

A COMPARISON OF ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION AND JOB SATISFACTION
IN NEW EXTENSION AGENTS WITHIN THE SOUTHERN REGION

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2007

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To my husband, Danny; my sons David and John, and my parents John and Jacqueline. Thanks so much.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are so many people that have helped me achieve this monumental goal. I am so grateful to so many for their assistance, support and dedication through this very long process. This list is dedicated to those people.

First, to my family, with incredible gratitude I thank my husband and best friend, Danny. Without his encouragement, undying love and truly believing that I could accomplish this, I never would have had the time or energy to complete this degree. Everything was always taken care of during weekends typing papers and late nights in class. Often school got in the way of family life, but you saw it to the end. Furthermore, I would like to acknowledge my sons, David and John, who have been my inspiration, and my parents John and Jacqueline, for their help and assistance, and mostly, their kitchen table where I typed many papers while the boys were playing with their grandparents at the beach or pool. Thank you also to my brother Michael, and his family for their support.

Second, I am so grateful to Dr. Howard Ladewig for helping me to begin this journey, and Dr. Nick Place, committee chair, for helping me to finish. Without the wise council of either of these men, I would not have finished this degree. I am especially grateful for the hours that Dr. Place spent with me to work out the details, again and again, of this research project. I consider him not only a trusted advisor, but also a friend. In addition to these men, I am also thankful for the help and support of my current committee members; Dr. Marilyn Norman, Dr. Jim Dyer and Dr. Al Wysocki, as well as those that have moved to other positions; Dr. Rick Rudd and Dr. Mark Kistler. I have learned so much from each of these people and I have grown tremendously by their involvement in my life as well involvement in the courses that they taught. I would also like to thank Dr. Kate Fogerty, who helped me to understand and utilize SPSS.

Thank all of the friends that I made in the Department of Agriculture Education and Communications as well as the wonderful faculty. I am so proud to be able to have so many colleagues around the country to correspond with. Thanks specially to Dr. Kim Bellah for all her wonderful jokes, hysterical emails and words of wisdom. You have no idea how much I needed those.

Special thanks to the state 4-H professional development specialists who were wonderful returning my emails and providing me with the information that was needed to complete this study. Those specialists included: R. Dollman, University of Alabama, N. Place, University of Florida; M. Blackburn, University of Georgia; J. Mowbray, University of Kentucky; D. Davis, Louisiana State University; R. White, Mississippi State University; M. Owens, North Carolina State University; J. Martin, Oklahoma State University; D. Baker, Clemson University; R. Waters, University of Tennessee; R. Luckey, Texas A & M, and L. Delp, Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University.

And finally, I would like to thank my co-workers and colleagues from around the state. I have been so lucky to have such a terrific support network. Yes, now I am done. To Amy Duncan, Nancy Moores and Bill Heltemes, my camping buddies; thank you for your contributions, advice and warm fuzzies. And we certainly cannot forget the tiara, wand, and boa! What a team!

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DEFINITIONS

Career Stage Model	Model developed by Rennekamp and Noll for extension that includes four stages of career growth.
Cooperative Extension Service (<i>CES</i>)	A research based organization tasked with bringing research knowledge to the general population to increase knowledge and skills in a variety of programmatic areas.
Competencies	Acquisition of knowledge, technical skills, and personal characteristics that have been identified, through research, that lead to outstanding performance.
Extension professional	Extension agent or extension educator hired by a land grant university to bring research based programs to counties and communities. Some extension professionals may also be hired only by counties to carry out the mission of extension.
Mentors	Co-worker assigned to work with a new agent. Can be formal, with specific tasks assigned; or informal, with no set agenda. Also can be a trusted peer who serves as an advisor. Mentors are non-evaluative.
Organizational Socialization	The process where employees learn about and adapt to their new jobs, new roles, and learn and understand the culture and history of the organization. There are a variety of ways that land grant universities socialize their new extension agents; specifically orientation programs, formal and informal mentoring, and web modules.
<i>Orientation</i>	A formalized program designed to acquaint new extension professionals with their various job duties and performances needed for success. It is a part of the socialization process.

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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By

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December, 2007

Chair: Nick Place

Major: Agricultural Education and Communication

People are one of company's greatest resources. How and when organizations socialize and train those people has a definite impact in job satisfaction and ultimately, job retention. Within the Cooperative Extension Service orientation and socialization programs vary as does the time frame in which new employees are formally and informally socialized into their new work environments.

This comparative study was undertaken to examine how new extension professionals in eleven states in the southern region, with between six months to 18 months of on the job experience, perceived their organizational socialization experiences. In addition this study examined perceived level of job satisfaction, and identified methods of organizational socialization perceived important by participants.

Each state's professional development specialist was contacted and asked to supply an email list of all new extension agents (six to eighteen months on the job). New extension professionals were contacted via email and asked to participate in an online survey. The survey was developed using two previously tested instruments, the Organizational Socialization Index and the Abridged Job in General instrument. A total of 321 participants were identified and a return rate of 75% (241 respondents) was achieved.

Results of the study indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between knowledge of the participants and the training they received, as well as training and their perception of future prospects. Approximately 86% of participants indicated that they were satisfied with their jobs; however, most participants felt that they were underpaid. The number of months on the job negatively affected job satisfaction; the more months employed, the less satisfied participants were.

With respect to methods of organizational socialization currently employed in the southern region, the interaction with county extension directors/ immediate supervisor was a significant indicator of job satisfaction as was immediate orientation (less than 3 months on the job) and self selection of mentors. Marginally significant were participants discussing job expectations and duties with co-workers, while the assignment of mentors, new agent orientation and training taking place after three months of hire and web modules as a form of socializing were not significant indicators of job satisfaction.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

As Mary Kay Ash, CEO of Mary Kay Cosmetics states; “People are definitely a company’s greatest asset. It doesn't make any difference whether the product is cars or cosmetics. A company is only as good as the people it keeps.” How an organization socializes and orients new hires has direct influence over their job satisfaction and thus, job retention rate. The Cooperative Extension organization spends vital dollars on socializing and orienting its new hires, but are those resources being used to the best advantage possible? Is there a more effective way to socialize and orient new hires as to maximize their job satisfaction rate and hopefully, retain those employees for years to come?

History of the Cooperative Extension Service

According to Rogers (2003), “The agriculture extension service is reported to be one of the world’s most successful change agencies” (p. 391). The formation of the land grant system began when Abraham Lincoln signed the Morrill Act in 1862 out of concern for the common man. Kelsey and Hearne (1949) reported, “Extension grew out of a situation...a period of pioneering and change in agriculture and homemaking” (p. 3). The Morrill Act created the basis for establishing the land grant college system, which combined agriculture with education. When such a large portion of America’s population, nearly three-quarters in the 1800’s, were deriving their livelihood from the land, it was thought that by bringing current information to the people that research and information would benefit society as a whole. By the 1850’s agriculture methods were changing, America was becoming more mechanized with horse drawn reapers, mowers and harvesters. Progressing through the 1800’s to 1850 Americas farm population began to dwindle about 2 percent per decade (Rogers, 2003).

In 1914, Congress passed the Smith Lever Act. The act was the foundation for the modern day Cooperative Extension Service (CES). Because the country saw the benefits of the farmer's institutes and activities of the state agricultural colleges there became a demand for public funds for extension work. In the final form the Smith-Lever Act stated that cooperative agriculture extension work consist of the education, instruction, and the use of and practical demonstration in agriculture and home economics.

By 1920, America's farm population was down to about twenty-five percent of the total United States population. According to Kelsey and Herne (1949), this did not mean that the population of farmers was decreasing, only that America's population was growing and a large number of people were flocking to the cities. The progress of American agriculture had the benefit of being able to release workers on the farm to become workers of other products and goods allowing America to grow and become more industrialized. Kelsey and Herne further state, "And so from the days of our forefathers, who began as pioneers and woodsmen, there developed a country which was primarily agricultural but which has since gradually become a great industrial nation whose capacity for agricultural production has kept pace with our needs" (p. 4). A large portion of the success of the American farmer and American society in general, can be attributed to the CES.

During the early days, there were many agriculture societies formed to help farmers learn about current trends in agriculture. Farmer's institutes were established and specialists from agriculture colleges would present educational programming dealing with issues affecting farmers in that area. In 1899, there were farmer's institutes in 47 states with an attendance of approximately 500,000 farmers. These farmers' institutes were usually either connected directly to the USDA or under agriculture colleges and experiment stations. Along with the farmer's

institutes, agriculture colleges began doing fieldwork, demonstrations, and lectures and, in essence, bringing additional research based information directly to the farmer.

In 1905, A.B. Graham, known to some as the father of 4-H, began working with boys and girls to establish 4-H clubs in Ohio, according to the National 4-H Headquarters (2007). It was thought that by teaching boys the newest methods of growing crops, they would adopt these practices earlier than their fathers and thus insure overall higher adoption rates by farmers. This too was the thought using girls clubs and homemaking skills. This method of teaching youth the newest methods in agriculture production and homemaking was an innovative approach used to assist with helping the adults in the home become early adopters of the newest methods and innovations. This practice proved to be very effective and is still one of the models used today with youth development and the earlier adoption of the most current research based information.

Since those early days, the CES has served clientele in every state and almost every county. According to Aurelia Scott (2001), the CES mandate was (and still is) to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics.

Extension Agents were hired by the land grant university to bring current researched-based information to the common man, to become part of the community, find key leaders and opinion leaders in the community, and work with those leaders to establish county-based programming that would directly impact the farmer and homemaker. Programs carried out by the CES are still community-based, allowing information to be disseminated directly to the people, the information that they feel is directly beneficial to their lives and livelihood. Scott (2001) also goes on to say that the Extension service has changed over the past 80 years to include now urban audiences but they remain true to their mission, which is the practical education of

Americans. “One of the great strengths of the CES is their obsession with meeting the needs of the local community” (p. 30).

The CES has always been instrumental in shaping communities. As Bowling and Brahm (2002) state, educational programs delivered to clientele all over the United States, play a significant role in the knowledge-creation process and has been instrumental in shaping neighborhoods and communities. This statement has been found true at the formation of the CES and now in the present. Extension’s goal is to provide citizens with educational programs to enrich lives, whether rural or urban. The organization has expanded to include all aspects of American life including business management, leadership, and building communities, as well as those traditional aspects of home and family life.

The CES has been a success for a variety of reasons. First, extension professionals (agents) are expected to be part of the community. Agents live and work in the county they are hired in. When CES was beginning, extension professionals worked with rural Americans on rural family issues dealing with agriculture, home making and youth. That “total family” approach has not changed but has expanded to include urban and city issues as well. Agriculture, This approach to the family as a unit has been of great benefit to the US. Not only families have benefited from programs provided by the CES, also the community at large has been able to broaden its scope of citizenship and leadership abilities.

Secondly, the CES is a cooperative organization between the USDA, state land grant universities, and local governing boards. As the funding is contributed by all three bodies, there is a great deal of flexibility in programming. Though flexible in nature, each funding partner identifies major program emphasis. The USDA - CSREES (Cooperative State Research, Extension and Education Service) identifies national priorities and plays a key role in the land-

grant mission by distributing annual appropriated funding to supplement state and county program funds. CSREES uses national program leadership to assist with identifying national program initiatives. Six national program areas have been identified which include 4-H youth development, agriculture, leadership development, natural resources, family and consumer science, and community and economic development (CSREES, <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/>).

In addition to the federal partners, state land grant universities are able to determine where their state programming focus should be using CSREES national program initiatives as a guide. In addition extension professionals use county and state advisory committees, who assist with determining county and community educational foci. The cooperative portion of the CES has always been a benefit to the organization and the people it serves.

The third reason for the success of the CES is the scope of research carried out by state land grant universities. Programs of the CES are locally driven and research undertaken by land grant universities is primarily in direct response to problems and issues of local people. One of the real underlying principles of the CES is that that research is driven by local needs and then disseminated to the people, via extension professionals, to solve problems at the local level. Not only is research driven by local needs, but research is also driven by national research initiatives, which are often in direct response to needs of the community. A very key point here is that research is carried out not only at the land grant university, but most states also have experiment and/or research stations where research can be determined and undertaken in the different regions of the state. With some states being very diverse in respect to agriculture produced within that state, this is a distinct advantage for local clientele as research and solutions then become more localized.

Fourth, another major success of the CES is unbiased research. Because land grant universities, funded by the public, carry out the research, it is viewed as being unbiased. As government bodies are not able to support one particular company or a particular way of thinking, research supported by land grant universities holds the distinction of being non-biased.

Fifth, extension professionals use a wide variety of teaching methods and techniques to disseminate information. As Rogers (2003) stated, information will be adopted more rapidly if people are able to see its advantage, make sure it is compatible with their current system, test the complexity of the innovation, are able to experiment with the innovation and can observe the results of the innovation first hand. With the variety of teaching methods, both formal and non-formal, clientele are able to see, hear, feel and experience the new information and are able to determine if this knowledge fits their personal needs.

The ability to provide non-formal education to the citizens of the community is a distinct advantage of the CES. Citizens have more opportunities than ever before for educational experiences in their daily lives. Non-formal education is about “acknowledging the importance of education, learning and training which takes place outside recognized educational institutions” (Fordham, 1993). An additional definition of non-formal education is that it is not compulsory, does not lead to a formal certification, and may or may not be state supported (Lingualinks, 1999). Non-formal education usually takes place outside of the formally organized school and often refers to adult literacy and continuing education for adults. Non-formal education can also be defined as “any organized educational activity outside the established formal system – whether operating separately or as an important feature of some broader activity – that is intended to serve some identifiable learning clienteles and learning objectives” (Coombs, 1973)

Non-formal education offers hands-on experiences that are relevant to the needs of the people in a community. Since non-formal education is learner centered, it is important for the instructor to focus on the learning rather than the teaching. The learner is a participant in determining the educational objectives and focus of the learning. Fordham (1993) discussed this as an enduring theme with respect to non-formal education. That theme is that education should be in the interest of the learner and the learners themselves should choose the curriculum that is utilized. Learners are key to taking action to solve their own community concerns, issues and problems. Non-formal education is often less costly than formal education which aids in the flexibility of programs that can be offered.

The role of non-formal education in society is great, first as a way of assisting clientele with solving local problems and dealing with local issues. One of the great benefits of non-formal education is that it is learner centered and can assist the learner with finding solutions to immediate problems that address local needs. Second, non-formal education assists with lifelong learning. Life-long learning is fundamental for self-enrichment (Wolfe, 2000). Non-formal education is especially effective with older clientele and those who have left formal education for a variety of reasons. When formal education fails, non-formal education can fill the gap left if lifelong learning is still a need or desire.

The CES is very responsive to immediate needs of clientele and the flexibility of non-formal education allows extension educators to alter planned programs to respond to immediate needs. The extension service has the great ability to develop programs that promote community development, youth development, health education, adult education and non-formal leadership development all within a given community. One of the great strengths of the extension service is that it is locally driven.

Because extension agents are able and encouraged to teach non-formally, agents are able to teach in groups, do field demonstrations and trials, and work one-on-one with clientele to assist with adoption of innovations. CES professionals (extension agents) often provide programs for individual groups (dairy farmers, beef farmers, vegetable or fruit growers, homemakers and/or youth), and information is specific for that group of people. Extension agents also work with volunteers to help channel information to other individuals and groups. The CES also works with farm organizations; cooperatives and commodity groups that engage in agriculture, as well as schools, church groups and civic groups of all types, to increase adoption rates of new innovations. Collaborative efforts working with large groups have added to the knowledge base of clientele.

Finally, vast numbers of resources are used to train “field agents” or extension professionals. Many years ago, agents were “jack of all trades.” Now, with the world changing and population growing, extension professionals are expected to specialize. Agents are also trained in current information by state specialists and have all of the Land Grant University resources (teaching and research) available when needed.

Each state hires extension professionals to provide information and programming to clientele in each of the approximately 3000 counties in the country. Some states have, as of late, begun to form county “clusters” where each cluster (or a certain number of counties) has agents in each programmatic area housed in a central office, and program and teach in a number of different counties. Georgia and Kansas are two of these states. In general, this provides smaller counties with a shared agent in a programmatic area that a county may not necessarily be able to support, either financially or population wise, and allows for a better distribution of educational support for clientele.

Each state has different requirements for hiring extension professionals but all states require at least a Bachelors Degree, while most require a Master's degree (or to hold a Masters within five years of hire). Extension professionals are usually hired with technical subject matter knowledge, though they often lack skills in areas that are needed to be effective extension professionals (Campbell, Grieshop, Sokolow & Wright, 2004). "Degree programs provide excellent subject matter training, but often lack opportunities for students to obtain skills or strengths in such necessary subjects as group facilitation, needs assessment, planning and organizing educational programs, evaluation, volunteer management, local government relations, educational technology, communications and many other related subjects" (Mississippi State University Extension Service, 2007, p. 2).

Each state's land grant college provides orientation and training to their new hires in order to increase knowledge and skills in their programmatic area as well as programming knowledge and skills. When that orientation is provided and what information is included differs from state to state. Professional development specialists in each of the thirteen states within the southern region have generously shared information on their state's new agent socialization/ orientation and training program. Each state orientation/training program is very different. The NEAT program (New Extension Agent Training) in Virginia begins socialization/orientation on the first day of hire (Gibson & Brown, 2002), as does Mississippi. Other states, such as Florida, have set dates for orientation and training. Agents may be on the job two weeks or up to eleven months before receiving a structured orientation and training program (Place, 2004). Most of the states in the southern region (Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee, and Virginia,) include web-based training modules, though an informal survey taken by Place and Higgins (2004) concluded that new extension professionals in Florida do not have the time

to begin to learn their jobs and complete web modules in a timely manner. This unstructured survey was undertaken as part of a goal focus team survey to determine if new agents were aware of the web training modules and, if they were, had they been able to utilize those models to increase their knowledge and skills with respect to the extension service in Florida.

Professional development specialists in the southern region shared socialization/ orientation and training information with the researcher. This information concluded that several states in the southern region that have a formal mentoring system in place (Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas) using trained mentors to assist with role adjustment as well as co-worker support. Virginia uses “training agents” to assist with socialization and orientation of new extension agents (NEAT Program). A training agent is a trained, extension agent with several (four to five) years of experience on the job that is responsible for socializing and orienting new agents to their current role. The difference between a training agent and mentor is that the training agent is given an evaluatory role; in other words, they may recommend keeping or terminating a new agent after a three-month period (Lambur, 2005). A summary of socialization/orientation for each state in the southern region can be found in Table 1.

Historical perspective on Organizational Socialization

“Growing disillusionment among new members of an organization have been linked to inadequacies in approaches used by organizations to socialize their new hires” (Louis, 1980, p. 226). Organizational entry has been studied from two distinct perspectives. The first is employee turnover and the second focuses on organizational socialization.

According to Louis (1980), turnover research is numerous. Turnover research can also be divided into voluntary and involuntary turnover. Voluntary turnover suggests that new hires expectations of the job are critical to their success and to their tenure within the organization (Ross & Zander, 1957; Katzell, 1968; Wanous, 1977). Many times new hires have unrealistic

views or expectations of the job. In the early seventies the Realistic Job Preview (RJP) was developed to determine expectations of new hires and assist with orientation information for those new recruits (Louis, 1980).

From the organizational socialization perspective, models became available that involved the total institution in the fifties. Goffman (1961) characterized an institution as “a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life” (pg. 13). Studies of how the military, correctional institutions, etc. socialized their new hires were among the descriptions of how individuals were made to conform to the norms of those institutions.

Socialization stage models became important in the early seventies. These different models were developed to determine what occurred during the socialization process. The premise of stage models involved developing an understanding of how new employees move from one stage to the next in the socialization process. There are four generally agreed upon stages, according to Ashforth, Sluss & Harrison (2007). Those stages include anticipation, encounter, adjustment and stabilization. Porter, Lawler & Hackman (1975) were one of the original authors of the stage models, determining their model from past research on organizational socialization. Feldman (1976) and Schein (1978) also developed very similar stage models to describe how organizations socialized new hires.

The second type of stage models can be defined as integrative models. These models blended initial models but these models serve as more of a conceptual framework (Ashforth, *et al.*, 2007). These models also took into account the importance of job anticipation and job expectation.

The final set of models identify mentors as being an important part of the socialization process as well as the relationship with how organizations socialize and the stress level of new hires. These models are also more “fluid” than earlier stage models, where the stages may overlap and specific events may or may not occur at a specific time.

Landmark work in the area of organizational socialization came about by Van Maanen & Schein (1979). This is one of the most often cited models of organizational socialization (Lueke & Svyantek, 2000). Van Maanen and Schein determined that there were six tactics that were employed by organizations to socialize or integrate their new employees. The six tactics identified include: collective versus individual socialization, formal versus informal socialization, sequential versus random socialization, fixed versus variable socialization, serial versus disjunctive, and finally investiture versus divestiture. It was hypothesized that organizations using these six tactics would increase job satisfaction as well as decrease turnover rate of new employees. These six tactics are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Research on newcomer learning, or how newcomers learn their roles and responsibilities, as well as learn about the organization, began in the early nineties with research undertaken by Chao, O’Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein & Garner (1994), Saks & Ashforth (1997) and Taormina (1994). This research was focused more on the employee and less on the employer. Research in this area has determined that learning is not a stage process and can span the life of the job, as well as interpersonal and group dynamics. Using the employee as the focus for organizational socialization, there are now four agreed upon domains of organizational socialization. Those domains include: task and job proficiency, role clarity, co-worker or group support, and understanding the organization itself (history, language, politics, goals and values). An additional domain, identified by Taormina (1997) is future prospects.

Organizational socialization is a rich and varied field where many research challenges lay ahead. As Ashforth, *et al.*, (2007) state, “Perhaps the biggest research challenge in the years ahead will be understanding how organizations might socialize for instability as well as for stability. As the conditions confronting organizations – and individual’s careers – become increasingly turbulent, particular research attention will need to be paid to task/project – and group specific, socialization, to newcomer proactively, and to role innovation” (pg. 54).

Organizational Socialization and Cooperative Extension: Significance of the Problem

Organizations train, teach, induct and/ or socialize new employees much as a parent does a child. Orientation and training can be considered within the organizational socialization concept model, as these programs do familiarize new hires with specific information on their job duties and responsibilities, assist those new hires with understanding the organization itself, assist with social interactions with colleagues, and help new hires understand some of the established ways of an organization. Training is simply one aspect of socialization and is related to job related skills and abilities. According to Taormina (1997), “training is defined as the act, process or method by which one acquires any type of functional skill or ability that is required to perform a specific job” (p. 31).

According to Klein and Weaver (2000) “Organizational socialization is the process where employees learn about and adapt to new jobs, roles and the culture of the work place.” Van Maanen and Schein (1979) also define organizational socialization as “the fashion in which an individual is taught and learns what behaviors and perspectives are customary and desirable within the work setting as well as what ones are not.” In addition, Ashford and Black (1996) define socialization as the process that newcomers engage in to learn about their work environments. Furthermore, Jahi and Newcomb (1981) emphasize that orientation is designed to assist new agents with adjusting to the workplace and the “living conditions” within their new

environment. Sanders and Kleiner (2002) also state that orientation programs are the single most prevalent training program that organizations participate.

The objective of employee orientation (Davis & Kleiner, 2001) is to provide a smooth transition for the employee into the new work environment in a way that maximizes motivation and allows the employee the opportunity to become productive as soon as possible, which is similar in definition to organizational socialization. Saks (1996) further explains that training programs within organizations are often the main way that employees learn socialization skills specific to that organization. Zimmer and Smith (1992) also agree with to this. Extension's effectiveness as an organization depends on well-trained extension professionals to carry out the mission of the Cooperative Extension Service and professional development helps with achieving excellence within the organization (Stone & Coppernol, 2004).

Why does socialization matter? Successful completion of a formal socialization program and/or set of socialization experiences increase employee productivity, increases self-assurance on the job, increases job satisfaction, motivation and commitment to the organization (Baker & Jennings, 2000). Other studies show that the initial period of employment within an organization is important in shaping subsequent attitudes and behaviors of that new hire (Buchanan, 1974; Hall, 1976; Wanous, 1980). The socialization process within an organization has a major influence on the performance of the new hires and can have a major influence on the performance of the organization (Louis, Posner & Powel, 1983). Early socialization assists the new hire with long-term adjustment and can help with fostering lifelong learning and confidence as well as transform the newcomer into a contributing member of the organization, which also enriches the organization itself (Ashforth, Sluss & Harrison, 2007).

Extension agent socialization is an important part of learning the roles and responsibilities of the job (Zimmer & Smith, 1992). It is important that new agents understand what is expected of them. Jahi and Newcomb (1981) state that the orientation process also helps to acquaint new agents with their expected roles, provide knowledge and skills necessary to become effective extension professionals, and assists new employees with understanding performance standards, all of which are necessary for building a commitment to the organization.

There is a growing concern among those in the field of business, that there are inadequacies in the socialization/orientation of new hires (Louis, 1980). Not only that, currently organizational socialization is newly being defined as a continuous process and not something that has a definite beginning and end (Taormina, 1997). As personnel move from one position to another, the socialization process continues. Even if not new to the organization, a new position within the organization will still have a period of socialization that will take place.

Entering into a new job as varied and diverse as extension can be confusing. “Where do I begin,” and “what is my role,” are words that are frequently heard within the Cooperative Extension Service with respect to new extension agents (Ritchie, 1996). The role of the extension agent is ever changing and very diverse (Cooper & Graham, 2001) as is the role of extension as an organization (Jahi & Newcomb, 1981). Stone and Coppernoll (2004) stressed that in order to achieve the mission of CES, agents must maintain professional competencies and technical expertise. But how do we do this? How effective is the CES in socializing and orientating new employees to the organization? According to Jahi and Newcomb (1981), “Orientation training is an early part of employee development,” and should be designed to provide a transitional period for newly hired agents. Only two states reported to orient and socialize their new extension

employees immediately upon hire (Kentucky and Virginia); most however, do conduct new agent orientation at some point after being hired (Gibson & Brown, 2002).

Purpose of the Study

This study was designed to determine the perception of new extension professional's level of organizational socialization with respect to (1) job skills and duties, (2) co-worker support, (3) knowledge of the organization, and (4) future job prospects, using Taormina's Organizational Socialization Index (OSI). In addition to the new hire's perception of their level of organizational socialization, this study was designed to examine the level of job satisfaction using JDI Research Group's Abridged Job in General Scale (aJIG). In addition, the perceived level of organizational socialization and level of job satisfaction will be compared in states with mentoring programs, states with immediate and not immediate orientation programs, and states that also utilize web modules as a socialization method.

The specific objectives of this study were to:

- Gather demographic data on new extension agents in each state including: months on the job, programmatic area, and other professional positions held prior to gaining employment with the extension service.
- Examine perceived level of organizational socialization of new extension hires using OSI.
- Examine perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension hires using aJIG.
- Compare the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to examine if perceived level of organizational socialization impacts job satisfaction, and examine the possible relationship of organizational socialization and job satisfaction.
- Compare job satisfaction with type of organizational socialization taking place; (1) formal mentor, (2) informal, self selected mentor, (3) immediate orientation program (within three months after hire), (4) formal orientation program after three months of hire, (5), web-based modules, (6) Discussing job expectations and duties with CED/immediate supervisor and (7) discussing job expectations and duties with co-workers; to examine if there are differences in methods and job satisfaction.
- Compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction.

The subjects for this study were new extension professionals (those with six months to eighteen months of extension experience) within twelve of the thirteen states in the southern region. Those states include Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. Arkansas opted not to participate. State program development specialists at the start of the study identified the new agents with the correct number of months and supplied researcher with emails of all qualified participants.

Importance of this study:

This study holds importance for several reasons. First, it is important to determine new agents' perception of how well the organization socialized new hires to their new jobs and organizations. As the employee is the focus of socialization, this study evaluates the areas in which the socialization is taking place for that new hire and examines the success of the organization socialization traditionally used with new agents. The higher degree of perceived organizational socialization, the higher the job satisfaction. Second, in comparing how new agents were socialized, state specialists can determine if the socialization/orientation programs and activities are "doing their jobs" and can evaluate the effectiveness of socialization/orientation programs. This allows the professional development specialists to modify, if needed, what they are currently doing in each state. It also allows for prioritizing socialization methods that have the most impact. This will assist with maximizing professional development dollars and increasing agent's ability to perform effectively and efficiently at a faster rate, as well as assist in the retention rate of new agents. In addition, how and when new hires are socialized impacts job satisfaction and has the potential to increase new hire tenure. If agent tenure can be increased, state land grant universities stand to save a substantial amount of money reducing agent turnover (Chandler, 2004; Kudilek, 2000; Abbasi & Hollman, 2000).

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to new extension faculty within twelve states in the southern region with six to eighteen months of continuous extension service; therefore generalization will be limited to new agents within the southern region.

An additional limitation is possible researcher bias. This researcher has been employed with the CES for 21 years and may have preconceived notions on organizational socialization within the CES. Therefore and as more formally discussed in Chapter 3, the researcher used a data base management system, *Zoomerang*TM, and had no access to original data prior to importing into the statistical program. The data was protected by a login and password on the *Zoomerang* site and was downloaded onto a disc in its entirety following the close of the survey. In addition the researcher had assistance from a professor at the University of Florida to assist with checking data and assistance with statistical analysis.

Summary

Extension has a rich history providing research-based knowledge and information to the citizens of this country and extension professionals are hired to disseminate this information to clientele using a variety of teaching methods. Research shows that early organizational socialization/orientation of new hires increases role clarity, job motivation, job satisfaction and tenure. With the diverse role that extension agents play within a community and state, it is important to understand how new agents feel they are socialized, when they undergo this formal process within the first year of hire, and which socialization methods may have the most impact on their perceived level of job satisfaction. Chapter 1 presented an overview of the history of extension, understanding why socialization is important for new hires, and discussed four aspects of socialization.

Chapter 2 will present information dealing with the literature associated with organizational socialization as well as the conceptual and theoretical framework associated with this study.

Table 1-1 Summary of Socialization/Orientation Program/Activity by State.

State	Immediate Orientation	Web Based Modules	Formal Mentoring Program	Formal Orientation Program
Alabama		X		X
Florida		X		X
Georgia		X	X	X
Kentucky	2 – 6 weeks after hire	X		X
Louisiana			X	
Mississippi			X	
North Carolina		X		X
Oklahoma				X
South Carolina		X		X
Tennessee		X		X
Texas	In planning	X	X	X
Virginia	X	X	X	X

Data was obtained from professional development specialists in each state prior to the start of this research project. Those specialists include:

- R. Dollman, University of Alabama
- N. Place, University of Florida
- M. Blackburn, University of Georgia
- J. Mowbray, University of Kentucky
- D. Davis, Louisiana State University
- R. White, Mississippi State University
- M. Owens, North Carolina State University
- J. Martin, Oklahoma State University
- D. Baker, Clemson University
- R. Waters, University of Tennessee
- R. Luckey, Texas A & M
- L. Delp, Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University

CHAPTER 2 CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Stephen Brown (1999), new employees are incompetent, not necessarily with respect to content knowledge but with respect to the organization. This chapter will present literature findings that focus on the concepts and theories of socialization and orientation both in extension and in the business community. This chapter will also present information on the importance of early socialization as well as the different types of research that can be associated with socialization.

New employees want to feel that they play an important part in an organization and therefore, employers must make sure that proper employee socialization/orientation is undertaken (Mahaffee, 1999). Socialization is vital in getting new employees quickly on board and to feel like they are an integral part of an organization. While it can be assumed that the extension organization as a whole understands that new agent socialization/orientation and is vital, there is little research that deals with new agent socialization and/orientation, especially research that is current. Extension work, and following the expressed mission of extension, relies heavily upon the extension agent, as with any job or employee. The effectiveness of the extension professional determines the success or failure of an extension program.

Successful completion of the formal organizational socialization/orientation experience has a number of favorable outcomes for both the employee and the organization. Organizations are able to add new, productive employees that accept the company's beliefs, values and attitudes, while the new employee is able to contribute to the organizations goals and objectives (Feldman, 1981).

Research on Competencies

Within the CES, there is little information published with respect to organizational socialization. However there is research that addresses competencies needed for new hires. What consists of a competency defined by Stone (1997) is the “application of knowledge, technical skills, and personal characteristics that lead to outstanding performance” (p. 1)

Stone and Bieber (1997) suggest that competencies need to be used as a foundation for improved performance of CES personnel. Competency models are then used to identify those core skills and characteristics that are essential in extension work. Core competencies for extension professionals can include: understanding the vision, mission and goals of extension, understanding partnerships, program planning and evaluation, ethical behavior, networking, oral communication, in addition to knowledge and skills in programmatic areas (Owen, 2004). Traditionally, organizations rely on academic achievement to hire potential employees, while McClelland (1973) concluded that job selection and performance should be based on desired, observable behaviors, or competencies, instead of grades and/or academic achievements (Ayers & Stone, 1999). Many of those competencies are addressed within the organizational socialization concept (role clarity, co-worker support, politics, organizational goals and values). According to Gammon, Mohamed and Trede (1992) one of the most important issues within the cooperative extension service with developing orientation and training is determining the needs of professionals in the field.

It is agreed that Extension professionals have a very diverse position (Cooper & Graham, 2001) and that the number of competencies extension agents should possess have increased (Beeman, Cheek & McGhee, 1979). The Texas Extension Competency Model identifies “organizational effectiveness” as one of the six categories of competencies that agents need to possess (Stone, 1997; Stone & Coppernoll, 2004). This competency category includes

understanding the mission and scope of the Cooperative Extension Service. Additionally, studies were conducted by Keita, and Luft in 1987, which also listed “extension philosophy and knowledge of the organization” as an important competency needed by new extension professionals. Both of these aspects relate to role clarity or performance proficiency within the organizational socialization concept. Gibson and Hillison, (1994) conducted research on the training needs of existing extension faculty and identified necessary competencies.

Dalton, Thompson and Price (1977) developed a career stage model for professional growth that was adapted by Rennekamp and Nall (1994) for the Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. This model uses competencies in defining areas of professional growth. According to Rennekamp and Nall, each stage in this four-stage model, “includes a distinct set of motivators that can drive professional development at that point.” Professional development specialists are able to use this model to assist with planning and implementing professional development programs and opportunities for extension professionals.

In the career stage model, the “entry stage” is indeed classified, in part, by psychological dependency of the new employee on the employer, to make sure that those critical foundational skills or opportunities to gain professional competencies (understanding structure, function and culture of the organization) are made available to that new employee. Additional competencies that should be attained at the entry stage include attaining base-level skills (which corresponds to the domain of role clarity and performance proficiency in the socialization models), and building relationships with professional peers (the domain of co-worker support). These are essential components of the socialization process for new employees and according to career stage model; it is difficult to move out of stage 1 (entry stage) until employees understand those key components that are sequential in nature.

Kutilek, Gunderson and Conklin (2002) adapted and revised the career stage model into a systems approach using competencies defined in the model. Where a competency (or motivator) is listed, there is an organizational strategy developed to assist with gaining that identified competency. This is a multi-layered approach that adds structure to the career stage model and assists agents with addressing their professional development needs at any given stage, but especially those in the entry stage.

Research in Mentoring

In addition to competency studies, there are studies that have been undertaken that specifically deal with mentoring of new extension agents (Kutilek & Earnest, 2001; Zimmer & Smith, 1992; Smith & Beckley, 1985). Kutilek *et al.* (2002) define a mentor as “a trusted advisor, friend and teacher, and should be a peer who is a non-evaluator.” Findings conclude that mentoring of new agents is indeed beneficial to the induction and socialization of those new agents. According to Kutilek and Earnest (2001) mentoring and coaching contribute to job satisfaction, increased productivity and employee tenure. This research concluded that mentoring increased new agent’s skills in program planning as well as understanding the political structure of extension. Mincemoyer and Thomson (1998) also completed a study on effective mentoring within the CES. Their definition of mentoring includes a senior member of the organization with advanced experience and knowledge who is committed to providing support to a new hire. For this study, mentors were not formally trained but did provide essential foundational skills, as well as co-worker support, another aspect of the organizational socialization model. In a review of state 4-H mentoring programs around the nation, Safrit (2006) concluded that most states have a mentoring system in place for extension 4-H agents, either formal or informal, but it was reported that those existing mentoring programs needed some changes.

Research in Customer Satisfaction

There are also studies that link customer satisfaction with the satisfaction level of employees (Hallowell, Schlesinger & Zornitsky, 1996; Goldstein, 2003), especially in “high contact service industries.” Extension is one of those high service industries where agents come into contact with clientele on a daily basis (Chase, 1981). Organizations find that when employees are satisfied, customers are also more satisfied with the relationship that they have with that particular business or organization (Goldstein, 2003). Terry and Israel (2004) point out, experience of employees and the level of staffing is key to the success of most organizations, and this concept is certainly true in extension. “Dissatisfied employees make dispirited employees who don’t perform optimally for the organization and who suffer personally through high levels of stress and frustration” (Manton & van Es. 1985. pg. 1).

Research on Organizational Socialization and Employee Turnover

Organizational Socialization has also been broached from a number of other perspectives, one of those being research related to turnover of new employees (Louis, 1980). There are several studies that discuss the high cost of turnover and the costs associated with hiring a new employee. In the Texas Cooperative Extension Service, it is estimated that an agent whose salary is \$30,000 could cost the organization between \$7,200 to \$30,000 in turnover costs per employee (Chandler, 2004). Kutilek (2000), in a study conducted at Ohio State Extension, concluded that Ohio extension lost approximately \$80,000 each year due to agent turnover and prolonged vacancies. In addition, Pinkovitz, Moskal and Green (2001) estimate that the cost for hiring extension professionals is approximately \$2,300, however those figures were used in 2001 and would be somewhat higher now. Just the cost of hiring alone, not specific to extension, has been documented by Abassi and Hollman (2000) at approximately \$4,000 per professional.

There are also costs associated with vacancies, which can be tangible or intangible costs. The intangible costs include decreases in employee satisfaction for those remaining, disruption of customer relations until the job is filled, the costs from the disruption of workflow, and the erosion of morale (Abbasi, & Hollman, 2000). “One estimate reveals that the cost of voluntary and involuntary employee turnover to American industry – the ‘find them, lose them, replace them’ syndrome – is about \$11 billion a year” (Abbasi & Hollman, p. 334). Ramlall (2004) also suggested that the average company loses \$1 million with every ten professional employees that leave the company. Those figures were reported from a 1997 study and are certainly significantly higher almost ten years later. One of the most significant losses for organizations is the loss of knowledge that comes with employee turnover. This is the knowledge that is used to meet the needs of clientele that is so vital to the mission of cooperative extension (Ramlall, 2004).

Research in Orientation and Socialization

Even though there is limited research with respect to extension on orientation and socialization, there is much research dealing with new employee orientation, induction, and socialization in the private sector (Kainen, Begley, & Maggard, 1983; Ashforth, Sakes & Lee, 1998; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). King and Sethi, (1998) suggest that socialization assists with role adjustment, or how well new professionals cope with their newfound careers. Also, research has demonstrated that employees have a higher job satisfaction when their orientation is completed as early as possible (Bailey, 1993).

Organizational socialization has been proven to increase organizational commitment and involvement in the job (Klein & Weaver, 2000). The induction/socialization period helps in shaping the new employee and helps employees to understand the mission of the organization, the rules and regulations, and acceptable cultural practices of that organization. King and Sethi (1998) show that socialization does affect professional role adjustment in information systems

professions through their research study. Saks (1996) conducted research on training and socialization and worker outcomes finding that the amount of training new professionals receives positively impacts job performance and commitment to the organization.

Research available on the process of organizational socialization is numerous. This type of research is concerned with understanding the different stages that a new employee passes through as s/he becomes a part of the organization (Chao, 1988; Feldman, 1976; Wanous, 1980). There are several “stage” models available from which to operate (Buchanan, 1974; Fisher, 1986; Wanous, 1992). These models incorporate four stages, which include: anticipation (pre entry), encounter (basic training), adjustment (becoming integrated) and stabilization (mutual acceptance of the organization).

Although Ashforth, Sluss and Harrison (2007) state that these types of research have not attracted as much attention as of late due to the fact that there is little attention to how the change occurs and more associated with the sequence of the socialization. As Taormina also discusses (1997), stage models have been useful but do not take into account the socialization process, which is continuous and ongoing.

Additionally, research on the content of socialization is also available. This type of research deals primarily with what is actually learned by the newcomer during the socialization process (Fisher, 1986; Feldman, 1986). This concept is the basis for most organizational socialization models (Chao, O’Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein & Gardner, 1994; Saks & Ashforth, 1997). According to Ashforth (2007), “socialization content has been characterized in three related ways: (1) acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities; (2) as general adjustment (including role clarity); and (3) as effective support from various sources during the socialization process (e.g. Organization, group, supervisor)” (p. 17).

Theoretical Framework

There are several theories identified with organizational socialization. Graen's (1976) "role making" theory discusses that defining employee roles helps ensure that acceptable patterns of social behavior become established, and assists employees with understanding the culture of that organization. Becoming socialized to a new position, especially in extension, where tenure and promotion are often tied to working with other professionals is especially important.

An additional and important theory (cited in most socialization articles and research) that can be tied to new agent orientation/ induction and socialization is Van Maanen and Schein's, typology of socialization tactics (1979). Van Maanen and Schein proposed that organizations use at least six tactics to structure the socialization of new hires. Those six tactics included collective versus individual (which involves common group experiences for new employees); collective versus individual (which involves grouping new employees together for common learning experiences and programs); formal versus informal (which involves separating the new employees from those within the organization for orientation programs); sequential versus random (involving new employees in a series of socialization experiences); fixed versus variable (following a set time table when moving newcomers from one experience to another); serial versus disjunctive (learning the job roles and responsibilities from a mentor, supervisor or co-worker), and investiture versus divestiture (affirming the new employees role within the organization). Van Maanen and Schein also stated that those socialization tactics could be used within any organization where there are individual careers (Ashforth, Saks, & Lee, 1998). Institutionalized socialization encourages tactics that include collective learning that is formal, sequential, fixed, serial, versus individual socialization where the new employee is left to "fend for himself" (Ashforth, Sluss & Harrison, 2007). As reported by Saks and Ashforth (1997),

institutional socialization is associated with higher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, higher performance proficiency and higher retention rate than individual socialization.

Socialization Models

Socialization models are varied but most have similar or common basic components or domains associated with them (Taormina, 1997; Chao et al., 1994). The first component or domain of organizational socialization can be termed “role clarity.” Role clarity, or performance proficiency, is defined as the development of job-related skills and abilities (Taormina, 1997). Feldman (1981) stated, “No matter how motivated the employee, without enough job skills there is little chance of success” (p. 313). However, as Gonzalez (1982) stated, “mastery of the knowledge alone does not insure that the individual can successfully apply what he has learned” (p. 40). It is very important that individuals develop the proper abilities, as well as the attitudes and behaviors necessary to carry out their professional roles.

The second component/domain of organizational socialization is co-worker support. Establishing successful relationship with co-workers and other organizational members plays a pivotal role in the socialization process. Furthermore, Fisher (1986) suggested that finding the right person from whom to learn about the organization is also important in the socialization process of the new hire. Co-worker support is essential within extension, where promotion and permanent status can be directly tied to teamwork and ability to work productively with co-workers.

A third component/ domain of organizational socialization is understanding the politics, language, and history of the organization. Learning and understanding the formal and informal work relationships and power structures within the organization increases the success of the individual (Louis, 1980). Learning the correct organizational jargon assists with the basic

organizational-specific language in order to comprehend information and communication from others.

A fourth component of socialization at the organizational level is learning and understanding organizational goals and values. These goals and values include the understanding of the rules and principals, the unwritten and informal goals and values held dear by the organization and those in powerful and controlling positions. Understanding goals and values also link the individual to the larger organization, beyond their immediate job and work environment (Chao, Oleary-Kelly, Klein & Gardner, 1994).

A fifth component/domain of organizational socialization newly defined by Taormina (1997) is “future prospects”. Future prospects relates to how a new employee perceives their future within the organization, which includes perception about raises, promotions and job security.

The addition of this relatively new domain can be substantiated using current research conducted by Taormina (1997) as well as research which identifies “free agents” and “generation X’ers” as looking for jobs that offer them the opportunity for the growth they need to maintain their employability (Opengart, 2002). The term “free agent” applies to this new type of employee, or further classified by using the term “generation X’ers” though not all free agents may be generation X’ers. Opengart (2002) defines the term “free agent” as either high potential employees, high tech employees and younger employees. Generation X’ers fall in to the category of younger employee. According to Knott (1999) generation X’ers are defined as those born between 1961 and 1981, though those born at the bottom end of that spectrum may not necessarily consider themselves to be “generation X’ers.” Typically the free agent looks for opportunities to learn knowledge and skills that will assist them in further employment. Opengart

suggests that employers offer opportunity for growth and learning to attract those types of employees. The findings of the study conducted on the free agents suggests that “continuous learning in the workplace as a key component to achieving their goal of retaining employment for the duration of their careers” is vital in being able to attract top candidates. Typically, the free agent values freedom and life-long learning and opportunities to apply that lifelong learning (Opengart, 2002). Taking into account the current research on this type of employee, this model best fits this study.

Conceptual Model

The model that fits best into this research study is the model designed by Taormina (1997), which encompasses four domains of organizational socialization. Those four domains include: (1) training, (2) understanding, (3) coworker support, and (4) future prospects (Figure 2- 1). As Taormina (1997) discusses, these four domains encompass both content and process, are continuous, and are different for each employee at each different level. The first domain is labeled “training” which includes learning job related skills and abilities. Training is defined as “the act, process or method by which one acquires any type of functional skill or ability that is required to perform a specific job.” (Taormina, p. 31). There is both formal and informal training involved with this domain. Formal training would be those trainings organized and carried out by the organization (workshops, in-service trainings, formal orientation programs, etc) to enhance job skills, while informal training can be classified as any unstructured way a newcomer learns job skills. These skills can be learned in a variety of ways including observation or trial and error.

As training is considered a domain of organizational socialization, Taormina discusses that this training should be provided by the organization and should be a process that is experienced by the employees. Training is important and, as stated by Gonzalez (1982), “mastery of the

knowledge alone does not insure that the individual can successfully apply what he has learned” (p. 40). It is also important to remember that training is a continuous process and may have a beginning, for a new hire, but does not have an end. Life-long learning has been proven to be a high motivator in the retention of employees. Fourman and Jones (1977), describe Herzberg’s theory of “vertical job enrichment” which helps to support positive attitudes towards work. They contend that one of the key issues in human resource management, and professional development specialists, is motivating the workforce. “Vertical job enrichment adds more authority, accountability, degree of difficulty and specialization to an individual’s work. By doing so, motivational factors such as responsibility, achievement, growth and learning, advancement and recognition are further developed” (Fourman & Jones, 1977, p. 1).

The second domain included in this organizational socialization model is “understanding.” Understanding is “the power or ability to apply concepts based on having a clear idea of the nature, significance or explanation of something.” (Taormina, p. 34). In other words, understanding consists of the extent of which an employee can apply knowledge of the job, the organization, the history, culture and values of the organization. Understanding especially the history, culture and values of an organization assists the newcomer with understanding what behavior is appropriate and inappropriate in specific circumstances according to the culture of the organization. Fisher (1986) emphasizes that understanding the organizational history is also a “means of learning key organizational principles.” Chao *et al.* (1994) discovered that understanding the history of the organization was positively correlated with job tenure and organizational commitment.

Understanding can also be a direct reflection of information seeking. Past studies show that information seeking, engaging in proactive behaviors to learn about role clarity, and

organizational principles, are positively related to attitudes, performance and organizational adjustment (Holder, 1996; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). Social information seeking was found related to overall social integration into the organization (Morrison, 1993) as well as understanding appropriate and inappropriate social behavior (Chatman, 1991).

The third domain in this model is “co-worker support.” Co-worker support is defined as “the emotional, moral or instrumental sustenance which is provided without financial obligation by other employees in the organization in which one works with the objective of alleviating anxiety, fear or doubt” (Taormina, p. 37). Critical aspects of co-worker support include emotional and moral support. Co-workers can include peers, mentors, and other employees within the organization (supervisors). Successful socialization involves learning how to establish positive relationships with co-workers. Finding the right person to assist the new employee to learn about the organization, politics, and job roles and responsibilities is also key to successful socialization (Fisher, 1986). Mentors are often used within organizations to assist newcomers with job adjustment through advice, additional training, and assisting with the establishment of a social support network (Kram, 1988). Mentors, as the research suggests, assist new employees with the adjustment into the new work environment within their organization (Lankau & Scandura, 2002; Wanberg, 2003).

In extension, where promotion and tenure (or permanent status) is often dependant on co-workers and peer groups, it is important that those new hires establish positive social networks and relationships among their peer groups and colleagues. Working in teams and groups is an organizational value of Cooperative Extension. Positive relationships with co-workers also reduce the amount of stress on the job and assist with having more positive feelings about co-workers and the job itself (Taormina, 1997). Kaufmann and Beehr (1986) concluded that social

support is a moderator of a high stress job. In other words, stressful job situations have less of an impact on an employee if there is a positive social network within that organization.

The fourth domain of organization socialization is “future prospects.” Taormina (1997) defines future prospects as “the extent to which an employee anticipates having a rewarding career within his or her employing organization” (p.40). Basically, this domain relates to new employees perception of future promotions, future salary potential, awards and recognition, and their overall perception about their tenure within the organization. This domain can also be associated with the commitment of an individual to stay within an organization. Buchanan (1974) described three components of commitment, which include: 1) the individuals’ ability to adopt the goals and values of the organization, 2) the psychological involvement of an individual to his or her work role and 3) the feeling of loyalty, or attachment to the organization. Buchanan studied commitment in managers and discovered that job achievement and hierarchical advancement were significant aspects of organizational commitment. Perception of future prospects includes job achievement and advancement potential within an organization. “An underlying assumption here is that employees may choose to leave an organization that they perceive is not providing a rewarding environment which supports their careers” (Taormina, 1997)

Summary

In summary, there is much literature available that supports organizational socialization from a number of different aspects. Extension work, and following the expressed mission of extension, relies heavily upon the extension agent and the effectiveness of the extension professional determines the success or failure of an extension program therefore completion of the formal socialization experience has a number of favorable outcomes for both the employee and the organization.

Literature is also available that supports the need to retain extension agents as well as the dollar value when those employees leave the organization. In addition, there is research available that identifies competencies needed for extension agents in order for those agents to be able to positively impact the clientele that they serve.

The organizational socialization model that will be used for this study was developed by Taormina (1997) and includes four domains; training, understanding, co-worker support and future prospects. This model best fits the extension organization as explained in Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 will present the research design and methodology proposed for this study as well as identifies participants, and discusses data collection and data analysis by objectives.

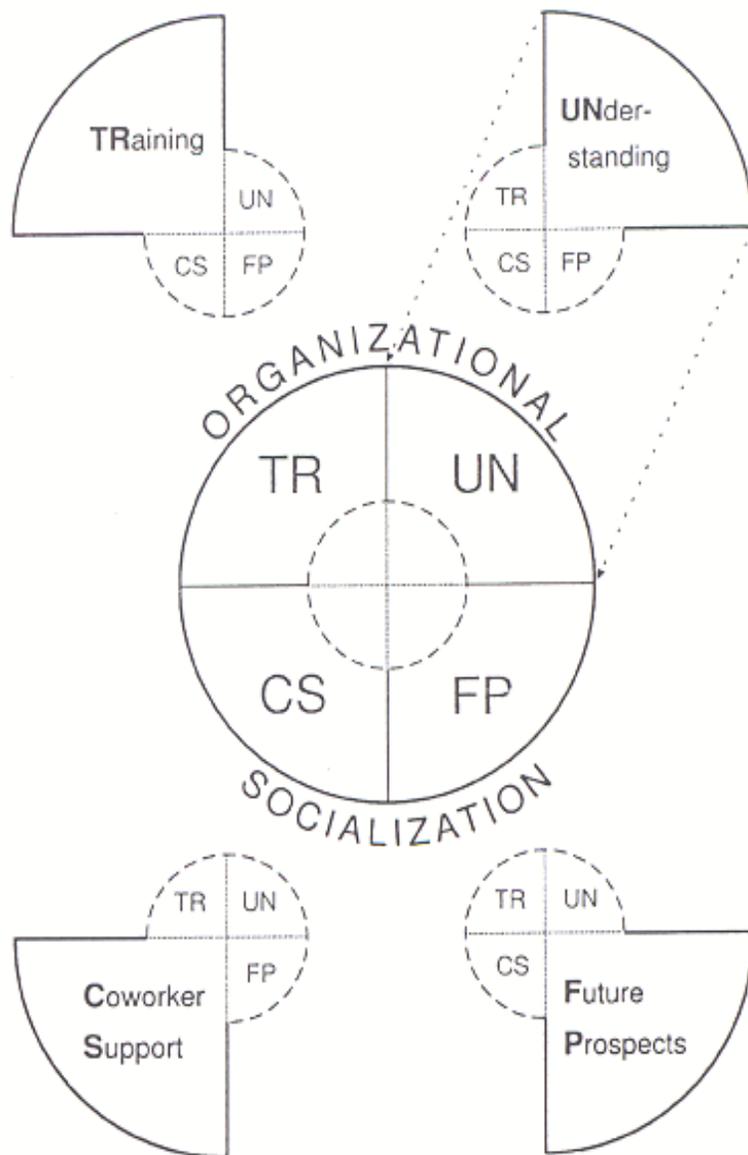


Figure 1: The four domains of organizational socialization

Figure 2-1 Taormina's Organizational Socialization Model.

Source Taormina (1997)

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the population, design, instrumentation, data collection procedures and statistical data analysis of this research study. This study was conducted to compare how new extension agents in the southern region perceive their degree of organizational socialization and job satisfaction. In addition, seven (7) formal methods of socializing/orienting new employees at the organizational level have been identified (formal and informal mentors, immediate orientation, non immediate orientation, web based module orientation, County Extension Director orientation, and discussion with co-workers) and a comparison of those programs with level of job satisfaction was studied to examine if any of the organizational socialization methods employed by states made a difference in job satisfaction of those new employees.

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

Objective 1: Gather demographic data on new extension agents in each state including: months on the job, programmatic area, and other professional positions held prior to gaining employment with the extension service.

Objective 2: Determine perceived level of organizational socialization of new extension hires using OSI.

Objective 3: Determine perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension hires using aJIG.

Objective 4: Compare the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to examine if perceived level of organizational socialization impacts job satisfaction, and examine the possible relationship of organizational socialization and job satisfaction.

Objective 5: Compare job satisfaction with type of organizational socialization taking place; (1) formal mentor, (2) informal, self selected mentor, (3) immediate orientation program (within three months after hire), (4) formal orientation program after three months of hire, (5) , web-based modules, (6) Discussing job expectations and duties with CED/immediate supervisor and (7) discussing job expectations and duties with co-workers; to examine if any method employed by states made an impact in job satisfaction of those new agents. In addition, compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction.

Research Design

The primary design of this study was descriptive in nature and is considered a single-method survey research design as defined by Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002). The study sought to examine the perceived level of organizational socialization and perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension agents in the southern region. In addition, this study design employed correlation research methods to explore any possible relationship in methods of socializing of new extension faculty and job satisfaction. The researcher used a web-based, questionnaire instrument to collect data from identified population.

Instrumentation

The data in this study was collected in the form of responses to questions using an internet survey. The researcher developed a questionnaire instrument consisting of four components; (1) questions related to demographics of participants, (2) one question to identify the primary methods that were used to socialize new agents within their organizations. One “check all that apply” question was used to identify those methods of organizational socialization identified by state’s professional development specialists, (3) the OSI, used to measure perceived level of organizational socialization and (3) the aJIG , which measures job satisfaction. The researcher

submitted the survey instrument to the University of Florida's Institutional Review Board (Appendix A) and was approved (Appendix B).

The study included two instruments that have been previously used as study instruments; the first measured organizational socialization, and the second, job satisfaction. For this study, there were two measures of organizational socialization available that were similar in nature, The Organizational Socialization Inventory (OSI), developed by R.J. Taormina, and Content Area of Socialization (CAS) developed by Chao *et al.* (1994). Both research instruments have practical applications for the human resource manager, both can assess how well organizational socialization programs are working within an organization, and both assess not only newcomers but also assess the socialization of organizational members at any time during employment. According to Taormina (2004), both measures are comparable, however the CAS is “a more specific measure and the OSI a more general measure of organizational socialization. This implies that the OSI can be used for more general purposes in a wide variety of organizational settings” (p. 91). In addition, the CAS contains six domains (which correspond to three of four of the OSI domains), but does not contain the fourth domain described in the model being used for this study, future prospects. “Future prospects assess the employee’s long-term view with the organization, such as his or her anticipation of continued employment in and the rewards offered by the organization” (Taormina, 2004, p. 78). It is felt from the review of literature that the fourth domain, future prospects, is important for this study and therefore, the OSI was used in place of the CAS. R.J. Taormina provided permission for the OSI to be used in this study (Appendix D).

The OSI is a twenty-item scale instrument with four subscales or domains (Appendix I). The four subscales (domains) are: 1. training, 2. understanding, 3. co-worker support and, 4.

future prospects. A 5-point Likert scale was used with the OSI, ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). There were five questions dealing with training, five questions that dealt with understanding, five that related to co-worker support and five that related to the future prospects domain. This instrument has been tested for reliability and validity in a wide variety of organizations and with a diverse group of employees.

The second instrument that was used was the Abridged Job Descriptive Index (aJDI), developed by P.C. Smith, Kendall & Hulin in 1969 and revised several times during the years, most recently in 1997. The aJDI was designed to measure the construct of job satisfaction, how the employee feels about their job (Kinicki, Schriesheim, McKee-Ryan & Carson, 2002) and is reported to be used more frequently than any other job satisfactory measure (Rain, Lane & Steiner, 1991). The aJDI is also considered one of the most reliable and valid measurements of job satisfaction (Roznowski, 1989; Kinicki *et al.* 2002). The aJDI includes items that pertain to satisfaction with co-workers, pay, promotions, supervision and work. The aJDI uses a 3-point response scale of either “No,” “Yes,” or “?” for not sure (Appendix H). Permission to use the JDI was obtained from JDI Research Group; Bowling Green State University (Appendix C).

In addition to the two surveys described above, participants were also asked to indicate their major programmatic area, the number of months that they have been employed in their current job, their state association, previous extension employment, and orientation programs participated in.

Objective 1. Gather demographic data on new extension agents in each state including: months on the job, programmatic area, and other professional positions held prior to gaining employment with the extension service.

The researcher used four demographic questions to be answered by participants. Those questions included, (1) major programmatic area, (2) number of months employed in current position, (3) state employed, and (4) previous extension employment. The purpose of these questions was to gain insight into participants and use demographic data to examine if months of extension had an impact on any of the other components of the survey.

Objective 2. Examine the perceived level of organizational socialization of new extension hires using the Organizational Socialization Index (OSI).

The OSI consists of twenty questions and includes questions related to the four domains of organizational socialization, five questions for each domain. The question type was a 5-point Likert scale, one (1) indicated strongly agree, three (3) indicated neither agree nor disagree, and five (5) indicated strongly disagree. The Likert scale was re-coded at the end of the analysis (1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Descriptive statistics were used to determine sub-score for each of the four domains of organizational socialization, as identified by Taormina's model of organizational socialization (training, understanding, co-worker support, and future prospects). In addition, a total organizational socialization score was calculated and reported. This total score was also used to achieve Objective 4.

Objective 3. Examine the perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension hires using Abridged Job in General Measurement (aJIG) instrument.

The aJIG was utilized to determine perceived level of job satisfaction of participants. The aJIG contains a series of 20 questions in the following categories: work on present job, present pay, opportunities for promotion, and supervision. The questions are measured, "yes", "no" and "not sure," and were ordered exactly as the original survey. Each of these questions was

analyzed separately, and then a combined job satisfaction score was calculated to determine a total score which was used for analysis in Objective 4.

Objective 4. Compare the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to examine if perceived level of organizational socialization impacts job satisfaction, and examine the possible relationship of organizational socialization and job satisfaction.

Comparisons were made between the total scores of the OSI and aJIG by use of a Pearson correlation coefficient and correlations were viewed collectively in a correlation matrix to determine if organizational socialization and job satisfaction are correlated.

Objective 5. Compare job satisfaction with type of organizational socialization taking place; (1) formal mentor, (2) informal, self selected mentor, (3) immediate orientation program (within three months after hire), (4) formal orientation program after three months of hire, (5) web-based modules, (6) Discussing job expectations and duties with CED/immediate supervisor and (7) discussing job expectations and duties with co-workers; to examine if there are differences in methods and job satisfaction. In addition, compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction

To examine the impact of socialization/orientation methods employed by the organizations to participants perceived level of job satisfaction, a one-way analysis of variance was conducted to on all seven (7) levels of the variable to determine what proportion of the variance in job satisfaction was associated with each different method of organizational socialization and which method may prove to impact job satisfaction. One question was used to determine which methods were used with participants and participants were asked to check “all that apply” for this question.

Objective 6: Compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction.

A way one ANOVA was conducted to determine if the number of organizational socialization methods new agents participated in had any impact on job satisfaction. Three groups were identified by use of the histogram displayed in Chapter 3 and three (3) levels, or groups, were identified (Figure 3 – 1).

Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

The OSI contains twenty questions, with each identified domain having five questions associated. The OSI has been tested for reliability and validity and as Taormina (1997) reported, the OSI was designed for use in most types of organizations, and the original Chronbach alpha reliabilities had values of .76 or higher for each of the five domains and a .90 for the overall scale.

The aJDI and aJIG has also been tested for reliability (Roznowski, 1989; Ironson, Brannick, Smith, Gibson and Paul, 1989; Kinicki et al, 2002), and JDI associates are continuously updating their data and measurement instrument to be able to be used within a wide variety of organizations.

Population

The population studied consisted of all new extension agents with six (6) months to 18 months of time on the job in twelve states in the southern region. The parameter of six months to eighteen months was selected as it was surmised that agents with less than six months of experience may not have had enough experience in answering these questions, and agents with more than eighteen months of experience are no longer considered “new.” States with mentoring programs (Texas, Mississippi, etc.) discontinue the formal mentoring program after agents reach twelve months of employment.

In order to gather a sampling frame, each state's professional development specialist was contacted via email to determine approximate numbers of new agents fitting into the above category for this study. The breakdown, by state, of the number of new agents that fit within that category is shown in Table 3-1. There were a total of three hundred and forty nine (349) new extension agents that were identified and invited to participate. Twenty eight of those that were identified by state professional development specialists were deleted from the list due to the fact that those agents didn't fit into the prescribed category of months on the job (15 participants), or had already left the job (13 participants), for a total of three hundred and twenty one (321) potential participants. All fifteen agents that did not fit into the proper number of months emailed the researcher and their names were removed from the survey group list. It was decided to use the entire population of new agents (census study) so that participants involved in this study would remain anonymous and an appropriate response rate (over 60%) would be obtained.

Independent Variable(s)

In this study, the independent variable measured was the methods employed by the organization to socialize new employees. Those methods include:

1. Having an assigned formal mentor.
2. Self selecting an informal mentor.
3. Attending new agent orientation immediately after being hired (within three months).
4. Attending new agent orientation three months or more after being hired.
5. Using orientation and training web modules.
6. Meeting with the County Extension Director to review job expectations and duties.
7. Working with co-workers to discuss job duties and expectations.
8. Not participating in any of the above.

The study looked for the relationship between the dependant variable, job satisfaction, and the participation in any or all of the socialization methods employed by the organization. In addition, the decision was made, after analyzing all methods together, to then separate each

method and examine those seven identified methods as separate independent variables to determine if there was an impact on any of the different methods on job satisfaction.

Data Collection

The researcher used a web-based program, *Zoomerang*, to disseminate the questionnaire to participants and facilitate data collection. It was decided to use this method for several reasons; the low cost to develop and disseminate the survey, uncomplicated distribution, ease of return for participants, and ease of data retrieval. Dillman (2000) listed several limitations to using an internet survey; respondents may not have a computer, internet access, or feel that they are confident enough to use an internet based survey. However, this researcher concluded that most extension agents have access to computers, the internet, and are comfortable using an internet survey format as most agents hold at least a Bachelors Degree and do extensive work using computers.

The measurement instrument was developed using the two surveys discussed above, as well as the demographic question, a question on methods of organizational socialization participated in as well as a “comments” section, and made available to participants on the *Zoomerang* web site. State program development specialists identified participants and an email list was submitted to the researcher from twelve states in the southern region. Dillman’s methodology (2000) was used as a guide in designing this study. As Dillman recommends, participants were sent an email announcing the study, providing details on nature of the study, the use of the data, instructions for completing the study instruments, IRB information, and an invitation to participate. The email also contained contact information of researcher and committee chair ,a brief personal introduction by researcher and the subject heading “From a Colleague” to help prevent participants from deleting this as “junk mail”. In addition, information on how to link to the questionnaire was provided. (Appendix E). The researcher

personally self addressed each email to participants and provided a personal code they were asked to include on Question 1, so that they could be checked off a participant list. Each participant received the same introductory email with individual participant code.

Researcher emailed a reminder to participants who did not respond after a 2-week period, again using the same method as above and “Survey Reminder” in the subject line (Appendix F). An additional follow up was sent to non-respondents four weeks after the initial correspondence (Appendix G) with email the subject heading “Last Chance to Participate”. The researcher addressed the third email in exactly the same way as the first and second emails, with the same information included.

In addition, a random sample of five non participants were called and asked to take the survey by phone to determine if there was any difference between those that responded to the survey on line, and those that did not. Those participants were selected using a random number generator. With this process, an adequate response rate of 75.07% was attained (241 respondents out of 321 possible participants).

Data was stored in the *Zoomerang* data management system, retrieved into an Excel spreadsheet, and then converted to an SPSS file at the conclusion of the survey phase of this project.

The time frame for the data collection was as follows:

First email and invitation to participate	May 29, 30, 31 - 2007
First reminder	June 13, 14, 15 - 2007
Final Reminder	June 27, 28, 29 - 2007
Phone calls to non respondents	August 1, 2 – 2007

Emails were sent individually by the researcher and two to three days were allowed to send and resend survey information due to the large numbers of potential participants.

Data Analysis

To analyze the first objective, descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic data (state, program area, and other professional extension job experiences) and consisted of means, rankings, frequencies and percentages. SPSS Version 12 was utilized for all calculations. In addition, descriptive statistics were used to determine scores for perceived level of organizational socialization, as well as job satisfaction. Also, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare means and examine the independent variable (training methods) on the dependant variable (job satisfaction) and, number of organizational socialization methods new agents participated in.

Controlling for Missing Data

Utilizing *Zoomerang* has a distinct advantage over traditional mail surveys as the researcher can control for missing data. The survey was developed so that each question had to be answered in order to proceed to the next question and to complete the survey. Each question did allow the participant to select a non threatening answer (examples: I prefer not to answer, not sure, etc.) as one of the choices to assist with completion of the survey and address any concerns participants had about answering the different questions.

Data Analysis by Objective

The objectives stated in Chapter 1 were measured using the following statistics:

Objective 1. Gather demographic data on new extension agents in each state including: major program area, months on the job, current state of employment, and other professional extension positions held prior to gaining employment with their current extension service.

Procedure. Participants were asked for demographic information included on the survey. SPSS was utilized to describe means, frequencies, and percentages. In addition, a table showing the total number of agents in the southern region is included for comparison (Table 3-2). Those

numbers were obtained by either professional development specialists or the state's extension web site, noted on the table.

Objective 2. Examine the perceived level of organizational socialization of new extension hires using the OSI.

Procedure. Participants were asked a series of twenty questions using a five-point Likert type scale with 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Each question was analyzed using descriptive statistics; frequency and percent were reported for each item. Items were re-coded after survey was completed (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). According to Borg and Gall (1983), Likert type scales are the most commonly used scales for the measurement of attitudes and perceptions. This scale was also recommended by Taormina (1997). Each domain was analyzed and a domain score was obtained for each of the four organizational socialization domains. In addition, a combined organizational socialization score was then determined from the responses to the instrument. That combined score is reported as mean, and standard deviation, and was used to complete the analysis in Objective 4.

A Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated and correlations were viewed collectively in a correlation matrix to determine if there was a relationship between any of the four domains of organizational socialization (knowledge, training, co-worker support and future prospects) and a total score was calculated for organizational socialization.

It was also decided to examine the months of extension employment and the OSI to determine if months of extension had any relationship to the four domains of organizational socialization.

Objective 3. Examine the perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension hires using aJIG instrument.

Procedure. Scores were calculated using SPSS Version 12 to determine individual scores for each of the twenty questions relating to job satisfaction. Questions were ranked as Yes = 2, No = 1 and Not Sure = 1.5. Each question was analyzed using descriptive statistics and reported as frequency and percent. In addition, a total job satisfaction score was determined for participants and reported again as mean and standard deviation. This total score was also used in the analysis of Objective 4.

Objective 4. Compare the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to examine if perceived level of organizational socialization impacts job satisfaction, and examine the possible relationship of organizational socialization and job satisfaction.

Procedure. A Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated and correlations were viewed collectively in a correlation matrix to examine a possible relationship between organizational socialization and job satisfaction using the total scores from the OSI and aJIG.

Objective 5. Compare job satisfaction with type of organizational socialization taking place; (1) formal mentor, (2) informal, self selected mentor, (3) immediate orientation program (within three months after hire), (4) formal orientation program after three months of hire, (5) web-based modules, (6) Discussing job expectations and duties with CED/immediate supervisor and (7) discussing job expectations and duties with co-workers; to examine if there are differences in methods and job satisfaction. Also, compare the number of organizational socialization methods new agents participated in to determine if the number of methods impact job satisfaction.

Procedure. To examine if any method of socialization makes a difference in job satisfaction, all seven (7) levels of the variable (methods of organizational socialization), were combined and analyzed using one way ANOVA. In addition, each method was then treated as a

separate variable and analyzed using a one way between-group analysis of variance that controlled for months of extension. This was undertaken to explore the impact of job satisfaction and the different organizational socialization method employed by the states within the southern region to assist with determining if any of the different individual methods made an impact in job satisfaction.

Objective 6: Compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction

Procedure: Using an additional one way ANOVA to determine if the number of organizational socialization methods that individual new agents participated in made an impact on job satisfaction, agents were combined into three (3) groups, based on the findings of a histogram (Figure 3 -1). Group one (1) were those new agents that participated in one (1) to three (3) methods of organizational socialization, group two (2) indicated that they participated in four (4) methods, and group three (3) participated in five to seven methods of organizational socialization.

Non-response Error

According to Lindner, Murphy, and Briers (2001), there are three methods for handling non response error. Those methods include:

1. Comparison of early to late responders.
2. Using “days to respond” as a regression variable, and
3. Comparison of respondents to non respondents.

Lindner, *et al.* (2001), suggest that with less than an 85% response rate, additional procedures need to be implemented for handling non response issues. For this study, method 1 was employed, “comparison of early to late respondents”. A random sample of five (5) non-respondents were surveyed by telephone, and responses were added to the existing data bank contained on *Zoomerang*. All *Zoomerang* data was listed in “response order”, from early to late

respondents, and the five telephone survey participants were added to the bottom of the Zoomerang data list (late respondents). Lindner and Wingenback (2002), suggest a minimum of 20 respondents to use when comparing early to late respondents. It was decided to use twenty-five late respondents, those five agents called were combined with 20 of the last group of respondents and twenty five of the earliest respondents were used. Data was analyzed comparing late responders with early responders on variables of interest. Those included total OSI score, total aJIG score and programmatic area. T-tests indicated no significant differences between early and late respondents on the total OSI. Total OSI score of early respondents ($M = 76.04$, $SD = 10.90$), late respondents ($M = 75.76$, $SD = 10.94$), $t(48) = .091$. Total aJIG scores of early respondents ($M = 34.08$, $SD = 4.16$), later respondents ($M = 34.44$, $SD = 3.76$), $t(48) = -.32$. It was, therefore, concluded that results could be generalized to the population and that nonresponse was not a threat to the validity of this study.

Summary

This chapter provided an overview on selection of participants, number of potential participants for the study, and number of total respondents. Instrumentation and the reasoning behind the selection of the OSI over the CAS were also discussed as well as the use of the aJIG to measure job satisfaction in new agents. In addition, this chapter discusses how participants were selected, contacted and distribution of survey instrument.

Zoomerang, a web based survey program, was used to facilitate the dissemination of the survey instrument for this study. *Zoomerang* is an easy to use survey instrument design tool, which allowed data to be collected and placed in a data management system for easy retrieval into SPSS. This allowed the researcher to have data collected directly by computer and not by hand, minimizing possible research bias issues.

Six objectives were measured using a variety of statistical methods. Those objectives were:

- (1) to gather demographic data on new extension employees,
- (2) examine perceived level of organizational socialization of new hires using OSI,
- (3) examine perceived level of job satisfaction of new hires using the aJIG;
- (4) Compare organizational socialization with job satisfaction to determine if there is a correlation;
- (5) Examine the differences between each method of organizational socialization and explore the impact of job satisfaction with each different method used, and
- (6) Compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction.

Table 3-1 Number of New Agents With 6 to 18 Months of Extension Experience.

States	
Alabama	11
Florida	44
Georgia	37
Kentucky	40
Louisiana	13
Mississippi	11
North Carolina	50
Oklahoma	13
South Carolina	11
Tennessee	12
Texas	36
Virginia	43
Total for Southern Region	321

Table 3-2 Total Number of Agents By Programmatic Area.

State	Programmatic Area					
	4-H	Ag.	Natural Res.	Hort.	F.C.S.	Other
Alabama *	37	21	16	6	27	18
Florida *	81	68	21	58	101	11
Georgia *	86	105	5	8	62	12
Kentucky *	128	117	2	25	120	2
Louisiana *	100	91	16	23	95	18
Mississippi *	65	42	2	17	69	35
North Carolina**	91	116	14	55	99	85
Oklahoma *	53	60	0	6	70	18
South Carolina **	40	32	13	24	14	13
Tennessee *	80	103	0	3	92	21
Texas **	79	229	12	20	200	27
Virginia*	90	49	37	19	52	3
Total Number	930	1033	138	264	1001	263
Total Percent	25.7%	28.4%	3.8%	7.3%	27.6%	7.2%

From State Extension Web Site *

From Professional development specialist **

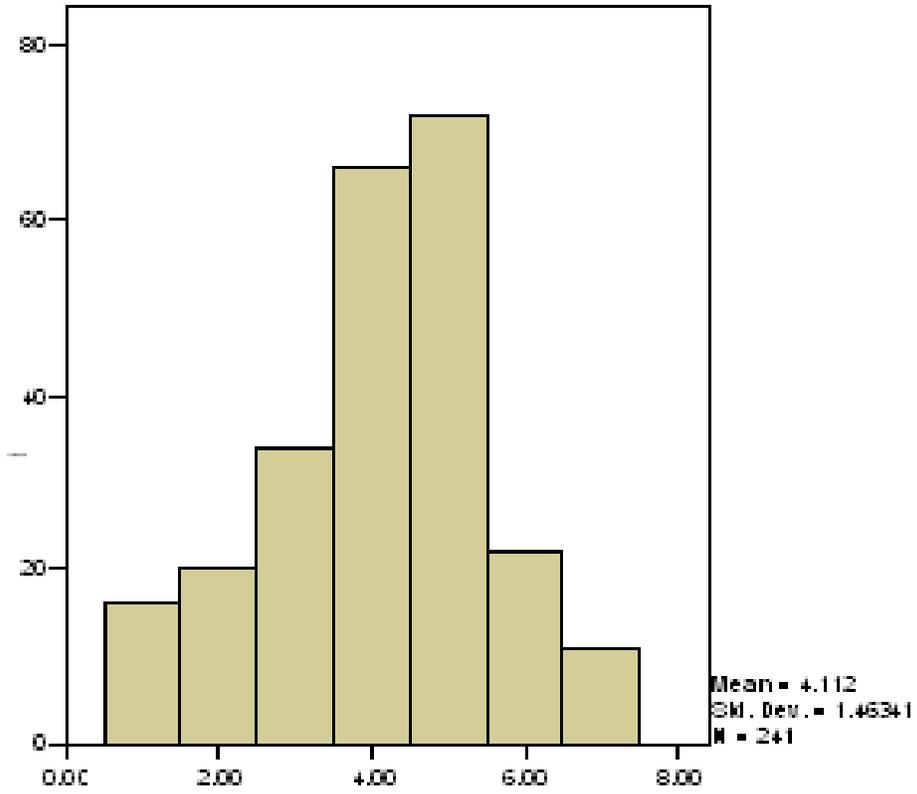


Figure 3- 1. Number of Organizational Socialization Methods Participated In

CHAPTER 4 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter presents a detailed analysis of data collected during this study. A summary of the study design is followed by discussion of the research objectives identified in Chapter 3. Included in this chapter are extensive descriptive statistics of participants, including demographic data; scores for the four domains of organizational socialization, as well as total organizational socialization score; perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension agents, a comparison of organizational socialization and job satisfaction, and an examination of the different methods of organizational socialization/orientation and job satisfaction. In addition, a summary of answers from an open ended question on the survey is also included. Five research objectives have been identified and the results of those objects are presented in this chapter.

Summary of the Study Design

This study involved collecting data by use of Internet survey research methods to measure research objectives. The population consisted of three hundred and twenty one (321) new extension agents in twelve (12) states within the southern region of the United States. Two hundred and forty-one (241) new agents responded to the survey with a response rate of 75.07%. “New agents” considered in the population had between six months and eighteen (18) months of current employment on the job. Two survey questionnaires were used for this research study, the OSI and aJIG. Additional questions were also asked that pertained to participant demographics. One open-ended “comment” question was also included in the survey instrument to gather qualitative data on participants and their experiences with the four domains of organizational socialization as well as gain insight on additional issues related to job satisfaction.

Zoomerang, an online survey development software system was utilized to develop and distribute the survey instrument to participants. All data was analyzed using the Statistical

Package for Social Science Research, version 12 and was downloaded from the *Zoomerang* data base management system into an excel document and then, transferred to SPSS for analysis.

Statistical Analysis of Research Objectives

As discussed in Chapter 1, this study was designed to examine the perception of new extension professional's level of organizational socialization with respect to job skills and duties (training domain), co-worker support, politics of the organization, the history and culture of the organization (organizational knowledge domain), and future job prospects using the OSI. In addition, this study was designed to examine perceived level of job satisfaction using JDI Research Group's Abridged Job in General Scale (aJIG). The perceived level of organizational socialization and job satisfaction were compared, and finally, the seven methods of organizational socialization employed by the different states were examined using one-way ANOVA and linear regression. ANOVA's were used to determine if any of the methods employed impacted job satisfaction, and linear regression was employed to analyze any possible differences in the number of methods a new agent participated and their perceived level of job satisfaction. Specific objectives of this study were to:

1. Gather demographic data on new extension agents in each state including: months on the job, programmatic area, and other professional positions held prior to gaining employment with the extension service.
2. Determine perceived level of organizational socialization of new extension hires using OSI.
3. Determine perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension hires using aJIG.
4. Compare the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to examine if perceived level of organizational socialization impacts job satisfaction, and examine the possible relationship of organizational socialization and job satisfaction.
5. Compare job satisfaction with type of organizational socialization taking place; (1) formal mentor, (2) informal, self selected mentor, (3) immediate orientation program (within three months after hire), (4) formal orientation program after three months of hire, (5) , web-based modules, (6) Discussing job expectations and duties with

CED/immediate supervisor and (7) discussing job expectations and duties with co-workers; to examine if any method employed by states made an impact in job satisfaction of those new agents.

6. Compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction.

A detailed analysis and discussion of the relevant data follows:

Objective 1: Gather demographic data on new extension agents in each state including: months on the job, programmatic area, and other professional extension positions held prior to gaining employment with the current employer.

The largest categories of new professionals have been employed in their current positions between 16 – 18 months (32.4%), and between 9 to 12 months on the job (31.5%). 19.9% of participants had between 13 and 15 months on the job, while 16.2% had 6 months to 8 months on the job (Table 4-1).

With respect to programmatic area, as indicated, 32.8% of new agents were in the 4-H youth development programmatic area, 22.8% of agents indicated that agriculture was the main programmatic area, 18.7% were family and consumer science agents, 10.8% were horticulture agents and 5.4% indicated their main programmatic area was natural resources. 9.5% of participants indicated “other” which include a “split” programmatic appointment, including those agents with a 50% 4-H and other (FCS, horticulture, and agriculture); EPNEP (Expanded Nutrition Education Program) and Sea Grant, and those considered to be 100% CED/immediate supervisor (Table 4-2).

In comparison to this, using the total number of agents employed within the southern region, 25.7% were considered 4-H, 28.4% were agriculture agents, 3.8% were listed as natural

resource agents, 27.6% Family and Consumer Sciences, and 7.2% were “other” (as defined above) and can be seen in Table 4-3.

In addition, 89.2% of new professionals indicated that they had not held another position within extension prior to obtaining their current extension position; this was their first professional extension position.

Objective 2: Examine perceived level of organizational socialization of new extension hires using the OSI.

Each of the twenty questions was analyzed separately, and combined scores of each of the four domains were totaled to obtain a domain score. A Pearson Correlation was then conducted to explore the strength of the relationship between the four organizational socialization domains (training, knowledge, co-worker support and future prospects). According to Cohen (1988), $r = .50 - 1.0$ is considered a large strength in relationship, there are some strong positive correlational relationships between the four domains as seen in Table 4- 4. A strong positive correlation between the knowledge domain and training domain ($r = .824$) exists, as well as a strong positive correlation between the training domain and future prospects domain ($r = .668$), and between the future prospect domain and knowledge domain ($r = .590$). A weaker relationship was found between the co-worker support domain and the training domain ($r = .449$) and co-worker support and future prospects domain ($r = .440$).

The OSI included five questions for each of the four domains. Questions associated with the “training” domain included questions 7, 11, 15, 19, and 22. Questions to determine perceived level of knowledge included 8, 12, 16, 20 and 24. Perceived level of co-worker support was ascertained through questions 9, 13, 17, 21 and 25, and questions related to future prospects included 10, 14, 18, 23, and 26. The descriptive statistics (mean, median, mode and SD) for each

of the four domains as well as the total score for the organizational socialization index are reported in Table 4-5. On a Likert-type scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), the mean score for participant's perception of adequate training was $M = 3.5$ ($SD = .81$), or between neither agree nor disagree and agree. Participant's perception of knowledge within the organization was similar with $M = 3.6$ ($SD = .65$). Perceived level of co-worker support obtained a mean score of $M = 4.3$, or agree ($SD = .57$); while perception of future prospects within the organization had a mean score of $M = 3.7$ ($SD = .75$), or slightly over neither agree nor disagree. The mean score for the total perception of organizational socialization was $M = 3.8$ ($SD = .58$), participants slightly agreed that they had been socialized/oriented well.

Scores were skewed somewhat negatively, or clustering toward the high end of the spectrum as can be seen in Figure 4-1 (mean training score), Figure 4-2 (mean knowledge score), Figure 4-3 (mean co-worker support), Figure 4-4 (mean future prospects). In addition, mean total organizational socialization score for all participants and is also skewed negatively as seen in Figure 4-5. Table 4-6 displays the total organizational score (out of 100 possible points; 5 points possible for each question). The mean total score for organizational socialization was $M = 75.8$ ($SD = 11.5$) or about average.

Objective 3: Examine perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension hires using aJIG.

A total of twenty questions are included in the aJIG, which was used to examine job satisfaction in new extension agents. There are four main areas used to measure job satisfaction on the aJIG. Those four areas include, (1) work on present job, (2) present pay, (3) opportunities for promotion, and (4) supervision. Scores were calculated using No = 1, Yes = 2 and Not Sure (or "?") = 1.5. Reverse coding was used on questions 30, 31, 34, 36, 39, 41, and 45. A total of

forty (40) points could be obtained from the all questions combined. Minimum points obtained were 24.50 while the maximum reported score was 40.0. The mean score for job satisfaction was 34.6 out of a possible 40 points with a standard deviation of 3.43 (Table 4-7).

With response to individual questions concerning aspects of job satisfaction, questions are summarized from the aJIG in Table 4-8. The answers in this category ranked the highest in any of the four categories as far as job satisfaction. As can be seen by this table, 83.4% of participants indicate that their jobs were satisfying; 86% indicated that their jobs gave them a sense of accomplishment, and 91.3% felt that their jobs were challenging.

The next highest ranking aspect of job satisfaction included questions related to supervision. In answering questions related to their immediate supervisors, 80.1% of participants indicated that their supervisor praised good work, 80.1% of participants felt that their immediate supervisor was tactful, and 78.0% indicated their they considered their supervisor “good.” Only 12.9% of participants indicated that their supervisor was “annoying”.

The lowest category of scores that dealt with job satisfaction was in the areas of present pay and opportunities for promotion. Roughly 54.4% did not feel that their income was adequate for normal expenses, 43.2% indicated that they did not feel they were paid at a fair rate, and 61.8% of the participants indicated that they were not well paid This issue was also expressed in written comments and are summarized in detail at the end of this chapter. Only 53.1% of participants felt that they had good opportunity for promotion, 45.6% of respondents felt that promotion was based on ability and only 51.9% of participants felt they had a good chance for promotion.

Objective 4: Compare the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to determine if level of socialization impacts job satisfaction and if organizational socialization and job satisfaction are correlated.

The correlation between job satisfaction and the combined score for organizational socialization can be viewed in Table 4-9. In this analysis, $r = .674$, which indicates a strong positive correlation between how participants felt they were socialized compared to their total job satisfaction score. The more participants felt they were socialized, the higher their job satisfaction.

Though not a research objective, it was decided to calculate a Pearson's Correlation to determine if the number of months on the job might have an impact on job satisfaction. It was determined that the longer participants are on the job, the lower their job satisfaction ($r = -.165$). Also, the longer they were on the job, the less likely they were to feel that their training was as adequate ($r = -.031$) and the less likely they were to feel as positive about their future prospects ($r = -.166$) (Table 4- 10). Though granted, some of these can be considered small relationships ($r = .10$ to $r = .29$) according to Cohen (1988).

Objective 5: Compare job satisfaction with type of organizational socialization taking place; (1) formal mentor, (2) informal, self selected mentor, (3) immediate orientation program (within three months after hire), (4) formal orientation program after three months of hire, (5) , web-based modules, (6) Discussing job expectations and duties with CED/immediate supervisor and (7) discussing job expectations and duties with co-workers; to examine if there are differences in methods and job satisfaction.

The first analysis conducted was a one-way ANOVA that combined all seven levels of the variable (methods of organizational socialization) to determine if the total number of methods

impacted job satisfaction. According to Garson (2007), if the computed F score is greater than 1, then there is more variance between groups than within groups and it can be inferred that the independent variable (methods of socialization) does impact the dependant variable (job satisfaction). In this case, the total number of methods employed impacted job satisfaction slightly, [$F(1, 234) = 1.74, p=.113$] (Table 4-11).

As the ANOVA analyzing all seven levels of the variable showed no difference with methods and job satisfaction, it was decided to examine and explore the impact of job satisfaction with each different organizational socialization method employed by the different states within the southern region using each method as a separate variable. As there was a correlation between months employed with extension and job satisfaction, one way between-group analysis of variance were conducted that controlled for months of extension. The each different methods of socialization explored included:

- Having a formal mentor assigned.
- New agents selecting their own mentor.
- Immediate new agent orientation- three months of less on the job.
- New agent orientation after three months on the.
- Using web modules for socialization.
- County Extension Directors discussing expectations of the job with new agent.
- Co-workers discussing expectations of the job with new agents.

The number of new agents that participated in the various new agent orientation and training methods is detailed in Table 4-12. A total of 77.6% of new agents indicated that they did review job expectations and duties with their county extension director or immediate supervisor, 75.6% indicated that they discussed job duties and responsibilities with co-workers, 62.2% were assigned a formal mentor and 42.3% had self selected a mentor. As far as a formal new agent orientation program, 60.2% indicated that they had participated in an immediate orientation

program (within three months of employment), while 46.9% had participated in an orientation program after three months of hire.

In analyzing the data, the ANOVA (Table 4-14,) comparing job satisfaction and new agents self selecting mentors was shown to be significant [$F(1, 239) = 4.554, p = .034$], as well as in participating in new agent orientation immediate after they were hired [$F(1, 239) = 6.394, p = .012$] (Table 4-15). A high level of significance was found with County Extension Directors meeting with new agents and discussing job expectations and duties [$F(1, 239) = 10.240, p = .002$] (Table 4-18). Co-workers assisting new agents with roles and responsibilities and impact on job satisfaction was marginally significant [$F(1, 239) = 2.030, p = .165$] in determining job satisfaction (Table 4-19). Other aspects of socialization were not deemed significant included assigning a formal mentor [$F(1, 239) = .535, p = .465$] (Table 4-13), holding new agent orientation after being employed for 3 months or more on the job [$F(1, 239) = 1.276, p = .281$] (Table 4-16) and the inclusion of web modules as a socialization/training method [$F(1, 239) = .515, p = .474$] (Table 4-17). As the F score was significant in several of these socialization/orientation methods, it can be concluded that the independent variable (methods of socializing/orienting new agents) does have an effect on job satisfaction.

Objective 6: An ANOVA was conducted to determine if the number of methods of organizational socialization that agents participated in impacted their job satisfaction. The total group was divided into 3 groups for analysis. Agents were grouped according to how many organizational methods they selected. A histogram was used to determine a logical break in groups. Group one (1) were those new agents that participated in one (1) to three (3) methods of organizational socialization ($N = 70$), group two (2) indicated that they participated in four (4) methods ($N = 66$), and group three (3) participated in five to seven methods of organizational

socialization ($N=105$). It was found that the number of methods that agents participated in did impact job satisfaction [$F(238) = 3.52, p = .031$] (Table 4 - 20).

In addition to the two surveys that were incorporated into this research instrument, an open-ended question was asked; “If you have any additional comments concerning your experiences with your orientation for your current position, please add those here. I welcome any comments you may have.” A total of eighty-four (84) comments were received from participants. Those comments were divided into four major theme categories that reflected different aspects of the survey (in regards to comments from participants, no states or programmatic areas are mentioned to assist with confidentiality of participants).

The first category of comments is related to orientation and training, both positive and “other” comments.

Training: Comments

- Excellent formal and informal training.
- Does an excellent job of training new employees. The trainings have been extremely useful in the completion of my job
- The training is excellent. Would like to see more visits to other counties to see how they function and see their structure. Take a deeper look at different ways to manage the coming flow of activity.
- I taught in the public schools and the training/orientation in extension is much, much better. We have been provided with the tools for success, it is up to us to decide which tools to use.
- The statewide trainings have been good but my county and local training has been horrible.
- I worked as a program assistant before accepting the job as an agent. Even though I had a good understanding of the job, I was still required to do the new agent orientation. I think that this was a very good idea. I learned a lot of additional information from this orientation.
- This training has been effective and has allowed me to network with more field faculty and campus faculty (from 4-H as well as other arms of extension) than a traditional organization’s orientation would permit.

- There is almost too much job training but yet certain areas for brand new to extension personnel are definitely missed. It's much better to have too much training than no training.
- Orientation in extension is to a great extent a function of individual maturity, experience and work ethic. Faculty members are expected to be somewhat self-sufficient and self motivated.
- I do not think that my level of satisfaction with extension reflects the quality of the orientation process. I love my job!
- Area specific orientation after the initial orientation would be beneficial because of the varied experience levels of the new agents.
- Although there is an abundance of training available to me, I still feel like I'm missing some important key elements when it comes to being the best 4-H agent I could possibly be.
- I have attended multiple orientations, which have been very informative: however, not one of them taught me how to use the information. I was not well oriented on what to do with the information I had been given.
- I appreciated the three new agent trainings that were required after the initial new agent training.
- Orientation has helped us feel part of a larger statewide group and this camaraderie has been helpful.

Training: Other Comments

- The orientation process is ok but not great. I feel that spending time with mentors is much more helpful than some of the trainings that we had as new agents.
- Instead of the normal orientation process at --, I would have preferred to spend three days every other month "shadowing" my mentor. It would have been much more beneficial to me in my position".
- Orientation was too general. I would have been more helpful if more technical information relating specifically to my general area was covered.
- Orientation was almost at the end of my first year and was very redundant – I have figured out the organization, benefits, relationships, professional goals, etc but was still required to attend.
- Although the ongoing training is thorough, it becomes repetitive and uninteresting. I think that it would be beneficial to have a training a few months into the job where new employees could request the training that they receive.

- Our university provides overall orientation, but does not provide job training. As soon as you sign your papers, you are on your own to figure it out!
- Orientation was too comprehensive, too soon after hiring and too diverse.
- I have received no one-on-one training that they said I would receive.
- I would rather have more actual examples instead of pure text.
- I wish the training program was more comprehensive in nature.
- There are many opportunities for training. However, with a rare exception, most of the trainers don't teach well. The training sessions are boring.
- I would encourage more in depth training for new agents/employees. It becomes discouraging and frustrating for new employees to not know their responsibilities and what to expect as a new employee. Any information would be helpful.
- Although my orientations were interesting they failed to provide truly useful information to develop local programs.
- Training was extremely overwhelming in which a great deal of information was overloaded on new agents.
- With respect to new agents coming into extension work for the first time, there is not enough of a training period before you are actually on the job. It is very frustrating as well as overwhelming.

The second major category of comments is related to salary and pay. As seen in the data reported above, 54.4% of participants did not feel that their income was adequate for normal expenses and 61.8% of the participants did not feel they were well paid. These comments reflect those statistics.

Salary and pay: Comments

- The main problem with me foreseeing myself in this position long term is the low level of compensation. Without knowing that a pay increase (\$10,000) will occur within the next 5 years, there will be no way that I will or can remain in this position.
- I was told that I was “over paid” and that I did not need to expect any extra compensation upon completion of my masters.

- The pay might be okay if we weren't traveling all the time or required to work weekends and night with no comp time.
- I feel that I am paid fairly for the work that I do but not for the hours that I put in at the office.
- I feel that this position is underpaid and pay should be adjusted to location.
- Another issue is the pay and "comp" time. I would not have a problem with that salary I receive if I did not have to work nights and weekends. I would be more inclined to accept my pay if I were given proper "comp" time.
- To explain the answers to my pay questions, while I feel I am adequately paid for the job, I do feel when compared to other youth programs such as agriculture education, I am underpaid in the job field.
- Why is it necessary to write a thesis to get a pay raise?

Co-workers (and mentors) and co-worker support was the third major category identified by participants.

Co-worker and Mentor Support: Comments

- I feel the staff is wonderful, including the secretaries. All questions are answered promptly and efficiently and lord knows I have many questions and I am never ignored.
- In the past, extension had mentors that new agents could shadow in their work. I think extension needs to reinstate this type of orientation, as it would give new employees a better understanding of the day-to-day job responsibilities.
- I was fortunate to have a mentor who worked well with me, quickly identified my strengths and offered meaningful unsolicited advice.
- As a new agent, many agents in other program areas have been wonderful in their advice and assistance in the orientation process.
- Experienced agents in our area did group mentoring sessions with new agents covering their areas of strength. It has all been very helpful and supportive.
- Great county staff and other county agents play a large role in training more so than the orientation sessions.

Co-worker and Mentor Support: Other Comments

- The older agents in my own program area do not take an active interest in my inquiries but seemed overworked or burned out. Consequently, I do not have much communication with the other agents in my program area that are not new agents or not young agents.
- A split appointment agent needs split responsibility mentors.
- Mentor selection was not in my area of expertise so was not able to help much.

Finally, one of the most significant contributors to job satisfaction of new extension agents is the County Extension Director/ Immediate supervisor. Comments included by participants are reflected in this category.

County Extension Directors/ Immediate supervisor: Comments

- I am definitely pleased with the position and the support that I get at the county level.
- My immediate supervisor has been very understanding of the stress on new agents and increase responsibilities as time goes on so that you are not so quickly overwhelmed in the beginning.
- My county director gives great advice and is very knowledgeable.

County Extension Directors/ Immediate supervisor: Other Comments

- Initial interactions with my supervisor may have left a negative impression and steered my career with extension.
- I don't feel my boss is much of a leader and I wish they had given me more guidance.
- I feel that the problem with the county director position is that their position is not monitored well.
- My county extension director is incompetent.
- I have had a terrible supervisor. He was very hard to work for and made life and work hard on me and everyone in the office.
- A big reason for my current frustration is due to the lack of help or guidance from our county extension director. They have not in almost nine months sat down with me and tell me any type of expectations, goals or objectives for my position. I have asked multiple times and in various ways.

SUMMARY

There were five objectives identified in this research study. The first objective identified demographic data of new extension professionals. Roughly one third of new extension professionals (32.4%) had been employed in their current position for 16 to 18 months. In addition, as far as programmatic area, 32.8% were 4-H agents, 22.8% identified themselves as agriculture agents, and 19% considered themselves Family and Consumer Science agents. Ninety percent (90%) of new extension agents had not held another job in extension prior to securing their current position. In comparison, the largest total group of agents employed in the southern region was agriculture agents (28.4%), Family and Consumer Science agents (27.6%), and 4-H agents (25.7%).

The second objective sought to examine organizational socialization scores using the OSI and four organizational socialization domains identified by Taormina. There was a large positive strength in the relationship between training and knowledge, as well as a strong positive correlation between training and future prospects.

Objective three was designed to determine the level of job satisfaction of new extension agents using the aJIG. Approximately 86% of participants reported being satisfied with their jobs however, one measure of job satisfaction relating to salary and pay was perceived as low with approximately 62% of participants feeling that they were underpaid. Comments of new professionals related to pay were also noted.

Objective four compared the level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction. There was a strong correlation between job satisfaction and organizational socialization. In addition, it was also determined that the number of months of the job negatively affected job satisfaction.

Finally, the last objective was developed to measure job satisfaction with the methods of organizational socialization used within the extension organizations. It was found that working with the county extension director to establish job expectations and duties was the most significant in determining job satisfaction of new extension professionals. It was also found that the number of organizational socialization methods agents participated in impacted job satisfaction.

A number of excellent comments were also generated from this study and were coded into major domains. Those domains included comments on training, salary and pay, co-workers and mentors, and county extension directors. A more thorough discussion of findings will be discussed in Chapter 5.

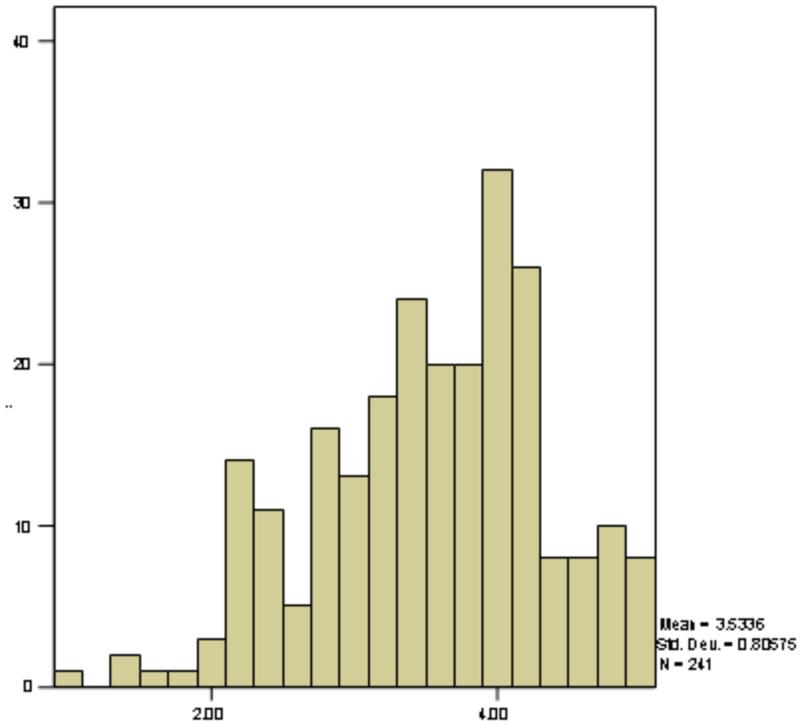


Figure 4-1. Mean Training Score

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

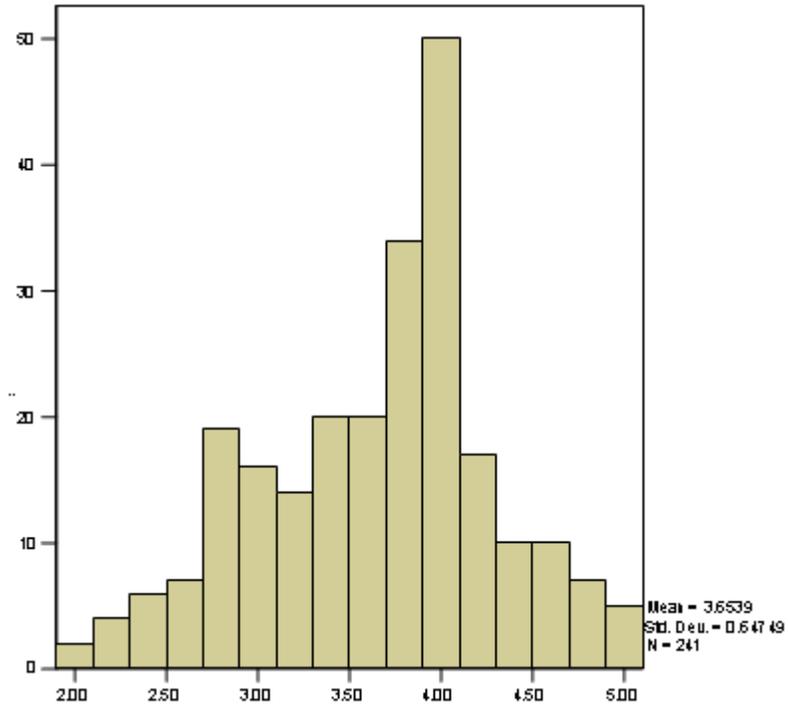


Figure 4-2. Mean Scores for Knowledge Domain.

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

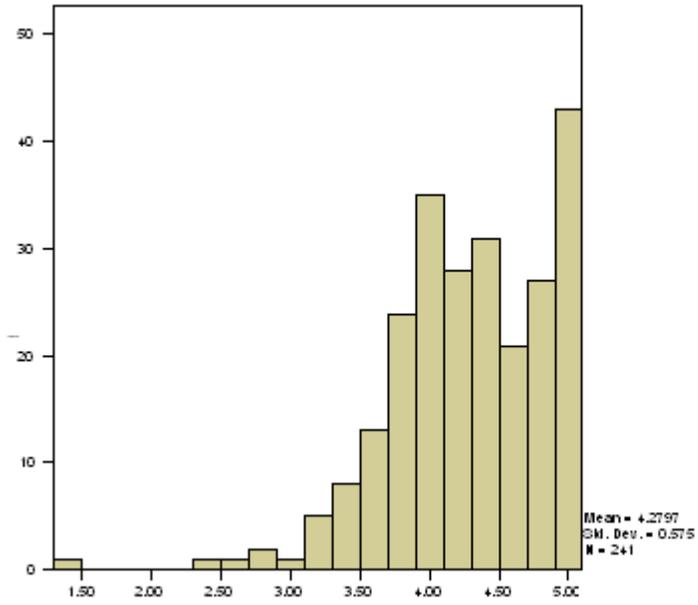


Figure 4-3. Mean Score for Co-Worker Support

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

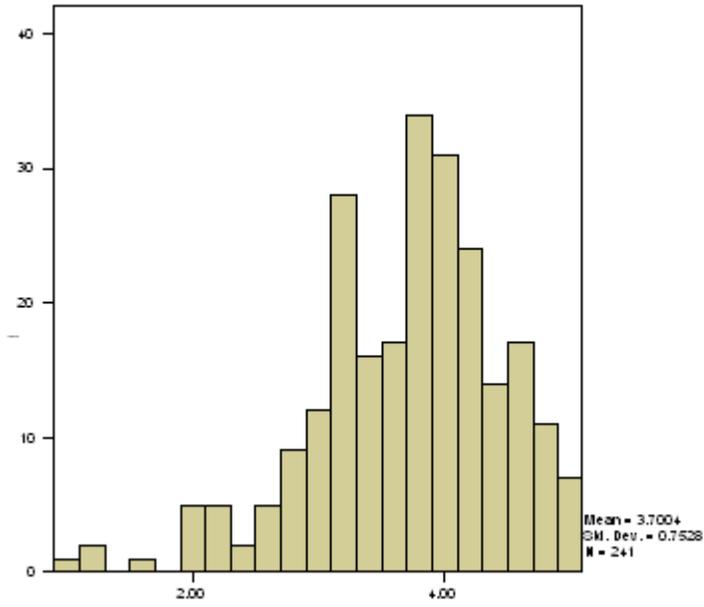


Figure 4- 4 Mean Scores for Future Prospect Domain

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

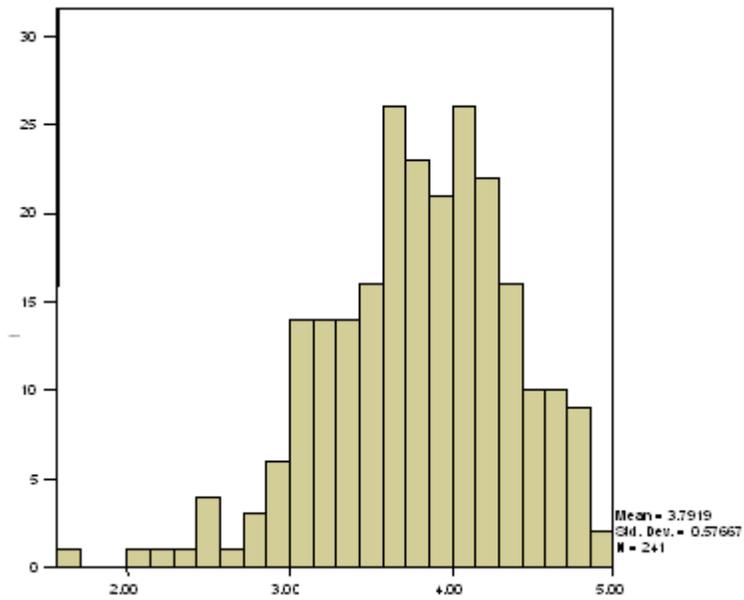


Figure 4-5 Mean Score for Total Organizational Socialization Index

Note: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Table 4-1. Months on the Job of Extension Professionals

Months on the Job:	<i>f</i>	%
6-8 months	39	16.2
9-12 months	76	31.5
13-15 months	48	19.9
16-18 months	78	32.4
Total	241	100.0

Table 4-2. Programmatic Areas of New Extension Professionals

	<i>f</i>	%
4-H Youth Development	79	32.8
Agriculture	55	22.8
Family & Consumer Sciences	45	18.7
Horticulture	26	10.8
Other, please specify	23	9.5
Natural Resources	13	5.4
Total	241	100.0

Table 4-3. Comparison of New Agents and All Agents

	New Agents <i>f</i>	%	All Agents <i>f</i>	%
Agriculture	55	22.8	1033	28.4
Family & Consumer Science	45	18.7	1001	27.6
4-H Youth	79	32.8	930	25.7
Horticulture	26	10.8	264	7.3
Other	23	9.5	263	7.2
Natural Resources	13	5.4	138	3.8

Table 4-4. Correlation Between the Four Organizational Socialization Domains

	Training Score	Knowledge Score	Coworker Support Score	Future Prospects Score
Training Score	–	.824	.449	.668
Knowledge Score	–	–	.420	.590
Coworker Support Score	–	–	–	.440
Future Prospects Score	–	–	–	–

N = 241

Table 4-5 Domain/ Combined Organizational Socialization Score

	Training Score	Knowledge Score	Coworker Support Score	Future Prospects Score	Org. Soc. Index Ave.
Mean	3.53	3.65	4.27	3.70	3.79
Median	3.60	3.80	4.40	3.80	3.85
Mode	4.00	4.00	5.00	3.80	3.95
Std. Deviation	.81	.65	.57	.75	.58

Table 4-6. OSI - Total Score

N	241
Mean	75.84
Median	77.00
Mode	79.00
Std. Deviation	11.53

Table 4-7. aJIG - Total Score

N	241
Mean	34.57
Median	35.00
Mode	35.00
Std. Deviation	3.43

Table 4 -8. aJIG Scores

<i>Questions:</i>	“Yes” <i>f</i>	%	“No” <i>f</i>	%	“?” <i>f</i>	%
<i>Work on Present Job:</i>						
With respect to your current work, do you feel your job is satisfying?	201	83.4	12	5.0	28	11.1
Does your job give you a sense of accomplishment?	208	86.3	9	3.7	24	10.0
Do you feel your present work is challenging?	220	91.3	15	6.2	6	2.5
Do you feel your present work is dull?	5	2.1	229	95.0	7	2.9
Do you feel your present job is uninteresting?	8	3.3	228	94.6	5	2.1
<i>Present Pay:</i>						
With respect to your current pay, do you feel your income is adequate for normal expenses?	79	32.8	131	54.4	31	12.9
Do you feel your current pay is fair?	99	41.1	104	43.2	38	15.8
Do you feel your current pay is insecure (not reliable)?	43	17.8	174	72.2	24	10.0
Do you feel you are well paid?	49	20.3	149	61.8	43	17.8
Do you feel you are underpaid?	133	55.2	77	32.0	31	12.9
<i>Opportunities for Promotion:</i>						
With respect to opportunity for promotion in your current job, do you feel you have good opportunity for promotion?	128	53.1	58	24.1	55	22.8
Do you feel that there is promotion based on ability?	110	45.6	74	30.7	57	23.7
Do you feel you are in a dead-end job?	24	10.	188	78.0	29	12.0
Do you feel you have a good chance for promotion?	125	51.9	56	23.2	60	24.9
Do you feel that your organization has an unfair promotion policy?	30	12.4	142	58.9	69	28.6
<i>Supervision:</i>						
With respect to your current immediate supervisor, does s/he praise good work?	193	80.1	37	15.4	11	4.6
Is your immediate supervisor tactful?	193	80.1	34	14.1	14	5.8
Is your immediate supervisor up to date?	183	75.9	33	13.7	25	10.4
Is your immediate supervisor annoying?	31	12.9	202	83.8	8	3.3
Would you consider your immediate supervisor good?	188	78.0	27	11.2	26	10.8

Table 4-9. Job Satisfaction and Organizational Socialization

	Job Sat. Total	Org. Soc. Index Total
Job Sat.Total	–	.674
Org.Soc.Index Total	–	–

N = 241

Table 4-10. Relationship Between Job Satisfaction and Months in Extension

	Job Sat. Total	Training Score	Knowledge Score	Coworker Support Score	Future Prospects Score	Org. Soc. Index Total
Months In Extension	-.165	-.031	.014	-.043	-.166	-.072

N = 241

Table 4-11. Comparison of Levels of Organizational Socialization and Job Satisfaction

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	120.89	6	20.15	1.74	.11
Within Groups	2709.90	234	11.58		
Total	2830.80	240			

Table 4-12. Methods of Organizational Socialization Checked

<i>Method Selected:</i>	Yes <i>n</i>	%	No <i>n</i>	%
Formal mentor (assigned).	150	62.2	91	37.8
Informal mentor (self selected).	102	42.3	139	57.7
Attended new agent orientation immediately after being hired (within 3 months).	145	60.2	96	39.8
Attended new agent orientation 3 months or more after being hired.	113	46.9	128	53.1
Used orientation and training web modules.	112	46.5	129	53.5
County Extension Director reviewed job expectations and duties.	187	77.6	54	22.4
Worked with co-workers to discuss job duties and responsibilities.	182	75.5	59	24.5

Table 4-13. Job Satisfaction and Assigned Formal Mentor

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	6.32	1	6.32	.54	.46
Within Groups	2824.48	239	11.89		
Total	2830.80	240			

Table 4-14. Job Satisfaction and Self Selection of Mentor

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	52.93	1	52.93	4.55	.03
Within Groups	2777.86	239	11.62		
Total	2830.80	240			

Table 4-15. Job Satisfaction and Immediate New Agent Orientation

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	73.76	1	73.76	6.39	.01
Within Groups	2757.04	239	11.53		
Total	2830.80	240			

Table 4-16 Job Satisfaction of New Agents and Orientation

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	14.96	1	14.97	1.27	.26
Within Groups	2815.83	239	11.78		
Total	2830.80	240			

Table 4-17. Job Satisfaction and Use of Web Modules

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	6.08	1	6.08	.52	.47
Within Groups	2824.71	239	11.82		
Total	2830.80	240			

Table 4-18. County Extension Directors and Effect on Job Satisfaction

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	116.31	1	116.31	10.24	.00
Within Groups	2714.49	239	11.35		
Total	2830.80	240			

Table 4-19: Job Satisfaction and Co-workers Discussion of Job Expectations and Duties

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Between Groups	23.94	1	23.94	2.04	.15
Within Groups	2806.85	239	11.74		
Total	2830.80	240			

Table 4-20. Job Satisfaction and Methods of Organizational Socialization

	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Between Groups	81.31	2	40.65	3.52	.03
Within Groups	2749.48	238	11.55		
Total	2830.80	240			

Note: 3 groups on 7 items checked. Group 1=checked 1-3 items (N=70),
 Group 2 = checked 4 items (N=66),
 Group 3 = checked 5-7 items (N=105)

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents conclusions for each of the six study objectives. This study was used to investigate organizational socialization and job satisfaction in new extension agents within the southern region by use of an Internet survey. One of the most important aspects of the study was to determine which organizational socialization method traditionally employed by the extension service might be most significant with respect to job satisfaction in these new professionals. Data analysis and results were presented in Chapter 4. This chapter presents key findings of the study, implications, limitations, recommendations, conclusions and directions for future research.

Population

The population for this study consisted of 321 new extension agents with six months to eighteen (18) months of on the job experience that were identified by their respective state's professional development specialists in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. Seventy-five (75) percent or 241 new extension agents out of 321 potential participants completed and submitted the Internet survey.

Objective of the Study

The overarching goal of this study was to identify the perceived level of organizational socialization and job satisfaction of new extension employees within the southern region and to identify possible methods of organizational socialization that may impact job satisfaction. The researcher developed the following objectives to accomplish the identified goal.

Objective 1: Gather demographic data on new extension agents in each state including: months on the job, programmatic area, and other professional positions held prior to gaining employment with the extension service.

Objective 2: Examine perceived level of organizational socialization of new extension hires using OSI.

Objective 3: Examine the perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension hires using Abridged Job in General Measurement (aJIG) instrument.

Objective 4: Compare the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to examine if perceived level of organizational socialization impacts job satisfaction, and examine the possible relationship of organizational socialization and job satisfaction.

Objective 5: Compare job satisfaction with type of organizational socialization taking place; (1) formal mentor, (2) informal, self selected mentor, (3) immediate orientation program (within three months after hire), (4) formal orientation program after three months of hire, (5) , web-based modules, (6) Discussing job expectations and duties with CED/immediate supervisor and (7) discussing job expectations and duties with co-workers; to examine if there are differences in methods and job satisfaction.

Objective 6: Compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction.

Data Collection

R.J. Taormina's (1991) Organizational Socialization Index (OSI) and the Abridged Job Descriptive Index (aJDI), developed by P.C. Smith, Kendall & Hulin in 1969, were used to measure perceived level of organizational socialization and perceived level of job satisfaction in new extension professionals. Both of these instruments were combined into one Internet survey using *Zoomerang*, an on-line survey development and management system. Participants were

invited to participate via email and reminders were sent to non-respondents, as suggested by Dillman (2000).

The OSI consisted of a twenty-question instrument, which was broken down into five questions on each of the four components of organizational socialization: knowledge, training, co-worker support and future prospects. Responses for the OSI were in the form of a 5-point Likert type scale with 1= strongly agree and 5= strongly disagree. Items were re-coded; 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree, when data was inputted into SPSS version 12. The aJDI was also a twenty-question instrument that asked questions relating to (1) work on present job, (2) present pay, (3) opportunities for promotion and (4) supervision. Responses to the aJIG were scored “Yes” = 2, “No” = 1 and “Not Sure” = 1.5.

In addition, participants were asked to identify their major programmatic area and, indicate how long they had been on their current job (six months – eight months, nine months – twelve months, thirteen months – fifteen months, and sixteen months – eighteen months). Participants were asked about their state affiliation, previous employment with the cooperative extension service, and asked to select which orientation programs and activities they had participated in during employment in their current position. The *Zoomerang* survey was utilized and designed to make sure there would be no missing data; no non-responses were allowed. Participants had to answer each question to move on to the next question. Finally, an open-ended question was asked at the end that concerned experiences with orientation in current employ.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 12 and was down loaded directly from the *Zoomerang* web site into an Excel spread sheet. The Excel data was then re-coded into SPSS version 12 for analysis.

Summary of Findings

The findings of this study point to several theoretical and practical implications. Overall, the findings suggest that the longer new agents are employed within extension, the less satisfied they are with their jobs. Most new agents also perceived their organizational socialization/ orientation to be adequate. Methods of organizational socialization that impact job satisfaction include self-selection of mentors by new agents, immediate new agent orientation (three months or less on the job) and the CED/immediate supervisor discussing job duties and expectations.

Six research objectives were developed for this study. The results of the analysis of data for each of the five objectives are presented in the following discussion.

Objective 1: Demographic data on new extension agents was explored with the number of agents with 16 to 18 months on the job accounting for roughly one-third of new professionals being hired within the southern region. The other large group consisted of extension agents with 9 – 12 months of experience. Roughly one third of new agents considered themselves within the 4-H programmatic area and one fifth were considered agriculture agents, one fifth listed themselves as family and consumer science agents. Almost 90% of new agents had not been previously employed with extension. In comparison, the largest number of total agents employed within the southern region were agriculture agents (almost 29%), family and consumer science agents (28%) and then 4-H agents, making up approximately 26% of the total.

Objective 2: This objective was used to determine the perceived level of organizational socialization of new hires using the OSI. A Pearson Correlation matrix was used to explore the strength of the relationship between the four different domains of organizational socialization: knowledge, training, co-worker support and future prospects. There was a strong positive correlation between knowledge and training. This is hardly surprising as training increases knowledge of the organization including, but not limited to, understanding organizational

terminology, politics, structure and job expectations and duties. There was also a strong positive correlation between the domains of training and future prospects. Again, training facilitates knowledge and understanding of how the promotional process works within that organization.

When reviewing mean scores for participant's perception of training, on a Likert type scale of 1= strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree, participants somewhat agreed that they had received adequate training ($M= 3.53, SD = .80$). They also felt as if they had an adequate understanding of the organization ($M = 3.65, SD = .64$). It was also felt by participants that they were well supported by co-workers ($M= 4.27, SD = .57$). The domain of co-worker support contained the highest score of all four domains. As extension professionals are highly encouraged to work in teams and groups in a variety of settings and programmatic areas, it is encouraging to discover that co-worker support ranks very highly for new extension agents. The overall mean score for organizational socialization was $M= 3.79, SD = .57$. Out of a possible score of 100 points for organizational socialization, (on a five point Likert-type scale), the mean total was 75.83 with a SD of 11.53.

Objective 3: Using the aJIG, the perceived level of job satisfaction was calculated. Out of a total of 40 points available (2 points possible for each answer); the total mean scored was $M = 34.57$ with a $SD = 3.43$. Separating the scores into their respective categories; answers relating to work on your present job indicated approximately 83% of new professionals were satisfied with their jobs in general, 86% percent felt that their current job gave them a sense of accomplishment, and 90% of participants felt that their work was challenging. It was also concluded by 95% of participants that the position was not "dull", and 94.6% felt that their jobs were interesting.

An aspect of job satisfaction that was ranked the lowest related to present pay. Only 32.8% of participants felt that their income was adequate for normal expenses, 41% felt their current pay was fair, and 20.3% indicated that they felt “well paid.” Several comments were received that dealt with the negative aspects of pay and salary which included comments about long hours, continuous weekend duty and lack of compensatory time that influenced the perceived level of pay.

Perceptions on opportunities for promotion were varied as a little over half of the participants (53%) felt that they had good opportunities for promotion, and 45% felt that promotion was based on ability. However, 78% of participants did not feel that they were in a dead-end job. When comparing this answer with the OSI for the questions related to “future prospects,” answers were somewhat similar with over half the participants (60%) agreeing or strongly agreeing that there were opportunities for advancement within the organization, and forty three percent (43%) of participants could readily anticipate prospects for promotion. These scores are possibly attributed to the fact that it typically takes a long amount of time to achieve promotion and permanent status. Some states (Florida as an example) require agents to typically wait six years before they are eligible for promotion. Regardless of these perceptions, answers on the OSI that dealt with future prospects concluded that 78% agreed or strongly agreed that they expected the organization to continue to employ them for many more years.

Objective 4: Comparing the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to determine if the level of socialization had an impact of job satisfaction was the next objective addressed in this study. A Pearson correlation matrix determined that there was a strong positive correlation between how participants felt they had been socialized with respect to their job satisfaction; the more that the participants felt that they had been socialized, the higher

their job satisfaction score. It was also discovered that the longer participants were on the job, the lower their job satisfaction, and the less likely participants were to feel that they had received adequate training.

Objective 5: The impact of socialization/orientation methods were examined and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted using all seven levels of the variable (methods) to determine if organizational socialization had an impact on job satisfaction. It was noted that a using all seven methods had a slight impact. It was then decided to do separate ANOVA's on each different method of organizational socialization, treating each method as a separate variable, controlling for months in extension, to determine if there were differences in the way that new agents are socialized/orientated compared to perceived level of job satisfaction. Notably, the methods that impacted job satisfaction were agents selecting their own mentors, agents receiving new agent orientation and training within three months of hire, and county extension directors discussing job expectations and duties with new agents. Less significant were the use of web modules, assigning a formal mentor to a new extension agent, and orientation and training after 3 months of hire.

Objective 6: Comparing the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction was undertaken using an ANOVA to determine if the number of socialization/orientation methods agents participated in impact job satisfaction. Agents were grouped according to how many organizational socialization methods they selected in question 6. A histogram was used to determine a logical break in groups. Group one (1) were those new agents that participated in one (1) to three (3) methods of organizational socialization ($N = 70$), group two (2) indicated that they participated in four (4) methods ($N = 66$), and group three (3) participated in five to seven methods of organizational socialization

($N=105$). It was found that the number of methods that agents participated in did impact job satisfaction.

Realistically, very few of these methods are done as a single unit. Most states use a variety of means to socialize/orient new agents, however; using methods that significantly impact job satisfaction could have an impact on retention rate of new extension professionals.

Limitations

This study was designed to be exploratory and was unique to the population under study. Nevertheless, there is a great deal that can be learned and applied to future research.

One of the major strengths of this study was the use of a census population; all new agents in the southern region (with the exception of Arkansas) were contacted concerning this study. A 75% return rate was achieved and was considered satisfactory for this population. There was no difference between early responders and non responders. Five new extension agents were called and each agent stated that summer was a particularly bad time to participate in a survey; however their answers were similar in nature to early responders. An additional strength of the study was the instruments used. Both instruments had been independently tested for validity and reliability by a number of different researchers. In addition, the survey was easily accessible on the web, and was short (46 questions to check and one comment question).

A weakness of this study was the time of year conducted. Summer is a particularly poor time to undertake a survey of extension agents. 4-H agents have summer programs, agriculture and natural resource agents are out in the field and taking numerous calls concerning crops, vegetables, etc. Eleven (11) agents emailed researcher to ask if they could please fill out the survey in the fall when things were “less busy.”

Conclusions and Implications

Based on the research findings, the conclusions and implications for this study are as follows:

Objective 1: Gather demographic data on new extension agents in each state including: major program area, months on the job, current state of employment, and other professional extension positions held prior to gaining employment with their current extension service.

According to data, the majority of new agents hired are in the 4-H programmatic area (33%) however 4-H agents account 25.7% of the total agents employed within the southern region, agriculture agents account for 22.8% of number of new agents hired and 28.4% of total number employed, and Family and Consumer Science agents account for 18.7% of new agents and 27.6% of total number of agents. More 4-H agents were considered new than any other group and compared to the total percentage of agents, there is a disparity. On the other side of this issue of disparity, almost 19% of new agents were in the Family and Consumer Science programmatic area, while the total number of FCS agents made up almost 28%.

A recommendation to address this issue calls for research in job satisfaction in programmatic areas. If this is a trend, it needs to be examined more closely to determine why there is a disparity in the number of new 4-H agents and FCS agents compared to the number of total 4-H and FCS agents. Working towards identifying satisfaction levels of the different program areas, and which organizational socialization methods made the large impact per programmatic group might yield some additional discoveries on agents making the decision to leave or stay within the organization.

Objective 2: Examine the perceived level of organizational socialization of new extension hires using the Organizational Socialization Index (OSI).

There is a strong positive correlation between knowledge and training. The more training a new agent receives, the higher the knowledge perception. This is consistent with the literature on new employees and training.

With respect to future prospects, or how new agents perceived their future within the organization including the promotional process, only 52% of new agents felt that they had a good chance for promotion, however 78% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the organization would employ them for many more years to come. A recommendation to address this issue would be to provide opportunities for growth and development by allowing agents to hold district and state-level leadership positions, serving on committees, and even serving as mentors to new professionals. Using the career stage model, the extension organization can reward new hires as they progress through different stages. In other words, a system that can address the five to seven years it takes to obtain a promotion in an extension position in a more proactive manner. One comment received by a new agent addressed this issue, “The main problem with me foreseeing myself in this position long term is the low level of compensation. Without knowing that a pay increase (\$10,000) will occur within the next 5 years, there will be no way that I will or can remain in this position.”

Objective 3: Examine the perceived level of job satisfaction of new extension hires using Abridged Job in General Measurement (aJIG) instrument.

For the most part, new agents were satisfied with their jobs, felt their jobs to be challenging and rewarding and gave them a sense of accomplishment. However, satisfaction with pay and salary was low with approximately 62% of agents reporting that they felt they were not well paid, and 55% felt they were underpaid. Many of the comments by new agents addressed the disparity between pay and the number of hours required to work. “The pay might be okay if

we weren't traveling all the time or required to work weekends and night with no comp time," and "I feel that I am paid fairly for the work that I do but not for the hours that I put in at the office" were consistent themes within the comments section related to present pay. Extension agents have traditionally been required to work nights and weekends as well as the traditional 40-hour a week. "Another issue is the pay and 'comp time'. I would not have a problem with that salary I receive if I did not have to work nights and weekends. I would be more inclined to accept my pay if I were given proper 'comp' time."

The first recommendation that addresses the issue of pay, salary and lack of "comp time" would be to make sure prior to hiring new agents, that time commitment issues are understood. An informal survey undertaken by Place and Higgins (2005) concluded that new agents did not understand the time commitments of the job and the nights and weekends associated with an extension position. Hiring the right person for the right job is key and allowing a potential hire to examine aspects of the position prior to interviewing, can assist with pre-conceived notions of the job itself.

The second recommendation that addresses this issue is to undertake a process that allows those hired into extension positions to have opportunities that they seek in order to stay in a position. As the literature indicates, "generation X'ers" look for opportunities to learn knowledge and skills that will assist them in further employment. Employers need to offer opportunity for growth and learning to attract those types of employees. Opengart (2000) concluded in the study on "free agents that, "continuous learning in the workplace as a key component to achieving their goal of retaining employment for the duration of their careers" is vital in being able attract top candidates. In addition, the free agent values freedom and so allowing for a more flexible schedule may be in order, as long as the mission of extension is kept as the focus.

The career stage model of Dalton, Thompson and Price (1977) can be used as a guide to assist with providing some of the information in what new, middle and late career agents desire to continue to be employed within the organization. Administrators can utilize this model to assist with increasing job satisfaction of agents in all stages of their career, in addition to new professionals.

Objective 4: Compare the perceived level of organizational socialization with job satisfaction to examine if perceived level of organizational socialization impacts job satisfaction and if organizational socialization and job satisfaction are correlated.

Research findings indicate that the perceived level of organizational socialization for new extension agents does have a positive relationship to job satisfaction, as the literature also indicates. In this analysis, $r = .674$, which indicates a strong positive correlation between how participants felt they were socialized compared to their total job satisfaction score

Objective 5: Compare job satisfaction with method of organizational socialization taking place within the organization. Those methods include: assigning a formal mentor, self selection of a mentor, immediate new agent orientation- 3 months or less on the job, new agent orientation after 3 months on the job, the use of web modules, orientation by county extension directors, and co-workers discussing expectations of the job; to determine if there were any differences and determine which method(s) if any, made the most difference.

Immediate orientation of new employees (less than three months on the job) was found to be significant with respect to job satisfaction. Working toward a method to socialize/orient and train new employees immediately has the potential to increase job satisfaction and, as the literature indicates, increase job tenure. The impact of longevity on the job also increases customer satisfaction, internal moral within the office and within the organization, and decreases

money lost to the organization. As Chandler (2004) states, it is estimated that an agent whose salary is \$30,000 could cost the organization between \$7,200 to \$30,000 in turnover costs per employee. Kutilek (2000) also concluded that Ohio extension lost approximately \$80,000 each year due to agent turnover and prolonged vacancies. These are significant costs to the organization and orienting and training new hires immediately, could have the potential to lower those costs when combined with other methods of organizational socialization that research indicates also increase job satisfaction.

Of the several organizational socialization methods employed with extension in the southern region, the impact of the C.E.D/ immediate supervisor was most significant with respect to job satisfaction for new extension professionals. C.E.D/immediate supervisors are often not hired because of their management and leadership abilities, or are hired with little or previous administrative and/or human resource management experience (Lyles & Warmbrod, 1997). They are hired because they excelled in a particular programmatic area. CED/ immediate supervisors, and those wishing to become CED/immediate supervisors, need to be trained in effective human resource management and leadership, with special focus on socializing and orienting new employees. CED/immediate supervisors are often not “credited” time to socialize new agents though the time that directors spend in this endeavor can greatly influence how long a new agent may be retained. Ensuring that CED/immediate supervisors understand that the time they spend socializing those new hires has an impact on the longevity of new extension professionals and allowing CED/immediate supervisors time to do this is highly recommended.

Continue to find creative ways to socialize new extension agents. Though web modules and the used of formal mentors did not significantly impact job satisfaction, continuing to use a variety of methods to socialize new employees, concentrating on those that made the most

impact, can help with retaining new employees. Providing these resources to those with over 18 months of employment may reduce agent turnover. This study demonstrates that the longer new agents are on the job, the less satisfied they are with the job. By providing additional support to new agents with over 18 months of experience; retaining mentoring programs, continuing to have meaningful discussions with CED/immediate supervisor on job expectations and duties, and creating additional opportunities to work with colleagues; tenure may be increased.

One of the methods of organizational socialization particular interest is that of mentors. Self-selected mentors made more of an impact than formal assigned mentors with respect to job satisfaction. One of the recommendations to address this issue would be to look at Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977). The social learning (or social cognitive) theory of Dr. Bandura emphasizes the importance of observing behaviors, attitudes and emotions of others and modeling those behaviors, attitudes and emotions. Bandura's basic premise is that we learn by observing what others are doing and is a general theory of human behavior.

There are three basic principles of this theory The first principle is attention to the modeled event and being able to rehearse the modeled event over and over, which aids in the retention of that behavior, attitude or emotion. The second principle is that individuals are more likely to adopt the behavior observed if they value the outcome. The third principle indicates that the model needs to be similar to the observer and is admired by the observer, or the model is someone the observer they can identify with. It is important that there is a degree of emotional attachment that is felt toward the individual model (Brown, 1999). This last principle was acknowledged by Bandura in "Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change" (Bandura, 1977). This component of self-efficacy assists with the increased adoption rate of the observer. According to Bandura, it is this sense of perceived self-efficacy that helps to explain

the differences in behavior between people even when they have observed the same behaviors, attitudes and emotions.

The selection of mentors, if following Bandura, would involve a mentor that was seen as similar to the new agent. That could be age, gender, programmatic area, etc. If the mentors that are selected are not perceived to be similar to the new agent, and they are not able to identify with the new agent, this may lead to mentors not having an impact in new agent job satisfaction. Self selection of mentors ranked as having a higher impact on job satisfaction than an assigned mentor. Careful selection of mentors could assist with increasing job satisfaction, using Bandura's Social Learning Theory as a guide.

Objective 6: Compare the number of organizational socialization methods participated in by new agents with respect to their job satisfaction. It was determined that the number of methods used with socializing new agents did increase job satisfaction. Using those methods that were determined to increase job satisfaction (CED/immediate supervisor discussions, immediate orientation, and self selection of mentors) as primary methods of organizational socialization is a recommendation. However, making sure that those methods are used effectively, by studying the research and literature, is highly suggested. The extension service is a research based organization and it is important that we use the research internally to find those best practices of organizational socialization make the most impact to new faculty and develop programs that are based on that research.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study was descriptive in design and was a primary step in examining organizational socialization and job satisfaction. The results of this study provide a platform for future research related to this study. This study can serve as a foundation for additional research in the areas of

organizational socialization and job satisfaction. For this reason, the following recommendations for future research based on the findings and conclusions of this study are as follows:

1. It is recommended that additional research be conducted on job satisfaction with the different programmatic areas as explained above. Are agents involved with a particular programmatic area more satisfied with their jobs than in other programmatic areas?
2. Another area of research along those lines of the above recommendation is to examine possible differences in organizational socialization and job satisfaction scores between the different programmatic areas. There has been research conducted on why agents leave (Kutilek, 2000), however, not with respect to organizational socialization and job satisfaction by programmatic area. Providing this type of research information can assist state program leaders with identifying issues pertinent to that particular programmatic area and plan for addition in service workshops, if needed.
3. A study to explore job satisfaction with agents that have been employed longer than 18 months would also be of benefit to the organization. This study should be longitudinal in nature and follow agents as they progress in their jobs. This study could assist with determining possible reasons why agents stay and/or leave their present employment and examine the period where that determination may be made.
4. Qualitative studies using agent exit interviews should be undertaken to identify possible themes in agents self-terminating their employment with extension.
5. As CED/immediate supervisors have been shown to impact job satisfaction in new agents, studies should be conducted that include the perception of county extension directors and competencies in orienting and training new agents. CED/immediate supervisor's socialization/orientation of new extension professionals significantly impacts job

satisfaction, what are those knowledge and skills with respect to socializing that CED/immediate supervisors possess or do not possess? Significance can have both negative and positive impacts on job satisfaction. Providing needed information and skills to those CED/immediate supervisors that do not feel comfortable socializing new employees could be of great benefit to the organization. CED/immediate supervisor perceptions of socializing new extension faculty are key. Those aspects can include perceived strengths and weaknesses of CED/immediate supervisor with respect to socializing new agents, possible barriers to socialization, competencies needed to successfully socialize new agents, leadership and management strengths and weaknesses.

6. Another recommendation for research is to identify characteristics of effective mentors. This would assist with being able to identify potential new agent mentors using criteria identified by new agents on effective mentors and mentoring.
7. Exploring the number of methods of organizational socialization methods used would also be of interest. There was a difference between those agents participating in one to three methods, those participating in four methods and those participating in five to seven methods, but there are more conclusions that can be gathered about this. Which of those methods (what combination) may make the most impact in job satisfaction?

Recommendations

In addition to future research that should be conducted, based upon the findings of this study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are offered:

- Study results should be made available to professional development specialists in each state in the southern region for review in the form of executive summaries.
- Salary and pay have been continuous issues within extension. As the number of new extension agents are satisfied with their current position, and often salary dollars are not available to increase pay or offer dollar incentives, the extension organization should explore other alternatives to assist with the perception of long hours and low pay. Options

could include information to extension agents on balancing work and family, time management training and adjusting expectations of the job to address perceived pay disparity issues.

- Sharing research results with County Extension Directors to increase awareness of their importance in the job satisfaction of new professionals.
- Implementing new agent orientation as soon after hire as possible to increase perception of organizational socialization and job satisfaction.
- Disseminate extension employment information to prospective new agents prior to interviewing. Information should include work hours, a summary of what extension agents may do within their jobs, professional development opportunities, etc.
- Work on identifying effective mentors for new agents and allow those new agents ample time to work in teams and groups within the county, district, region and state.
- Assist new faculty with developing a professional development plan that addresses their personal professional development needs.

Summary

In this chapter the population, objectives, data collection, data analysis, summary of findings, limitations, conclusions and recommendations were discussed in detail. Six objectives were identified for this study which included examining perceived level of organizational socialization and job satisfaction among new agents with six months to 18 months of job experience in the southern region.

It was discovered that the perceived level of organizational socialization does impact job satisfaction. It was also found that that several methods of organizational socialization highly impacted job satisfaction. Those methods were the CED/immediate supervisor discussing job expectations and duties, immediate orientation of new agents and self-selection of mentors.

In addition it was also determined that the number of organizational socialization methods used impacted job satisfaction. There was a difference in those participating in one to three methods, four methods, and five to seven methods.

In this chapter there were many implications and recommendations. Some of those include examining disparity issues among new agents hired and total agents employed, increasing opportunities for new agents to judge future prospects and provide for future growth using the career stage model, work on the perceived disparity with pay hours worked. It is recommended that prior to interview prospective employees understand the number of hours that extension agents typically work. In addition it is recommended to use the career stage ladder as a foundation for professional development.

This chapter also discussed recommendations for future research projects as well as recommendations concerning this research in general.

APPENDIX A: IRB PROTOCOL

UFIRB 02 – Social & Behavioral Research	
Protocol Submission	
Title of Protocol: A Comparison of Organizational Socialization and Job Satisfaction And New Extension Agents within the Southern Region.	
Principal Investigator: Cynthia Higgins	UFID #:
Degree / Title: PhD. Candidate Department: Agriculture Education and Communications	Mailing Address: 164 SW Mary Ethel Lane, Lake City, Florida. 32025 Email Address & Telephone Number: Email: cmah1@ufl.edu Phone: 386-758-1168
Co-Investigator(s):	UFID#:
Supervisor: Dr. Nick Place,	UFID#:
Degree / Title: PhD./ Department: Agriculture Education and Communications	Mailing Address: PO Box 110540, Gainesville, Florida, 32611-0540 Email Address & Telephone Number: Email: Phone: 352-392-0502
Date of Proposed Research: May 25, 2007	
Source of Funding <i>(A copy of the grant proposal must be submitted with this protocol if funding is involved):</i> Self funded	
Scientific Purpose of the Study: To determine the job satisfaction rate with the method of socialization new extension agents receive.	
Describe the Research Methodology in Non-Technical Language: <i>(Explain what will be done with or to the research participant.)</i> See attached methodology section, which includes the two surveys that will be utilized, if approved.	
Describe Potential Benefits and Anticipated Risks: <i>(If risk of physical, psychological or economic harm may be involved, describe the steps taken to protect participant.)</i>	

Professional development specialists from southern region states will be able to utilize information to best plan training and orientation for new extension agents assisting new extension agents in preparing for their new careers and maximizing training dollars.

Describe How Participant(s) Will Be Recruited, the Number and AGE of the Participants, and Proposed Compensation:

Participants are new extension agents within the 13 states of the southern region with at least 6 months of job experience and no more than 18 months of job experience (with the extension service). New agents will be identified by professional development specialists in each state and email addresses will be forwarded to researcher. There are approximately 300 new extension agents falling into the above criteria within the southern region. New extension professionals range in age from 22 to 65.

There will be no compensation for participation in this study.

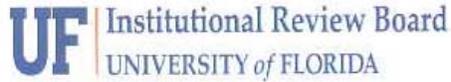
Describe the Informed Consent Process. Include a Copy of the Informed Consent Document:

Participants will be asked to participate in this internet survey and will receive a copy of the informed consent document that they will be asked to review before participating in the on line survey.

Principal Investigator(s) Signature:

Supervisor Signature:

APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL



PO Box 112250
Gainesville, FL 32611-2250
352-392-0433 (Phone)
352-392-9234 (Fax)
irb2@ufl.edu

DATE: May 23, 2007

TO: Cynthia Higgins
164 SW Mary Ethel Lane
Lake City, FL 32025

FROM: Ira S. Fischler, PhD, Chair 
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Approval of Protocol #2007-U-0487

TITLE: A Comparison of Organizational Socialization and Job Satisfaction and New Extension Agents within the Southern Region

SPONSOR: None

I am pleased to advise you that the University of Florida Institutional Review Board has recommended approval of this protocol. Based on its review, the UFIRB determined that this research presents no more than minimal risk to participants, and based on 45 CFR 46.117(c), authorizes you to administer the informed consent process as specified in the protocol.

If you wish to make any changes to this protocol, *including the need to increase the number of participants authorized*, you must disclose your plans before you implement them so that the Board can assess their impact on your protocol. In addition, you must report to the Board any unexpected complications that affect your participants.

If you have not completed this protocol by May 17, 2008, please telephone our office (392-0433), and we will discuss the renewal process with you. It is important that you keep your Department Chair informed about the status of this research protocol.

ISF:dl

APPENDIX C: AJIG PERMISSION

Dear Cynthia,

Attached please find the aJDI. We understand your concerns about confidentiality, so leaving the person's zip code out is fine with us. We do ask that you include the company's zip code. As per the agreement, you have 350 uses of the measure. If you should need more uses at a later date please let me know.

I have also attached another document that shows which items are to be reverse scored. For reverse scored items, Yes = 0, No = 3, and ? = 1. For items that are not reverse scored, Yes = 3, No = 0, and ? = 1. Next, add up the item scores for each facet on the measure. You should not have one overall score (i.e. you should not add up all of the facet scores). To get an overall idea of job satisfaction you should look at the sub-score for the Job in General scale. For each facet, the highest score that can be obtained is a 15. For the JIG, the highest score is a 40.

If you have missing values for some items code those as "0". If you have more than 1 missing value per facet, you cannot create a facet score.

Maya

Maya Yankelevich

JDI Research Assistant

Department of Psychology

Bowling Green State University

Voice: 419.372.8247

Fax: 419.372.6013

APPENDIX D: R.J. TAORMINA PERMISSION (OSI)

Dear Cindy,

Many thanks for your interest in my conception of organizational socialization, and for letting me know about it! If you are planning to gather data on the socialization of employees, you might be interested in the **updated** measure of socialization, namely, the one I published in 2004. I am attaching this paper to facilitate your research (the new OSI measure is included in that publication).

I am not familiar with the recruitment, training, work, etc., of extension agents, so I am not sure what else I can help you with at this time. But since you have read my theory paper (the 1997 model), you should have a rather complete idea of how socialization is seen from the employee's perspective.... I think the success of my model has been due to the fact that I examine socialization, and measure it, from the employee's point of view, rather than from the manager's perspective. If you look at the early work by John van Maanen & Edgar Schein, you will see that they look at socialization almost exclusively from the manager's point of view, which is to "shape" or "mold" workers into what they want them to be, and their theory and research focused only on methods to achieve that.

The employee, on the other hand, is not an automaton, evaluates the areas in which socialization is taking place, and determines for himself or herself how successful the organization has been in those areas. Forgive me for "preaching" on this topic (regarding the point of view), but I have done a considerable amount of empirical research on this topic using the OSI, and it invariably is strongly related to a variety of positive outcomes, such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction (as shown in the 2004 paper), and the OSI can be very revealing as a "diagnostic" instrument to determine the strong and weak areas of an organization's socialization endeavors. As an example, you might want to look at my paper (with Carrie Law) on socialization and nurse burnout. This paper is often cited in medical journals... and it shows how important Training (one of the four OS domains) is to preventing nurse burnout. I am attaching that paper as well (in case you cannot find it).

I wish you great success with your dissertation and with using my theoretical model (and measure).

I also look forward to hearing how successful you were with them.

Best regards,

Robert Taormina
University of Macau

APPENDIX E: PRELIMINARY LETTER (EMAIL)

Dear

My name is Cindy Higgins. I am the 4-H agent in Columbia County, Florida and also finishing up my PhD in Extension Leadership at the University of Florida. For my research project, I am conducting a study dealing with how new agents are socialized/oriented into their jobs in extension and comparing the method of orientation to the level of job satisfaction. Your email was provided to me by your state professional development specialist and has been approved by the Dean of Extension at your University. As a 4-H agent for 22 years, I find this topic very interesting and very important. I am hoping that this study will allow professional development specialists in each of the 13 states to plan and carry out those socialization/ orientation programs that have the most impact for new agents. This is where you come in. I need your input to complete this study. Your perceptions are vital and your participation has far reaching impacts. This survey will take only about 15 minutes of your time. I have included the informed consent form for your review, as required by the University of Florida, as well as the link to the survey itself. The results of this survey will only be reported as a southern region study and no individual state data will be available. As with any survey, your participation is completely voluntary but I hope that you will be able to assist me, as well as those new agents now entering the field of extension. I have included the informed consent required by the University, and at the end of that, the web site to take the survey. **Please insert this number () into question #1. It will help me to send out reminder emails as the survey progresses.**

Thank you in advance for your participation in this study. Please feel free to contact me at this email address, and/or Dr. Nick Place, my committee chair (nplace@ufl.edu) if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to your participation.

Cindy

Informed Consent:

Protocol Title: A Comparison of Organizational Socialization and Job Satisfaction with New Extension Agents within the Southern Region. Protocol # 2007-U-0487.

Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this study is to compare job satisfaction of new agents with method(s) in which they were socialized or oriented into the Cooperative Extension Service. This study is designed to assist professional development specialists determine the most effective methods of socializing and orienting new agents to extension. This is a southern region study and there are 13 states and approximately 300 new extension agents that will be involved. This information will be used as a total southern region study; there will be no individual state data. **Time Required:** It is anticipated that it will take no more than 20 minutes to fill out the survey. **Risks and Benefits:** All data will be kept strictly confidential, and reported only as a total southern region report, there are no risks associated with this study. Benefits include being a part of a study that will help focus training dollars on the methods of socialization and

orientation found most effective in this study. **Compensation:** There is no compensation associated with this study. **Confidentiality:** Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. All data will be coded together using “*zoomerang*” (a data management and survey system) using SPSS. A southern region report will be generated. No individual state’s data will be reported. **Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

Right to withdraw from the study: You have the right to withdraw from this study at anytime without consequence. **Whom to contact if you have questions about this study:** Cynthia Higgins, Graduate Student and Columbia County 4-H Coordinator, 164 SW Mary Ethel Lane, Lake City, Florida. 32025. (386) 758-1168. Dr. Nick Place, Graduate Chair, University of Florida, P.O. Box 110540, Gainesville, FL. 32611-0540. (352) 392-0502.

Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in this study:

UFIRB Office. Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250. (352) 392-0433.

Agreement: I have read the procedure described above. By logging on and participating in this Internet survey, I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.

Please click on this web site, which will take you directly to the survey. Thank you so much.

<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB226FQMK9JBW>

APPENDIX F: FIRST REMINDER LETTER (EMAIL)

Dear ,

Just a reminder, would you please take the time to fill out the survey below if you haven't done so already. It will take only about 10 minutes of your time. If you are unable to participate because you haven't been employed at least 6 months and no more than 18 months, please let me know so that I can cross that number off my list. I have included the original letter; consent form and Internet site of the survey for your convenience.

Thanks so much for your help with this.

Cindy

My name is Cindy Higgins. I am the 4-H agent in Columbia County, Florida and also finishing up my PhD in Extension Leadership at the University of Florida. For my research project, I am conducting a study dealing with how new agents are socialized/oriented into their jobs in extension and comparing the method of orientation to the level of job satisfaction. Your email was provided to me by your state professional development specialist and has been approved by the Dean of Extension at your University. As a 4-H agent for 22 years, I find this topic very interesting and very important. I am hoping that this study will allow professional development specialists in each of the 13 states to plan and carry out those socialization/ orientation programs that have the most impact for new agents. This is where you come in. I need your input to complete this study. Your perceptions are vital and your participation has far reaching impacts. This survey will take only about 15 minutes of your time. I have included the informed consent form for your review, as required by the University of Florida, as well as the link to the survey itself. The results of this survey will only be reported as a southern region study and no individual state data will be available. As with any survey, your participation is completely voluntary but I hope that you will be able to assist me, as well as those new agents now entering the field of extension. I have included the informed consent required by the University, and at the end of that, the web site to take the survey. **Please insert this number () into question #1. It will help me to send out reminder emails as the survey progresses.**

Thank you in advance for your participation in this study. Please feel free to contact me at this email address, and/or Dr. Nick Place, my committee chair (nplace@ufl.edu) if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to your participation.

Cindy

Informed Consent:

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Service. This study is designed to assist professional development specialists determine the most effective methods of socializing and orienting new agents to extension. This is a southern region study and there are 13 states and approximately 300 new extension agents that will be involved. This information will be used as a total southern region study; there will be no individual state data. **Time Required:** It is anticipated that it will take no more than 20 minutes to fill out the survey. **Risks and Benefits:** All data will be kept strictly confidential, and reported only as a total southern region report, there are no risks associated with this study. Benefits include being a part of a study that will help focus training dollars on the methods of socialization and orientation found most effective in this study. **Compensation:** There is no compensation associated with this study. **Confidentiality:** Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. All data will be coded together using “zoomerang” (a data management and survey system) using SPSS. A southern region report will be generated. No individual state’s data will be reported. **Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

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Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in this study:

UFIRB Office. Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250. (352) 392-0433.

Agreement: I have read the procedure described above. By logging on and participating in this Internet survey, I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.

Please click on this web site, which will take you directly to the survey. Thank you so much.

<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB226FQMK9JBW>

APPENDIX G: FINAL REMINDER LETTER (EMAIL)

Dear ,

This is the last chance to participate in this very important survey. Would you please take the time to fill out the survey below if you haven't done so already? It will take only about 10 minutes of your time. If you are unable to participate because you haven't been employed at least 6 months and no more than 18 months, please let me know so that I can cross that number off my list. I have included the original letter; consent form and Internet site of the survey for your convenience.

Thanks so much for your help with this.

Cindy

My name is Cindy Higgins. I am the 4-H agent in Columbia County, Florida and also finishing up my PhD in Extension Leadership at the University of Florida. For my research project, I am conducting a study dealing with how new agents are socialized/oriented into their jobs in extension and comparing the method of orientation to the level of job satisfaction. Your email was provided to me by your state professional development specialist and has been approved by the Dean of Extension at your University. As a 4-H agent for 22 years, I find this topic very interesting and very important. I am hoping that this study will allow professional development specialists in each of the 13 states to plan and carry out those socialization/ orientation programs that have the most impact for new agents. This is where you come in. I need your input to complete this study. Your perceptions are vital and your participation has far reaching impacts. This survey will take only about 15 minutes of your time. I have included the informed consent form for your review, as required by the University of Florida, as well as the link to the survey itself. The results of this survey will only be reported as a southern region study and no individual state data will be available. As with any survey, your participation is completely voluntary but I hope that you will be able to assist me, as well as those new agents now entering the field of extension. I have included the informed consent required by the University, and at the end of that, the web site to take the survey. **Please insert this number () into question #1. It will help me to send out reminder emails as the survey progresses.**

Thank you in advance for your participation in this study. Please feel free to contact me at this email address, and/or Dr. Nick Place, my committee chair (nplace@ufl.edu) if you have any questions or concerns. I look forward to your participation.

Cindy

Informed Consent:

Protocol Title: A Comparison of Organizational Socialization and Job Satisfaction with New Extension Agents within the Southern Region. Protocol # 2007-U-0487.

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Purpose of the research study: The purpose of this study is to compare job satisfaction of new agents with method(s) in which they were socialized or oriented into the Cooperative Extension Service. This study is designed to assist professional development specialists determine the most effective methods of socializing and orienting new agents to extension. This is a southern region study and there are 13 states and approximately 300 new extension agents that will be involved. This information will be used as a total southern region study; there will be no individual state data. **Time Required:** It is anticipated that it will take no more than 20 minutes to fill out the survey. **Risks and Benefits:** All data will be kept strictly confidential, and reported only as a total southern region report, there are no risks associated with this study. Benefits include being a part of a study that will help focus training dollars on the methods of socialization and orientation found most effective in this study. **Compensation:** There is no compensation associated with this study. **Confidentiality:** Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. All data will be coded together using “*zoomerang*” (a data management and survey system) using SPSS. A southern region report will be generated. No individual state’s data will be reported. **Voluntary Participation:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

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Please click on this web site, which will take you directly to the survey. Thank you so much.

<http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB226FQMK9JBW>

APPENDIX H: AJIG INDEX (ABRIDGED JOB IN GENERAL INDEX)

© Bowling Green State University, 1975, 1985, 1997

Scoring Key aJDI & aJIG:

WORK ON PRESENT JOB

	Yes	No	?
Satisfying	3	0	1
Gives sense of accomplishment	3	0	1
Challenging	3	0	1
Dull	0	3	1
Uninteresting	0	3	1

PRESENT PAY

	Yes	No	?
Income adequate for normal expenses	3	0	1
Fair	3	0	1
Insecure	0	3	1
Well paid	3	0	1
Underpaid	0	3	1

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROMOTION

	Yes	No	?
Good opportunities for promotion	3	0	1
Promotion on ability	3	0	1
Dead-end job	0	3	1
Good chance for promotion	3	0	1
Unfair promotion policy	0	3	1

SUPERVISION

	Yes	No	?
Praises good work	3	0	1
Tactful	3	0	1
Up-to-date	3	0	1
Annoying	0	3	1
Bad	0	3	1

* This measurement instrument must be purchased from JDI Associates. Access to the actual instrument is limited but the scoring key was available to assist with dissertation proposal.

APPENDIX I: ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION INDEX (OSI)

Please answer the following:	5	4	3	2	1
This organization has provided excellent job training for me.					
I know very well how to get things done in this organization.					
Other workers have helped me on the job in various ways.					
There are many chances for a good career with this organization.					
The training in this organization has enabled me to do my job very well.					
I have a full understanding of my duties in this organization.					
My co-workers are usually willing to offer their assistance or advice.					
I am happy with the rewards offered by this organization.					
This organization offers thorough training to improve employee job skills.					
The goals of this organization have been made very explicit.					
Most of my co-workers have accepted me as a member of this organization.					
Opportunities for advancement in this organization are available to almost everyone.					
Instructions given by my supervisor have been valuable in helping me do better work.					
I have a good knowledge of the way this organization operates.					
My co-workers have done a great deal to help me adjust to this organization.					
I can readily anticipate my prospects for promotion in this organization.					
The type of job training given by this organization is highly effective.					
This organization's objectives are understood by almost everyone who works here.					
My relationship with other workers in this organization is good.					
I expect that this organization will continue to employ me for many more years.					

Note: Organizational Socialization Inventory: 5 = strongly agree 4 = agree, 3 = neither agree nor Disagree, 2 = disagree, 1 = strongly disagree.

APPENDIX J: ZOOMERANG SURVEY

Organizational Socialization and Job Satisfaction for New Extension Professionals

1. Please type in the code that you were given in your email asking you to participate in this survey.

2. Please indicate your major program area. Please select the best one that reflects your job description.

- Agriculture
- Natural Resources
- Horticulture
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- 4-H Youth Development
- Other, please specify

3. Please indicate the number of months you have been employed in your current position.

- 6 months – 8 months
- 9 months – 12 months
- 13 months – 15 months
- 16 months – 18 months

4. Please indicate which state you are currently employed with. (Remember, this information will be held in strict confidence).

- Alabama
- Arkansas
- Georgia
- Florida

- Kentucky
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- North Carolina
- Oklahoma
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Virginia
- Prefer not to answer

5. Have you ever been employed in extension in another state?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please indicate total number of months or years employed in extension in another state.

6. In your present extension position, what orientation programs and activities have you participated in? Please check all that apply.

- I have or have had a formal mentor (one that was assigned to me).
- I have or have had an informal mentor (one I selected myself).
- I attended new agent orientation immediately after being hired (within 3 months).
- I attended new agent orientation 3 months or more after being hired.
- I used orientation and training web modules.
- I have met with my county extension director to review job expectations and duties.

I have worked with my co-workers to discuss my job duties and expectations.

I have not participated in any of the above.

Other, please specify.

7. This organization has provided excellent job training for me.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1

2

3

4

5

8. I know very well how to get things done in this organization.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1

2

3

4

5

9. Other workers have helped me on the job in various ways.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1

2

3

4

5

10. There are many chances for a good career with this organization.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1

2

3

4

5

11. The training in this organization has enabled me to do my job very well.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1

2

3

4

5

12. I have a full understanding of my duties in this organization.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

13. My co-workers are usually willing to offer their assistance or advice.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

14. I am happy with the rewards offered by this organization.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

15. This organization offers thorough training to improve employee job skills.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

16. The goals of this organization have been made very explicit.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

17. Most of my co-workers have accepted me as a member of this organization.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

18. Opportunities for advancement in this organization are available to almost everyone.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

19. Instructions given by my supervisor have been valuable in helping me to do better work.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

20. I have good knowledge of the way this organization operates.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

21. My co-workers have done a great deal to help me adjust to this organization.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

22. The type of job training given to me by this organization is highly effective.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

23. I can readily anticipate my prospects for promotion in this organization.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

24. This organizations objectives are understood by almost everyone who works here.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

25. My relationship with other workers in this organization are good.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

26. I expect that this organization will continue to employ me for many more years.

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

1 2 3 4 5

27. With respect to your current work, do you feel your job is satisfying?

Yes

No

Not sure

28. Does your current job give you a sense of accomplishment?

Yes

No

Not sure

29. Do you feel your present work is challenging?

Yes

No

Not sure

30. Do you feel your present work is dull?

Yes

No

Not sure

31. Do you feel your present job is uninteresting?

Yes

No

Not sure

32. With respect to your current pay, do you feel your income is adequate for normal expenses?

Yes

No

Not sure

33. Do you feel your current pay is fair?

Yes

No

Not sure

34. Do you feel your current pay is insecure (not reliable)?

Yes

No

Not sure

35. Do you feel you are well paid?

Yes

No

Not sure

36. Do you feel you are underpaid?

Yes

No

Not sure

37. With respect to opportunities for promotion in your current job, do you feel that you have good opportunities for promotion?

Yes

No

Not sure

38. Do you feel that there is promotion based on ability?

Yes

No

Not sure

39. Do you feel that you are in a dead-end job?

Yes

No

Not sure

40. Do you feel you have a good chance for promotion in your current job?

Yes

No

Not sure

41. Do you feel that your organization has an unfair promotion policy?

Yes

No

Not sure

42. With respect to your current immediate supervisor, does she/he praise good work?

Yes

No

Not sure

43. Is your immediate supervisor tactful?

Yes

No

Not sure

44. As far as management and supervision, is your supervisor up to date?

Yes

No

Not sure

45. Is your immediate supervisor annoying?

Yes

No

Not sure

46. Would you consider your immediate supervisor good?

Yes

No

Not sure

47. If you have any addition comments concerning your experiences with your orientation for your current position, please add those here. I welcome any comments you may have.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Cynthia Higgins was born in Barranquilla, Columbia, South America in 1959. The oldest of two children, she traveled the world as a child, lived in four different countries and six different states before attending West Virginia University in 1978. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in animal sciences from WVU in 1981, and a Master's of Science Degree in agriculture education in 1984, also from West Virginia University.

Upon graduating from college, Cynthia taught high school agriculture from 1984 -1986 at Morgantown High School in Morgantown, West Virginia. She was one of only four female agriculture instructors in the state. During that time, she met Danny Bell at the wedding of her friend, and soon after the two decided to get married.

Prior to the wedding, Cynthia applied for and acquired a position as the Columbia County 4-H Coordinator in 1986 where she remains today. She and Danny were married a month after starting the job in Buffalo, New York, then home of her parents, on August 2, 1986.

Cynthia began working part time on her PhD in Extension Leadership in 2003, while still working full time as the 4-H Coordinator. A six month sabbatical was granted in 2005 that allowed Cynthia to finish the majority of her course work. Cynthia plans to graduate in December 2007. Upon completion of her PhD. Program, Cynthia plans on continuing work in the extension field in some capacity.

Cynthia and Danny have two sons: David, age 16 (a high school junior) and John, age 11 (a middle school student). Both boys are avid soccer players, Danny serves as both school and recreational soccer coach, and Cynthia serves as "official soccer mom".