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UMI
FACTORS RELATED TO OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION AGENTS PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANIZATIONAL JUSTICE AND JOB SATISFACTION

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
The Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
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The Ohio State University
2002

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ABSTRACT

Ohio State University Extension is a dynamic organization that continues to undergo tremendous changes that ultimately affect both its clientele and employees. Extension county agents face many of the challenges directly as they address budget reductions; implementation of new policies, procedures, and guidelines; and balancing traditional and non-traditional position responsibilities. The extensive changes encountered by O.S.U. Extension employees likely impact their perceptions of justice in the organization and their levels of job satisfaction.

The researcher investigated factors related to O.S.U. Extension county agents’ perceptions of organizational justice, and current levels of job satisfaction. The descriptive-correlational study utilized a census of O.S.U. Extension agents having 100% appointments in a county office. Data were collected utilizing Beugre’s organizational justice instrument and Werner’s job satisfaction instrument. Data were also collected describing O.S.U. Extension county agents’ participation in and initiation of continuing professional education, based on frameworks provided by Houle, and Knowles, Holton, and Swanson.
The findings suggest that O.S.U. Extension county agents have an average perception of organizational justice; positive perceptions of procedural and interactional justice; and negative perceptions of distributive and systemic justice. Respondents’ current level of overall job satisfaction was positive. Positive correlations were found between job satisfaction and perception of organizational, interactional, procedural, and systemic justice. O.S.U. Extension county agents participate at a high rate in a variety of continuing professional development opportunities and do so primarily through self-initiation.

Correlations were found between perception of organizational justice and each construct and: Extension district of employment; age; highest degree completed; years with O.S.U. Extension; perception of organizational, interactional, procedural, and systemic justice and program area and academic major; race/ethnicity and perception of distributive justice. Correlations were found between job satisfaction and race/ethnicity; academic major; highest degree completed; years with other Extension service; Extension district of employment; and program area.

Based on the findings, the researcher concludes that O.S.U. Extension county agents have an average overall perception of organizational justice, yet are very satisfied with their job. Extension county agents likely gain satisfaction from the opportunity for interaction with co-workers, controlling their pace of work, and opportunity for input into decision-making.
Dedicated to Kerisha, Ashtin, and Collin:
I hope all your dreams come true!
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Land-Grant University concept came into existence by the passage of the Morrill Act of 1862 and has played an important role in our society since it’s beginning over 200 years ago (Sanderson, 1988). This legislation granted the sale of state land with the proceeds invested to support at least one college in each state. The primary objective of the legislation, “shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and mechanical sciences in order to promote the liberal and practical education of industrial classes” (Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862, p.1). It was out of this important legislation that the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 gained momentum and found its role in society.

The Cooperative Extension Service received formal authority to conduct community-based programming with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 (Sanderson, 1988). The purpose of Extension, as documented by the legislation, “is to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States, useful and practical
information subjects relating to Agriculture and Home Economics, and to encourage the application of the same" (Smith Lever Act of 1914, pg. 1). Furthermore, Section 2 of the Act specifies that Extension would provide instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture, home economics, and related subjects to persons not attending college and giving information through demonstrations, publications, and other methods. The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 created the Cooperative Extension Service (Sanderson, 1988). The Act called for:

---cooperative agriculture extension work between agricultural extension and the agricultural colleges....and the United States Department of Agriculture, in order to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects related to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same...Extension work shall consist of giving instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture and home economics to persons not attending or resident in said colleges,... and imparting to such persons information on said subjects through field demonstrations, publications, and otherwise; and this work shall be carried on in such manner as may be mutually agreed upon by the Secretary of Agriculture and state agricultural college or colleges receiving the benefits of this Act. (p. 26)

Sanderson stated “and with that, the land-grant system became complete, its Extension arm firmly supported by a cooperative state and federal funding procedure
and a relationship, over time, has grown beyond the jealousies and takeover fears that arose in the early congressional debates” (p. 26).

In 1953, Congress approved a significant change in the wording of the Smith-Lever Act (Sanderson). The original Act called for Extension work in agriculture and home economics; since 1953, the Act has read, “agriculture and home economics and subjects relating thereto” (p. XX). The report of the House Committee on Agriculture (Sanderson) clarifies the congressional intent behind the change:

The phrase “and subjects relating thereto” is added to the language of the Smith-Lever Act to make certain that the new legislation will authorize all those Extension activities, such as 4-H Club work, education in rural health and sanitation, and similar aspects of the manifold Extension program hereto for authorized and now being carried on under existing law. (p. 29)

Therefore the legislative beginnings of the 4-H program as a part of the Cooperative Extension System, an arm of the land grant university system came into being. Rasmussen (1989, p. 3) believed that the “Cooperative Extension System today is a unique achievement in American education. It is an agency for change and for problem solving, catalyst for individual and group action with a history of seventy-five years of public service.”

The current Cooperative Extension Service’s leadership is provided from a national structure and is administered under the responsibilities of the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES, 2001). Extension’s
base programs are its major educational emphasis and include: (a) agriculture, (b) community resources and economic development, (c) family development and resource management, (d) 4-H and youth development, (e) leadership and volunteer development, (f) natural resource and environmental management, and (g) nutrition, diet, and health. Initiatives may arise from one or more of these base programs to receive special emphasis over a specific time period. According to Framing the Future: Strategic Framework for a System of Partnership (1995):

Extension’s vision foresees people learning from and with one another as they create knowledge and put it to work. Scholarship is central. Extension draws from the knowledge base of the entire land-grant network and other colleges and universities and collaborations with public and private organizations, businesses, and industries. Actions emphasize prioritizing programs, realizing diversity, broadening resources acquisition, renewing the organization, and sharing leadership. Strengthening Extension as a system of partnerships is an overarching theme. (Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, p.12)

Extension work in Ohio began much earlier than 1914, under the direction of A.B. Graham who was employed as Superintendent of Extension on July 1, 1905 (McCormick & McCormick, 1984). Much of Graham’s plan included a focus on elevating standards of living in rural communities; providing knowledge to boys about agricultural sciences and to girls information on domestic living; educating
adults on simple agricultural science; acquainting boys and girls with their environment; and emphasizing the importance of hard work and industry (O.S.U. Extension). The work initially implemented by A.B. Graham engaged individuals, both youth and adults, entire families, and whole communities through a variety of educational delivery methods, many of which are still used today in Extension education program delivery (O.S.U. Extension).

Background of the Problem

Organizations in existence for nearly 100 years, including O.S.U. Extension, must evolve to meet the needs of an increasingly complex society. As the organizations have changed, so to have reward structures and resource allocation, operating procedures, and the formal and informal communication patterns between staff and administrators that are distributed over a large geographic area. Further complicating the programmatic and internal organizational changes, for O.S.U. Extension, is the autonomy of individual employees and their evolving roles and responsibilities, coupled with the flexibility afforded to supervisors when carrying out their administrative responsibilities. For nearly two years, O.S.U. Extension has been preparing for and now faces many challenges, including balancing the budget as government support decreases, addressing pay equity among individual employees and responding to salary increase and legislative mandates, employee work loads, promotion and tenure review, and performance evaluation standards.

There is a need to understand the perceptions of organizational justice in large, complex organizations, such as O.S.U. Extension, especially during a time of
budget reductions and reallocations. O.S.U. Extension is evolving and encountering many changes that ultimately may affect county-based employees, volunteers, participants, and entire communities. Organizational leaders are being challenged to develop strategies to address financial cutbacks and legislative mandates, conduct performance evaluations, award financial resources (both in terms of salary and program development support), and support evolving promotion and tenure procedures. During this critical process, it is important to understand and respond to Extension agents’ perceptions of organizational justice to ensure that employees feel they are being treated fairly and are satisfied in their positions.

O.S.U Extension continues to undergo tremendous change that will ultimately affect both clientele and employees. County Extension agents currently face numerous challenges as they seek to meet the needs of their clientele, both youth and adults. Currently, Extension county agents face budgetary cut-backs affecting personnel and operations; the likelihood of increased volunteer screening requirements that may significantly increase workload; balancing traditional programs with expectations to engage non-traditional program audiences; emerging community and university partnerships, developing new, innovative programs; understanding legal and programmatic risks; and the need to balance administrative responsibilities (e.g. volunteer management, county operations, staffing) with the delivery of quality educational programs.

Organizational justice refers to individual and group perceptions of the fairness of treatment received from organizations, including their behavioral
reactions to such perceptions (James, 1992). Sheppard, Lewicki, and Minton (1992) suggested that there are three types of activities that potentially invoke concerns for fairness by individuals and groups within an organization, including: making policies and rules, applying policies and rules, and interpreting policies and rules. Sheppard, Lewicki, and Minton stated that "persistent justice typically produces immediate and direct consequences, such as equitable pay improves individual performance, equal treatment raises group spirit, voice creates commitment to a decision, and access creates a loyal ally" (p. 102).

O.S.U. Extension state and district administrators will benefit from understanding employees current perceptions of organizational justice. Organizations, such as O.S.U. Extension, should pursue justice in the organization, as the benefits potentially include: (1) Increased performance effectiveness; (2) a sense of community among employees; and (3) a sense of individual dignity and humanness among employees and volunteers (Buegre', 1998; Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992). Positive perceptions of organizational justice typically result in attitudinal (job satisfaction, commitment, and trust) and behavioral (organizational citizenship, behavior, turnover, and workplace aggression) reactions (Beugre', 1998).

Job satisfaction is an extremely complex and convoluted construct with no single conceptual model completely and accurately portraying the construct (Hagedorn, 2000). Locke (1976) suggested that job satisfaction is a positive emotional or affective reaction to the appraisal of one's job or experience. A number of variables influence job satisfaction, including a position that provides high pay,
promotional opportunities, considerate and participative supervision, opportunities to interact with peers, a variety of duties, and a high degree of control over work methods and pace (Vroom, 1964).

Statement of the Problem

O.S.U. Extension county agents are either field faculty or administrative and professional (A&P) staff. Faculty are required to teach, conduct research and scholarly work, and provide service to the community. Administrative and professional staff are required to teach, develop scholarly works, and provide service to the community (King, 1998). A 1995 report released by the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) and the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension System (CSREES) stated that “some Extension professionals see themselves as educators. Others view themselves as information providers” (p. 8). Regardless of how the Extension educator views their job responsibilities, the report emphasized that “Extension must encompass both education and information-giving as it establishes learning partnerships” (p. 8). Multiple definitions of the Extension agents’ roles and responsibilities have likely resulted in stress, frustration, dissatisfaction, and misunderstanding during performance reviews and during times of organizational change.

O.S.U. Extension has evolved from a rural, agricultural program to an organization that engages thousands of youth and adults in a multitude of innovative educational programs. To support the extensive change in audience focus, program delivery methods, and implementing new policies and procedures, county Extension
agents have had to experience rapid change and ambiguity in their individual roles and responsibilities. Extension agents themselves, their direct supervisors, support teams and other administrators within the organization typically provide leadership for these changes. As the organization undergoes this extensive change, administrators and support teams will benefit from understanding the perceptions of decision outcomes, formal decision-making procedures, and the manner in which they are communicated from supervisors. Knowing current agents’ perceptions of organizational justice and level of job satisfaction will allow organizational leaders to identify appropriate strategies when distributing resources and establishing, implementing and communicating policy and procedures.

Based on his six years of professional experience, the researcher identified seven critical research questions regarding O.S.U. Extension county agents and their relationship to organizational justice and job satisfaction. These include:

1. What perceptions of organizational justice are currently held by O.S.U. Extension county agents?

2. What is the current level of job satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension county agents?

3. Are the perceptions of organizational justice of O.S.U. Extension county agents related to selected personal characteristics?

4. Are the perceptions of organizational justice of O.S.U. Extension county agents related to selected professional characteristics?
5. Are levels of job satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension county agents related to selected personal characteristics?

6. Are levels of job satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension county agents related to selected personal characteristics?

7. Do relationships exist between perceptions of organizational justice and level of job satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension county agents?

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors affecting O.S.U. Extension agents' perceptions of organizational justice and job satisfaction.

Specific objectives include to:

1. Describe the perceptions of organizational justice held by O.S.U. Extension county agents.

2. Describe the current levels of job satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension county agents.

3. Explore relationships between agents' perceptions of organizational justice and level of job satisfaction

4. Describe O.S.U. Extension county agents' selected personal characteristics of gender, age and race/ethnic background.

5. Describe O.S.U. Extension county agents' selected professional and organizational characteristics, including years in current position as an Extension Agent; years in other position, current, primary program area;
highest degree completed; major area of study with highest degree; county chair; and participation in continuing professional education.

6. Investigate relationships between selected personal, professional and organizational characteristics, and agents' perceptions of organizational justice.

7. Investigate relationships between selected personal, professional and organizational characteristics, and agents' current level of job satisfaction.

8. Explore relationships between participation in continuing professional education and the agents' perception of organizational justice and level of job satisfaction.

**Definition of Terms**

**Academic Major** – the field of study of the highest academic degree attained by the respondent.

**Continuing Professional Education** - “the education of professional practitioners, regardless of their practice setting, that follows their preparatory curriculum and extends their careers” (Queeney, 1996, p. 698).

**Extension Agent** – individual employed by Ohio State University Extension and is responsible for one of the major program areas in one of eighty-eight counties. The program areas include: Agricultural and Natural Resources, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H Youth Development, and Community Development.
Highest Degree Earned — the self-reported highest academic degree received by an individual and includes: (a) Bachelor's Degree, (b) Master's Degree, or (c) Ph.D./Ed.D.

Job Satisfaction — pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences (Locke, 1976).

Justice — perception of fairness in the organizational setting (Greenberg, 1987).

Length of Service — the self-reported number of years respondents have been employed as county Extension agents.

Limitations of the Study

1. Only O.S.U. Extension county agents were surveyed in the study; therefore, results may only be applied to agents and cannot be generalized to other O.S.U. Extension professionals, or to county Extension agents in other states.

2. The research questionnaire is self-reporting; therefore, there is no verification of responses possible.

3. The researcher is measuring agents perceptions using attitudinal scales; therefore, no formal performance evaluation was conducted. Perceptions may change over time as individual positions and the organization changes.

4. The researcher is measuring current level of job satisfaction using attitudinal scales; therefore, no formal performance evaluation was conducted. Levels of job satisfaction may change over time as individual positions and the organization changes.
Basic Assumptions

1. Perceptions of respondents are valid and reliable indicators of the concepts being measured.

2. Respondents will answer questions honestly and truthfully.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

To better understand the research problem the researcher identified four important constructs in which to review the literature. These include: (a) organizational justice; (b) job satisfaction; (c) Cooperative Extension Service; and (d) continuing professional education.

Organizational Justice

Organizational justice, as an area of inquiry, is a relatively new area of research that evolved with equity theory, proceeded through distributive justice, and then moved to procedural justice (Byrne & Cropanzano, 2001). More recently, the definitions of organizational justice have grown beyond the perceived fairness of the organization to include the interactions and actions of others within the organization. Organizational justice is not a perceptual phenomenon or an objective state; rather it is an evaluative judgment by individuals of the fair treatment by others (Bazerman, 1993; Furby, 1986). Organizational justice is a fluid concept that involves actions, interactions, and perceptions of individuals and groups.
Organizational justice is an elusive concept that has only recently been defined by scholars and practitioners (Beugre’, 1998). In the 1990’s our knowledge and understanding of how fairness issues affect employees and organizations has grown tremendously (McFarlin & Sweeney, 2001). Organizational justice is a difficult concept to define; however, several authors have attempted to do so over the past three decades. Organizational justice, in perhaps the most simplistic terms, refers to peoples’ perceptions of fairness in the organizational setting or workplace (Byrne & Cropanzano, 2001; Greenberg 1987). Organizational justice in a broader sense also refers to individuals’ and groups’ perceptions of the fairness of treatment received from organizations, including their behavioral reactions to such perceptions (James, 1992). Bies and Tripp (1995) referred to organizational justice as the rules and social norms governing: (1) How organization outcomes should be allocated, (2) the procedures that should be used to make decisions, and (3) how people should be treated interpersonally. Citera and Rentsch (1992) defined organizational justice as the “perceived fairness of the distribution of outcomes and procedures used to make these decisions” (pp. 211).

As research of organizational justice has evolved, so too have the definitions proposed. More recently, Beugre’ (1998) stretched the definition of organizational justice to “the perceived fairness of the exchanges taking place in an organization, be they social or economic, and involving the individual in his or her relations with superiors, subordinates, peers, and the organization as a social system” (pp. xiii). Beugre suggested that organizational justice be considered in relation to: interaction
with others (interactional justice); the organization as a system (systemic justice); the fairness of the rewards (distributive justice); and the formal procedures (procedural justice).

**Distributive Justice**

Distributive justice relates to the manner in which individuals perceive the outcomes of decisions to directly affect them (Beugre'). More specifically, distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of the distribution of outcomes, decisions, or resources within an organization (Deutsch, 1985; Greenberg, 1987; Homans, 1961; Walker, Lind & Thibaut, 1979). Distributive justice is concerned with the distribution of the conditions and goods that affect an individual’s well-being, including psychological, physiological, economic, and social aspects (Deutsch, 1985). A number of models and theories have served to support and essentially shape distributive justice theory.

Over the past 40 years, numerous authors and scholars have developed models or theories that have served to further define distributive justice. Those models and theories include: Adam’s Theory of Equity (1965); Walster, Walster, and Berscheid’s Theory of Equity (1978); The Justice Motive Theory (Lerner, 1975); Deutsch’s Theory of distributive justice (Deutsch, 1985); Jasso’s Theory of Distributive Justice (1977); and Relative Deprivation Theory (Crosby, 1976).

Equity theory, developed by Adams (1965), incorporated the notion of social comparison into a quasi-mathematical formula (Cropanzano & Randall, 1993). When individuals work for an organization they present inputs (e.g. ability or job
performance); consequently they expect something in return for their inputs. Adams (1965) identified this as a ratio of outcomes over inputs with fairness determined by comparing one individual's ratio to the ratio of someone in a similar position. Equity theory predicts that comparatively low rewards produced dissatisfaction, ultimately motivating individuals to take action that reduces the discrepancy between their ratio and that of a comparison individual (Cropanzano & Randall, 1993). Critics of Equity Theory suggest that it is a unidimensional rather than a multidimensional conception of fairness. Specifically, critics identify the following weaknesses: (1) Theory conceptualizes perceived justice solely in terms of a merit principle; (2) equity theory considers only the final distribution of reward; and (3) equity theory tends to exaggerate the importance of fairness in social relationships (Leventhal, 1980).

Relative deprivation refers to "an emotional outcome and sometimes refers to the various theories that explain how that outcome comes about" (Cropanzano & Randall, p. 4). Crosby (1979) identified relative deprivation as "the emotions one feels when making negatively discrepant comparisons" (p.88). Relative deprivation theory would suggest that individuals define justice relative to some standard. For example, under the right circumstances, individuals might happily accept relatively modest rewards or complain about what appears to be overgenerous rewards (Cropanzano & Randall).

Jasso (1977) developed a model of distributive justice that is mathematically formulated. Jasso's theory describes how choices made by individuals combine with
two objective features to produce the sentiment of justice in the individual (Jasso, 1980). Choices that an individual must make include which goods to value, which social aggregates to form, and what conditions to regard as fair. Jasso suggests that there is an internal standard that is compared to an actual reward; therefore when the actual reward falls short of the expected, the individual is likely to have feelings of injustice.

The form of justice followed, according to the justice motive theory, in making decisions depends on the relationships between parties and the focus of the parties on individuals or as occupants of positions (Lerner, 1977). Walster, Walster, and Berscheid (1976) developed a formula that allowed inputs to be assets or liabilities, which in turn means outcomes refer to positive and negative consequences of an interaction. Although a complicated formula, and difficult to translate into everyday living, a relationship is equitable when the two calculated equations are equal. Finally, Deutsch (1985) supported distributive justice as being concerned with the distribution of conditions and goods that affect an individuals' well being.

**Procedural Justice**

Defining the concept of procedural justice within an organization is not easy as there are competing theories as to when procedures are necessary. Some, including Thibaut and Walker (1975; early pioneers in procedural justice), suggested that procedures are only implemented when allocation of resources is in dispute. However, more recently, that theory is being challenged as there has been increased attention paid not only to reactive, but also proactive procedures within organizations
(Rohl, 1997). Furthermore, Rohl identified the overall goal of a procedure as the process of distributing benefits and burdens, with the endpoint resulting in one party as a winner and one party as the loser.

Procedural justice is the perceived fairness of the policies and procedures used when making decisions, or determining outcomes, in the organization (Greenberg, 1990; 1996). When considering if the procedure would be perceived as being fair, there are six rules that should be met (Leventhal, 1980): (1) Consistency across people and time; (2) freedom from bias; (3) based on accurate information; (4) opportunity to modify and reverse decisions; (5) representative of the concerns of all parties; and (6) consistent with moral and ethical standards.

Similar to distributive justice theory, numerous authors and scholars have developed models or theories to support procedural justice theory (Beugre', 1998; Folger & Baron, 1996; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 1987; Tyler, 1994). There are a number of models that help define procedural justice and include the self-interest, value-expressive, group-value, referent cognitions theory and procedural preferences models.

The Self-Interest Model states that, “people seek control over decisions because they are fundamentally concerned with their outcomes” (Lind & Tyler, 1988, p. 222). The Value-Expressive Model suggests that, “disputants want to have voice because they value having the chance to state their case irrespective of whether their statement influences the decisions of authorities” (Tyler, 1987, p.333). The Group-
Value Model suggests that people want to maximize the resources they obtain from social interactions and people attempt to maintain high status within groups and use the justice of their experiences to evaluate their group status (Tyler, 1994). The Procedural Preferences Model suggests that “individuals choose allocations which lead to the goal previously set, they tend to select the procedures that help them achieve their goals” (Beugre', 1998, p.). Finally, the Referent Cognitions Theory proposes that when individuals consider treatment they have received from others, they compare it with past outcomes, outcomes of others, and ideal conceptions about entitlements and rewards (Folger & Baron, 1996).

**Interactional Justice**

Interactional justice is closely related to the construct of procedural justice, as it is the actual enactment of procedures rather than the development of the procedures themselves. Interactional justice refers to the social aspects of procedural justice; how the procedures are communicated to individuals, or the interpersonal aspect of procedural justice (Greenberg, 1993; Tyler & Bies, 1990). Ultimately, interactional justice refers to the “quality of interpersonal treatment people receive during the enactment of organizational procedures” (Bies & Moag, 1986, p 44). While procedural justice refers to the degree to which formal procedures are present and used in the organization, interactional justice refers to the fairness in which the procedures are carried out (Beugre', 1998).

Tyler and Bies (1990) recognized the need to ensure that decision-makers consider the social aspects of procedural justice as they interact with employees. Tyler
and Bies (1990) identified five common norms that apply to individuals in decision-making roles: (1) adequately considering employees' viewpoints; (2) suppressing personal bias; (3) applying criteria consistently for all employees; (4) providing feedback to employees in a timely manner after decisions are made; and (5) providing an account of the decision. These norms are important, especially during an individual’s performance appraisal, compensation and grievance procedures, and other budgetary reduction or reallocation processes (Folger & Greenberg, 1985).

There are two important aspects of interactional justice, identified as informational and interpersonal justice (Beugre'). Informational justice refers to the social determinants of procedural justice, the adequacy of the information used to explain how decisions are made, and the thoroughness of the accounts. Informational justice may be sought by providing knowledge about the procedures that demonstrate regard for people’s concerns (Greenberg, 1993). Interpersonal justice refers to the social interactions between an individual and others in an organizational setting or a social exchange (Beugre'), and to the considerateness and courtesy shown by the partners responsible for dividing available rewards (Folger & Baron, 1996). Recent research supports the fact that the manner in which supervisors communicate (interactional justice) was important to employees (Bies, 1986; Bies, Shapiro, & Cummins, 1988; and Greenberg, 1988).

Bies (1986) identified honesty, courtesy, timely feedback, respect for rights, and the chance to express viewpoints as important components of interactional justice when studying master of business administration (MBA) students. Another study
conducted by Tyler (1988) found that perceptions of honesty and ethical appropriateness, such as politeness and respect for rights, were important determinants of fairness. Bies and Shapiro (1987) found that individuals receiving negative outcomes were more likely to accept them when an explanation was provided. Greenberg (1988) found similar results associated with performance appraisals when written narratives explaining those ratings were provided than when no written explanations were provided accompanied by monetary ratings. Bies, Shapiro, and Cummings (1988) found that perceptions of procedural justice were enhanced when explanations were believed to be adequately reasoned and sincerely communicated. The manner that supervisors communicate with employees is important, potentially impacting the overall perceptions of organizational justice, or more recently identified as systemic justice.

**Systemic Justice**

Systemic justice may not be considered a separate construct from distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. Rather, systemic justice is a system, or a set of interacting units (Katz & Kahn, 1978) that focuses on the set of the whole, the interplay between the units, and the units' relationships with the larger environment (Asforth, 1992). Therefore, systemic justice refers to the overall perception of justice in the organization or the perceived fairness of the structure that policies, procedures, and outcome distribution results (Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992). The systemic level of justice concerns the broader organizational context in which procedures are embedded and represents a global assessment of the degree that the organization itself
is fair (Beugre', 1998; Bies & Tripp, 1995; Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992).

Sheppard, Lewicki, and Minton noted that there is very little social psychology
research on perceptions of systemic justice.

A relatively new construct, systemic justice is sometimes difficult to
understand or distinguish from distributive and procedural justice (Pfaltzgraff, 1998).
To help understand the differences, Pfaltzgraff offers the following example:

a person may receive a promotion that he or she perceives to be fair resulting
in perceptions of distributive justice. That person may also perceive that the
procedure used to determine the promotion is fair (procedural justice).
However the individual may not believe that other people would have been
treated fairly given the existence of bias toward a particular group of people in
that organization (systemic justice). (p. 18)

It is important to know that systemic justice is different from the other constructs that
make up organizational justice. The inclusion of systemic justice in research is
important and should recognize the existence of subsystems within the organization
(Beugre’)

In order for the system of an organization to be perceived as fair, employees
need to perceive that the organizational system meets six standards based upon
balance and correctness (Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton). Balance suggests that given
actions being compared to similar actions in similar situations and is grounded in three
standards (control of abuse, inclusion, and opportunity). Correctness suggests that
there is responsiveness to change within the organization, that there is stability in terms of applying policy and procedure, and that significant and important interests are central to those responsible for making decisions (Sheppard, et. al).

**Effects of Demographic Variables**

There are a number of important demographic variables that potentially have an affect, either positively or negatively, on an individual’s perceptions of organizational justice. Three demographic variables of importance to organizational justice research that have been a focus of researchers and authors include tenure in the organization, highest level of formal education, and gender. Leventhal, Karuza, and Fry (1980) have suggested that organizational procedures that have long been established tend to gain greater acceptance due to their longevity of existence. This would suggest that the longer individuals were employed at the organization, the more accepting they would be to existing organizational procedures. Considering the more broad construct of systemic justice, Beurge’ (1996) found a negative correlation between organizational tenure and perceptions of organizational justice. However, there were positive correlations between tenure, and the three remaining constructs, including, distributive, procedural, and interactional justice (Beurge’).

An individual’s level of education may also impact perceptions of organizational justice as those with higher-levels of education may be more sensitive to issues of fairness as they potentially have a greater understanding of procedures, their rights, and willingness to influence decisions concerning their jobs (Beurge’, 1998). Furthermore, Daily and Delaney (1992) suggested that employees with higher-
level education may have more mobility, therefore when they experience justice inequities, they become dissatisfied and may be more likely to leave the organization, therefore leaving individuals with less education who may not have the ability to leave the organization.

Studies investigating the impact gender has on perceptions of organizational justice are revealing some differences between males and females. Sweeney and McFarlin (1997) investigated the importance that women and men serving as federal, civilian employees placed on distributive and procedural justice. Results indicated that the relationship between distributive justice and selected organizational outcomes (commitment, intent to stay) was stronger for men than women. Conversely, the relationship between procedural justice and the same selected organizational outcomes (commitment, intent to stay) was stronger for women than men. The research results suggested that procedural justice, if the process was fair or not, played a larger part in how women evaluate their experience; men, on the other hand appeared to base their perceptions of the organization on whether the outcomes were fairly distributed. Lee and Farh (1999) replicated the Sweeney and McFarlin study and found that gender did not impact procedural or interactional justice, but did have an impact on distributive justice and trust of supervisor.

Kutilek (2002) investigated organizational justice as it relates to the effectiveness of work/life issues within Ohio State University Extension. Overall, in this descriptive, correlational study of a stratified random sample of Extension employees, there were statistically significant relationships found between gender,
location (District and State), and number of children with the factors of work/life
issues and organizational justice. Kutilek found a low association between gender and
distributive justice; procedural justice and Extension district of employment; and a low
negative association between interactional justice and number of children. Perceptions
of organizational justice did not differ significantly based on the individual’s position
within the organization (support staff, program staff, and administration).

In addition to demographic variables investigated, Kutilek (2002) also
investigated relationships between seven work/life issues (concerns with work/life
issues, communication about concerns, actions of co-workers, organizational issues,
actions of administration, actions of supervisor, and financial issues) and three
organizational justice constructs (distributive, procedural, and interactional).
Substantial, positive relationships were found between: distributive justice, procedural
justice and actions of administration; procedural justice and actions of administration;
distributive justice and actions of supervisor; and procedural justice and actions of
supervisor. A very strong, positive relationship was found between interactional
justice and actions of supervisor.

Outcomes of Justice

Perceptions of organizational justice are shaped by two sets of variables, the
first being individual variables that include demographic characteristics (gender, level
of education, occupational status, and tenure); personality characteristics (negative
affectivity, hostile attribution bias); and cognitive attributes (self-serving bias and
casual attributions) (Beugre’, 1998). The second set of variables includes such
organizational factors as: organizational change; performance appraisal, leader behavior, pay, punishment, selection, and organizational culture. Positive perceptions of organizational justice typically result in positive attitudinal (job satisfaction, commitment, and trust) and behavioral (organizational citizenship, behavior, turnover, and workplace aggression) reactions (Beugre', 1998).

There are a number of different outcomes associated with an individual’s positive perceptions of organizational justice. Lind and Taylor (1988) found (supported by Alexander and Ruderman, 1987) that satisfaction is one of the primary consequences of procedural justice. Further studies have shown that positive perceptions of procedural and distributive justice had significant, direct positive effects on job satisfaction (Folger & Konovsky, 1989; Manogran, Stauffer, & Conlon, 1994). Previous research would support the idea that an individual with positive perceptions towards organizational justice will more likely be satisfied with their employment situation.

Beugre' and Baron (2001) conducted a study involving 232 employees working in the service and manufacturing sector to determine if distributive, procedural, and interactional justice had an impact on perceptions of systemic justice. The authors stated that "feelings of fairness (or unfairness) based on the distribution of outcomes; the development of formal procedures; and respectful courteous treatment are likely to influence employees’ perceptions of an organization as fair or unfair overall" (p. 325). Results of the study indicated that employee perceptions of procedural justice and interactional justice in their organizations positively predicted
perceptions of systemic justice. However, perceptions of distributive justice did not predict perceptions of systemic justice (Beugre' & Baron, 2001). As a result of this study, Beugre' and Baron suggested that an organization desiring to induce high levels of perceived systemic justice among employees might concentrate on procedural and interactional justice. In light of tightened budgets and other financial constraints, it may be easier to increase perceptions of procedural and interactional justice rather than distributive justice, as it often times relates to pay and other forms of resource distribution (Beugre’ & Baron).

Studies have investigated current perceptions of organizational justice for employees of corporations or other for-profit business and industry. Rahim, Magner, and Shapiro (2000) conducted a first of it's kind study, consisting of 202 currently-employed undergraduate students to investigate the relationship between employees’ perceptions of organizational justice and the styles they select to manage conflict with their supervisors. Results of the study reveal that distributive, procedural, and interactional justice generally related positively to the use of more cooperative conflict management styles. Conflict management styles considered in this study included integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising. Furthermore, it was observed that higher interactional justice was related to greater use of the integrating style primarily when distributive justice was low and procedural justice was high.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is extremely complex and convoluted with no single conceptual model completely and accurately portraying the construct (Hagedorn,
Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences" (p. 1300). Vroom (1964) referred to job satisfaction as an individual's attitude about work roles and the relationship to worker motivation.

Several theories have dominated the landscape of job satisfaction over the years. Herzberg (1959) developed a theory of employee motivation that was based on satisfaction, theorizing that a satisfied employee is motivated from within and that a dissatisfied employee is not self-motivated. This concept of job satisfaction distinguished two groups of factors that influence an individual's job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Motivators, or intrinsic factors, are those that lead to job satisfaction and include achievement, recognition, work, and the intrinsic interest in the job. Consequently, hygienes, or extrinsic factors, lead to dissatisfaction and include pay, job security, working conditions, policy and administration, and an individual's relationship with peers and supervisors (Herzberg, 1959; Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959).

Maslow's (1970) Hierarchy of Needs operates under the premise that human desires and needs are hierarchial in nature, as certain needs must be met to prior to proceeding to desires. First, physical needs, such as food, clothing and shelter must be met as they are survival requirements, then the more complex desires may be met. Complex needs include: (1) Safety; (2) belonging and love; (3) esteem and status; and (4) self-actualization. While Maslow did not specifically apply his model to job satisfaction, Gruneberg (1979) concluded that some evidence exists to support the
theory related to job satisfaction. Individuals working in lower level occupations were likely to be motivated by lower level needs such as pay and security. Consequently, those in higher-level occupations were more interested in fulfilling higher order needs, as basic needs have been met (Gruneberg, 1979).

Hagedorn (2000) identified two types of constructs that interact and affect job satisfaction for faculty members: triggers and mediators. A trigger is a significant life event that is either related or unrelated to the actual job an individual holds. Subsequently, mediators are those things that help explain the complexity of satisfaction. Six triggers identified include: (1) Change in life stage; (2) change in family-related or personal circumstances; (3) change in rank or tenure; (4) transfer to a new institution; (5) change in perceived justice; and (6) change in mood or emotional state. Furthermore, there are three types of mediators: (1) Motivators and hygiene’s (i.e. achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and salary); (2) demographics (i.e. gender, ethnicity, institutional type, and academic discipline); and (3) environmental conditions (i.e. collegial relationships, student quality of relationships, administration, and institutional climate or culture).

There have been numerous studies conducted focusing on Extension agents’ job satisfaction nationally. The majority of these studies investigated job satisfaction related to traditional, demographic characteristics. Factors investigated have included: age, years of experience, gender, types of agents, job title of the personnel, urban and rural agents, and other factors including the opportunity to participate in decision-making, changes in their work area, and attendance (Boltes, Lippke, & Gregory, 1995;
Bowen, Radhakrishna, & Keyser, 1994; Keffer, 1976; Mallilo, 1990; Miller, 1997; Riggs & Beus, 1993). A limited number of studies focused on other variables, such as job commitment (Miller, 1997), education level (Keffer, 1976), and salary (Mallilo, 1990). No study was found that focused on individual perceptions of organizational justice related to job satisfaction.

A West Virginia University Extension study found that employees had higher job satisfaction the longer they worked for the organization; additionally, those in the 23-33 and 46-50 age range were more satisfied than Extension faculty in the 34-45 and 51 and more age groups (Nestor & Leary, 2000). Furthermore, Extension faculty who were on the non-tenure track had more intrinsic job satisfaction than those who were in tenure-track positions. Consequently, the researchers found that there was no relationship between current status of tenured and non-tenured Extension faculty and their level of job satisfaction. Additionally, no relationship was found between gender of Extension faculty and their current level of job satisfaction.

Miller (1997) conducted the most recent study involving O.S.U. Extension county agents' current level of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Miller found that (1) there were no difference between males' and females' and level of job satisfaction; (2) a negligible correlation was found between job title (Agriculture and Natural Resources, Community Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, 4-H Youth Development) and job satisfaction; (3) there was a positive, low relationship
between job satisfaction and age; (4) there was a positive, low relationship between years of work. With a mean response of 4.10 on a five-point likert-type scale, Ohio State University Extension agents were very satisfied with their work (Miller).

**Continuing Professional Education**

Continuing professional education is not new as it was one time provided through apprenticeships and guild systems of the middle ages (Queeney, 2000). However, it was not until the 1960’s that there existed a concrete system of continuing education, with the first evidence being a conceptual scheme for the lifelong education of physicians (Cervero, 2000; Dryer, 1962). From the first conceptual scheme developed to support physicians, there quickly emerged continuing education for relicensure and recertification during the 1970’s (Cervero & Azzaretto, 1990). Over the next two decades, numerous professions have adapted the philosophy of continuing education for their employees (Cevero, 1988). Unfortunately, a clear picture of a system of continuing education that is effective in a complex world has yet to be developed (Cevero, 2000). Houle (1983) offered the following description of continuing professional education:

> At a minimum, continuing professional education appears to be a complex of instructional systems, many of them heavily didactic, in which people who know something teach it to those who do not know. The central aim of such teaching, which is offered by many providers, is to keep professionals up to date in their practice. (p. 254)
Complex in its nature, continuing professional education has undergone significant changes since its early 1960 inception and faces many new challenges into the twenty-first century.

Continuing professional education has undergone significant change in the past decade and remains tremendously fragmented as providers typically identify practice within their professions rather than within the field of adult education (Mott & Daley, 2000). The 1990’s brought significant change to continuing professional education as several trends emerged: (1) Amount of continuing education offered in the workplace dwarfs that offered by any other provider, and surpasses that of all other providers combined; (2) universities and professional associations are important providers, with increased programs being offered in distance education formats; (3) increasing numbers of collaborative partnerships among providers, especially universities and workplaces; and (4) continuing education is being used more frequently to regulate professionals’ practices (Cervero, 2000).

The 1990’s were marked by a number of trends that have helped shape continuing professional education; however, there remain a number of challenging issues facing providers, employers, and employees (Cervero, 2000). Cervero identified the following three issues, to be addressed, that are critical to the future of continuing professional education: (1) The struggle between updating professionals’ knowledge versus improving professionals’ practice; (2) the struggle between the learning agenda and the political and economic agendas of continuing education; and (3) the struggle for turf versus collaborative relationships. While there are many
challenges facing continuing professional education, employers, professional associations, universities, and governments have many opportunities to collaborate, and develop a system of continuing education for the professions (Cevero).

Providing continuing professional education opportunities for employees is not the responsibility of a single entity; rather, it has evolved to include a wide variety of institutions, organizations, and individuals (Mott, 2000). Traditionally, professional associations and formal educational institutions have provided continuing professional education; however, independent education and training brokers, manufacturers and suppliers, and individuals themselves have emerged as providers. For years, continued education was accomplished through informal reading and consultation with colleagues; however, that approach is no longer acceptable (Smutz & Queeney, 1990). Houle (1980) recognized the growth and potential of continuing professional education and identified the following providers: (1) Autonomous groups; (2) associations; (3) professional schools; (4) universities; (5) employment settings; (6) independent providers of learning opportunities; and (7) purveyors of professional supplies and equipment.

The autonomous group is considered a major provider of continuing professional education, yet it is also the most difficult to identify and bring into focus (Houle, 1980). Typically, a few members of a profession assemble periodically for any number of reasons, including fellowship, instruction, and discussion. The focus of discussion within the autonomous group is usually based on the common problems amongst the group, each individual attempting to focus the attention on their specific
problem or issue. These groups can develop into highly functioning entities that spark a national movement however, a vast majority only last for a short time period. Tough (1979) supported the autonomous group concept when stating that it “might be peers who decide and conduct their activities without a professional instructor or authority with a large portion of the knowledge and skill typically provided by the group” (p. 79).

The professional association is very different from that of the autonomous group as it has a complex structure and is so large that direct personal ties cannot bind the membership together (Houle, 1980). While the professional association may have a variety of missions, central to the operation of the association is to “address the competence of individual professionals by establishing standards of practice and recommendations for achieving them” (Bennett & LeGrand, 1990, p. 29). Individuals belong to associations for many reasons, including: because it is expected; they desire increased status; they want to share in policy formation and implementation; it is a feeling of duty; and for fellowship and an overall desire for education. The association meets the needs of individuals through offering leadership opportunities; sponsoring conventions, conferences, and workshops; issuing journals, books, newsletters, and other publications; influencing public policy; and collaborating with other groups (Houle).

Professional schools are an important provider of continuing professional education, functioning as freestanding entities or part of a larger university (Houle). Professional schools that provide continuing professional education are typically
autonomous stand-alone entities, or function as a component of a larger network of service such as a university. A primary focus of professional schools is to offer educational opportunities for graduates of its own pre-service programs to continue their education. Concurrently, faculty operate in the instructional mode, conducting and supervising activities directly related to the growth of the occupation's knowledge base (Houle, 1980). Like universities, professional schools have a tremendous advantage in that they are considered a credible source for continuing professional education because research and teaching are their primary missions (Bennett & LeGrand, 1990; Cervero, 1988; Nowlen, 1988).

In many cases, universities are logical choices for individuals to continue their education, as it was through higher education that many have received their pre-practice education (Bennett & LeGrand, 1990). While some institutions have segregated continuing education programs, a large number of institutions have "general extension divisions with authority to operate institution-wide programs of educational services to adult learners and with control over the facilities and staffs required to provide these services" (Houle, p. 181). Two primary reasons for continuing professional education to be coordinated at a university are: (1) The practice of a profession is narrowing and in need of being corrected by other influences that a university can offer; and (2) more efficient programs of service can thereby be provided (Houle). Bennett and LeGrand (1990) noted that the university offers faculty, (both full and part-time, and representing a variety of disciplines and
specialties), that allow for interdisciplinary program development. Additionally, university representatives have access to classrooms, laboratories, dormitories, conference centers, and meeting rooms.

The central educational task of employing institutions is to improve the quality of services and performance of employees and ultimately meet corporate goals (Houle, 1980; Bennett & LeGrand). Employers approach continuing professional education in at least two manners. First, employers may financially support any educational program that an employee desires, recognizing that individuals best know what they need. On the other hand, employers may only financially support those educational activities that have a direct impact on the task being performed by the employee. The most common method of organizing continuing professional education for employers is to conduct learning experiences at the workplace. However, other methods employees have implemented to continue their education include staff retreats, individual study leave, or cluster meetings (Houle).

Offering continuing professional education opportunities within the employment setting has tremendous advantages for both employer and employee (Cervero, 1988). First, “professionals’ performance problems can be directly assessed on a regular basis and used to determine both the need for educational program and the extent to which the program has made a difference” (p.85). Additionally, there is relative ease in scheduling educational opportunities and minimizing lost work time for employees to attend programs.
Continuing professional education within the employment setting is not without its disadvantages. Bennett and LeGrand (1990) identified advantages of the employer offering continuing professional education, including: (1) Employers are familiar with day-to-day performance needs; (2) close tie between program content and application; and (3) less emphasis placed on academic credentials of faculty. At the same time, the authors identified disadvantages of employers offering continuing professional education, including: (1) continuing professional education is of secondary importance to corporate goals; and (2) there is irregular support to the overall concept.

Independent providers of learning opportunities are organized on a free-standing basis to provide specialized forms of continuing professional education (Houle, 1980). Independent providers have the advantage of potentially responding more rapidly to learners’ requests; are free from committee approval and faculty involvement; and have the flexibility to experiment with new methods (Bennett & LeGrand). The most common independent providers are publishers who supply textbooks, journals, microfilm, microfiche, programmed instruction, simulation games, or computer software. Some independent providers are operated for profit while others are defined as non-profit organizations. Operating as cooperative self-help ventures, philanthropic foundations (depending on their mission and financial resources) offer educational opportunities for free or subsidize the people who are enrolled or the organizations they represent (Houle).
There are many professionals across the country, including dentists, architects, pharmacists, and school administrators, that must buy supplies and materials to conduct their work (Houle, 1980). These individuals are the primary audience for purveyors of professional supplies and equipment. Often times, representatives of these companies speak one-on-one with individuals who may typically be or have isolated themselves from other educational opportunities.

Employees of organizations ranging in all sizes face many complex problems that often times require interdisciplinary solutions (Cervero, 1988). The employee that is engaged in continuing professional education (most often adults) bring unique life and work experiences to the situation. Understanding adult learners is critical prior to engaging in practices to provide educational opportunities. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (1998) identified key characteristics of adult learning. Specifically they have: The need to know; a self concept for being responsible for their own decisions; a great volume and diversity of experiences; a need to be ready to learn; the need to perceive that the learning will help them perform tasks or deal with problems; and internal and external motivating factors. Furthermore, adults learn in many different ways, prefer some control to their learning experience, expect feedback, and have tremendous capacity for learning (Apps, 1991).

The American workplace is a dynamic institution that has been transformed through the proliferation of corporations and the rapid expansion of technology and knowledge (Hofstader & Munger, 1990). Furthermore, increased attention has been placed on the notion that there is an increased desire of professionals to participate in
activities within their employment setting (Flagello, 1998). This rapid expansion of
technology, knowledge, desire to participate and other personal needs has lead many
individuals to pursue continuing professional education opportunities. Employees
participate in continuing professional education for a variety of reasons; however, they
primarily are grouped according to personal or situational factors, depending on their
professional career (Cervero, 1988). One possible planner of the learning experience
is the individual themselves, making most of the decisions from one learning episode
to the next, about what and how to learn. On the other hand, the learner may choose a
group, or instructor or leader in a group, to plan his or her learning efforts (Tough,
1979).

Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (1998) stated that “individuals want to have
control over their learning based on their personal goals and learning will increase as a
result” (p. 123). There are a variety of factors that one may consider when choosing to
behave in a self-directed manner at a specific time. Those factors may include: (1)
Learning style; (2) previous experience with the subject matter; (3) social orientation;
(4) efficiency; (5) previous learning socialization; and (6) locus of control. While self­
directed learning is an important component of adult education, a major problem arises
when adult learners desire more independence, but are denied that opportunity.

Not all individuals will actively seek out continuing professional education
opportunities. Houle (1980) stated, “too few professionals continue to learn
throughout their lives...they must be identified” (p.303). Employees participate in
continuing education for a variety of reasons, including their desire to satisfy some
type of organizational regulation (Bennett & LeGrand, 1990). It is not uncommon that organizations have mandates, requirements, or recommendations for levels of learning and types of participation. In some cases, participation is strongly recommended or required as an outcome of an employee’s performance review (Bennett & LeGrand).

O.S.U. Extension, in 1991, created the agent support team concept to provide assistance to county agents in planning and developing programs, appraising agent performance, and encouraging agent professional growth and development. The support team includes the agent’s county chair, a district specialist, and district director serving in the ex-officio capacity (Zoller & Safrit, 1999). Support team members, among their other responsibilities, recommend or require the participation in continuing education opportunities, based on performance evaluations, observation of teaching and programs, or through the program development stage (Ohio State University Extension, 2001c). It is not uncommon that individuals regarded as experts will provide input into the decision-making process about future learning opportunities (Tough, 1979).

Individuals participate in continuing professional education opportunities for a variety of reasons, including (1) They are interested in the subject; (2) they have personal goals; or (3) they need to meet formal, work-related requirements (Burgess, 1971). While it is important that individuals participate in continuing education, reluctance to do so stems from: (1) professional’s seeing their participation as extra work; (2) previous experiences; or (3) lack of ownership of the program (Wright, 1985). Motivation to participate in continuing education was determined to be
primarily intrinsic. Individuals see the opportunity to: (1) increase their self-confidence; (2) sense of achievement; (3) the challenge of the task; and the opportunity to develop new skills and leadership (Wright, 1985).

**Cooperative Extension Service**

The Cooperative Extension System is the world's largest network of out-of-school non-formal education that exists to serve the needs in local communities in the United States and across the world (Graham, 1994). The complexity of the organization leads to difficulty when attempting to explain what a county Extension agent is responsible for on a day-to-day basis. Compounding the difficulty of explaining the organization is the differences in the educational process from state to state and from county to county within any given state (Bishop & Carter, 1976). The complexity and uniqueness of the Cooperative Extension System and the difficulty in explaining the educational processes has lead to misunderstandings of the role of the organization in individual communities. The two basic premises of the Cooperative Extension System are to: (1) provide individual families and communities satisfying and self-actualizing growth opportunities; and (2) involve lay leadership that evolves from its education processes for its own maintenance, stability, growth, and development (Bishop & Carter, 1976).

Early pioneers of the Cooperative Extension movement included Kenyon L. Butterfield and Seaman A. Knapp, both having very different views on the administration of the organization (Vitzthum & Florell, 1976). The first county agent was hired in Smith County, Texas, in 1906, primarily supported, at that time by
private funding sources. Although beginning with a focus on production agriculture for adult farmers, activities for youth gained early momentum as many youth clubs focusing on corn growing, gardening, canning, and livestock production were formed. While there were many early beginnings of what is today known as Cooperative Extension Service work, the organization was formally established with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 (Vitzthum & Florell, 1976). With roots in rural America, the Cooperative Extension System quickly grew and attempted to adapt to meet the needs of all the citizens of the United States.

In 1946, Cooperative Extension leaders conducted an analysis to assist in determining the major areas of program responsibility (Raudabaugh, 1976). The 1946 analysis revealed the major fields of Extension educational responsibility as being: (1) Agricultural production; (2) marketing and distribution; (3) conservation of natural resources; (4) farm and home management; (5) social relationships, adjustments, and cultural values; (6) rural organization and leadership; (7) farm and home buildings; and (8) health. While there are similarities between the results of the two major areas of program emphasis, the latter of the two reports began to broaden the scope of responsibilities of the Cooperative Extension Service to reflect societal changes and growing population centers beyond rural America.

In 1958, Extension leaders examined the organization in an attempt to remain current with societal changes and a comprehensive study and analysis on the Cooperative Extension Service was completed (Radabaugh). At the time, rapid
societal changes were affecting the Cooperative Extension System, including: (1) Adjustments in the family farm economy; (2) off-farm influences; (3) population changes; (4) rising educational levels; (5) changes influencing family living; and (6) increased demand on natural resources. As a result of the 1958 study, nine new areas of program emphasis were identified: (1) Efficiency in agricultural production; (2) efficiency in marketing distribution and utilization; (3) conservation, development, and use of natural resources; (4) management on the farm and in the home; (5) family living; (6) leadership development; (7) community improvement and resource development; (8) public affairs; and (9) youth development (Raudabaugh).

Approximately ten years later another analysis was conducted to identify emerging changes in society (Raudabaugh). In the 1968 analysis, audience priorities were identified, including: (1) Highly specialized farmers; (2) other commercial farmers; (3) low-income farmers; (4) rural non-farm families; (5) rural non-farm families; (6) low-income urban families; (7) educational organizations and institutions; (8) county and community organizations; and (9) farm organizations. While the rural farm population was obviously identified as an important audience, the emergence of non-farm audiences began to show the importance of and needs in those communities. The overall basis of the 1968 report revealed that the Cooperative Extension Service had to adapt its staff and programs to serve adequately the broad range of social and economic problems facing communities and their residents.

For nearly a century, the Cooperative Extension Service has been leading the way in addressing the educational needs of citizens, especially those engaged in
production agriculture. Hildreth (1976) emphasized that the Cooperative Extension System has changed dramatically since its inception in 1914 with the passage of the Smith-Lever Act. Many of the changes within program area focus and societal issues that were identified in the mid 1900's have evolved and have remained in the forefront. Hildreth identified the changes as: (1) Extension is no longer confined to rural areas; (2) no longer confined to agriculture; (3) has an increasing demand for multidisciplinary approach and off-campus resources; (4) has more sophistication of agricultural sciences; (5) has expanded to include urban audiences, specifically youth; (6) partners with other public and private agencies; and (7) faces budget challenges. While defined as changes affecting the Cooperative Extension System, these may also be considered as challenges and opportunities facing all Extension employees.

In recent years, the Cooperative Extension System (as a component of the larger land-grant University), has focused additional efforts on more nontraditional society issues (Campbell, 1995). Working as members of multidisciplinary teams, Cooperative Extension faculty and staff have focused programming efforts on disadvantage youth, children dropping out of school, k-12 education, poverty, pollution, unemployment, and poor housing. Specifically, the Cooperative Extension Service initiated the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Master Gardener Program (Campbell). The new program area initiatives and multidisciplinary approach to programming will reshape the roles and responsibilities of the county Extension agent conducting educational programs in the local community.
The Cooperative Extension Service is comprised of four traditional program areas, commonly referred to: 4-H Youth Development; Family and Consumer Sciences (Home Economics); Agricultural and Natural Resources; and Community Development. While the actual names of the program areas and specific focus may change from state-to-state, Extension primarily provides educational programs for agricultural producers, families, school-age children, and communities, including rural, suburban, urban, and metropolitan. Current educational programs being conducted by Cooperative Extension staff are often interdisciplinary, drawing on the greater resources of the land-grant institution (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin, 1997).

4-H Youth Development

The individual program areas of the Cooperative Extension System, 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, Agricultural and Natural Resources, and Community Development, all have characteristics that make them unique to their constituent groups. However, the 4-H program is perhaps the most widely recognized of the four disciplines of the Cooperative Extension Service (Warner & Christenson, 1984). The 4-H program varies from location-to-location across the country with programs designed to meet local needs, however the overall emphasis is on holistic youth development (Focus on the Future, 1994). These differences across the country provide numerous opportunities for youth to become engaged in positive, educational programs focusing on leadership, citizenship, and other, unique non-formal educational activities.
O.S. U. Extension 4-H Youth Development seeks to engage young people between the ages of 5-19 with caring adults to make a difference in their communities. Specifically, Ohio 4-H helps focuses on: (1) Developing marketable skills in youth for lifelong success; (2) encouraging community service and citizenship to transform local communities; (3) building sustainable relationships between youth and adults to enable youth to become positive and productive citizens; (4) appreciating and building upon diversity to foster a harmonious global society; and (5) building volunteer skills and abilities to more effectively work with youth (Ohio State University Extension, 2001b). During the 2000 calendar year, over 286,000 youth were engaged in over 200 projects lead by nearly 32,000 adult volunteers in Ohio’s 88 counties (Ohio State University Extension, 2001a).

Agriculture and Natural Resources

The agricultural program was the basis for the primary development of the Cooperative Extension Service; however, like other program areas, this discipline has evolved as well (Seevers, Graham, Garçon, & Conklin, 1997). At one time the agriculture program area focused primarily on basic production agriculture practice, it now includes such focal issues as marketing, processing, and consumption. Just as the educational content has grown and evolved, so too have the audiences being serviced by Extension professionals in this discipline area. The clientele continues, in large part, to include producers (farmers, ranchers, nursery workers, foresters, fisherman), but now also includes bankers; feed, fertilizer, and seed dealers; grain and livestock...
merchandisers; elevator personnel; public school teachers; commodity groups; community organizations; and public health agencies (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin, 1997).

Family and Consumer Sciences

The family and consumer sciences program area develops and delivers educational programs to strengthen the well being (physical, social, and emotional) of individuals and families, specifically focusing on human development, family resource management, and human nutrition (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin). Working in a broad focus area, Family and Consumer Sciences professionals often work in partnership with other agencies and/or Extension program areas to deliver programs to specific groups. Like their colleagues in agriculture and 4-H Youth Development, Family and Consumer Science professionals have also engaged a wider audience, including manufacturers, retailers, child-care centers, and food outlets, as issues are identified. The Expanded Food and Nutrition Program (EFNEP) began with a Congressional mandate in the 1960s and is an important component to Family and Consumer Sciences programs (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin).

O.S.U. Extension Family and Consumer Sciences “is working to strengthen individuals, families, and communities through education” (O.S.U. Extension Family and Consumer Sciences, 2001, p.1). O.S.U. Extension agents with program responsibilities in Family and Consumer Sciences engage in programs that: (1) Help build strong families; (2) assist with managing time, money, and other resources; (3) help manage multiple roles; (4) address community health and environmental

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concerns; and (5) help people improve nutritional habits and lifestyle choices.

Furthermore agents are working with local agencies, families, low-income audiences, older adults, limited resource audiences, young audiences, and youth (O.S.U. Extension FCS, 2001).

**Community Development**

The community development program is considerably different than the other three program areas in that (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin, 1997): (1) It is not mentioned in the original Smith-Lever Act of 1914; (2) typically does not have a full-time professional in each county; (3) is smaller in terms of staffing and funding; and (3) tends to be more process rather than content oriented. Through the mandated federal Rural Development Act of 1972, community development programming was developed to focus on rural communities to enhance physical, social, and economic conditions (Graham, 1994). Drawing on their backgrounds in sociology, economics, political science, and community and regional planning, community development professionals focus on leadership development, public policy education, economic development, and community services as they work with their local clientele (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin).

O.S.U. Extension community development “helps communities enhance their well-being” (O.S.U. Extension Community Development, 2001, p.1). Extension agents working in the community development program area: (1) Provide perspectives to residents and leaders regarding local development issues; (2) increase the knowledge base for individual and community decisions; (3) develop clientele
skills necessary to help achieve their individual and community goals; and (4) create an inclusive decision-making environment. Furthermore, community development programs conduct educational programs in: community based planning; community leadership; public issues education; economic development; sustainable communities; and community wellness and environment.

Staffing

Today, the Cooperative Extension System is focused far beyond the traditional agricultural programs that are its founding roots (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin, 1997). The Cooperative Extension Service links the education and research resources and other activities of 74 land-grant institutions, over 3,150 counties, and the United States Department of Agriculture. Furthermore, there are approximately 32,000 C.E.S. employees at the local, state, and federal level and nearly 2.8 million volunteers delivering educational programs to diverse audiences across the country (Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, 1995). The tremendous size and scope of the Cooperative Extension Service not only provides opportunities for the organization, it also presents challenges for employees at all levels.

As society has become increasingly complex and new issues affecting individuals and communities continue to surface, the Cooperative Extension Service has struggled at times to adapt (Hildreth, 1976). Although flexibility has long been a trademark of the Cooperative Extension System, there are many issues that have affected and will continue to affect how the organization responds to societal changes.
Cooperative Extension leaders have had to define program criteria, distinguish between education and service, balance audiences being served, define and support program focus areas, and understand knowledge delivery versus response to knowledge needs. While Extension leaders have largely given leadership to statewide issues, it is the county Extension agent that must balance the desires of the organization with the needs of local community members.

Cooperative Extension personnel are typically classified into five different categories, including administration, program specialists, county agents, paraprofessional or program assistants, and support or clerical staff (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin, 1997). Cooperative Extension staff at all levels are engaged in developing, implementing, and/or supporting educational programs. While all personnel are important to the organization, the county agent is the individual who provides the leadership to local programming efforts. County Extension agents are typically employed in agriculture, family and consumer sciences, 4-H youth development, community development, or some combination.

The county agent position was the first within the Cooperative Extension Service with the specialist structure developing in the 1920's as specialization in biological sciences increased. The first Extension agent was hired by the New York legislature in 1843 to give public lectures upon practical and scientific knowledge (Graham, 1994). While New York may have hired an individual to serve that capacity, the more commonly recognized date for the first appointment of a county agent is when W.C. Stallings was hired in 1906.
The Extension agent operates in an informal, non-certified educational setting that is quite different than a classroom teacher (Hildreth, 1976). A demanding position, the county Extension professional is under tremendous pressure as they work long hours, participate in evening and weekend meetings, spend time away from family, and balance multiple responsibilities and programs (Seevers, Graham, Gamon, & Conklin, 1997). With the potential for burnout and frustration by the county Extension agent, administrators must effectively recruit and support employees through training so that they are prepared to face the many unique challenges of the position. Furthermore, the fostering of a positive environment and development of an incentive system to achieve acceptable levels of performance is essential (Hilbreth).

Many state Cooperative Extension Services in the United States require that staff have obtained a master’s degree to enter employment as a county agent, with the absolute minimum being a bachelor’s degree (Graham, 1994). Extension agents in many states must work multi-county positions as they deliver educational programs through a variety of delivery methods (Graham). A core component of the Cooperative Extension Service is the volunteer corps that delivers many of the educational programs, developed by professional staff. A primary responsibility of many county Extension agents is to recruit, select, train, work with, and/or recognize adult volunteers (Graham).

Summary

Employee perceptions of justice focus on the distribution of resources (distributive), procedures in place to distribute resources (procedural), interactions
between supervisors and subordinates (interactional), and overall fairness of the organizations sub-systems (systemic). Positive perceptions of organizational justice may be related to the current level of job satisfaction of employees. Current levels of job satisfaction may be attributed to the fairness of the organization, or specific work roles of individual county Extension agents. County Extension agents, regardless of program area engage in professional development opportunities, including those offered by: (1) Autonomous groups; (2) associations; (3) professional schools; (4) universities; (5) employment settings; (6) independent providers of learning opportunities; and (7) purveyors of professional supplies and equipment.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The topics addressed in this chapter relate to the methodology utilized for the study. These include: type of research, population, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

Type of Research

The researcher used a descriptive-correlational research study design and a mailed questionnaire to collect data to accomplish the study objectives. Permission was secured from O.S.U. Extension administration to conduct the study. The final instrument was approved for exemption from review by human subjects by The Institutional Review Board at The Ohio State University (Protocol Number 02E0053).

Subject Selection

Ohio State University Extension county agents' were selected for this descriptive-correlational research. The population was obtained from the O.S.U. Extension computer personnel database, and included all agents who currently worked in a county Extension office as of February 1, 2002. The total number
included in this census study was 284 individuals with 100% full time equivalent appointment. Individuals participating in the study had at least one of the following titles in their job title: Agriculture and Natural Resources; Community Development; Family and Consumer Sciences; or 4-H Youth Development. Individuals who were personnel in a district office, regional center, or employed as an agent in any position other than at the county office were eliminated from the list. In an effort to control for coverage error, the list was further examined to eliminate duplications and to make certain it was current.

**Instrumentation**

The researcher developed a questionnaire to collect data containing four sections. Section I used the scale developed by Beugre' (1996) to measure four dimensions of organizational justice: distributive, procedural, interactional, and systemic justice.

The instrument developed by Beugre' consisted of 35 items presented on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly). Reliability coefficients for the scales were as follows: distributive justice scale, $x = .96$; procedural justice scale, $x = .87$; interactional justice scale, $x = .95$; and systemic justice scale, $x = .93$ (Beugre' & Baron, 2001).

Section II collected information on respondents' job satisfaction within O.S.U. Extension. This section of the instrument utilized a job satisfaction index developed by Brayfield-Rothe (1951) and subsequently modified by Warner (1973). The original eight-item Brayfield-Rothe index was modified through feedback from
a field test, resulting in four items that reflected low scores on a correlated split-half correlation being eliminated. Using the revised 14-item version of the Brayfield-Rothe “Job Satisfaction Index” resulted in a reliability of .89 (Bowen, 1980).

Section III collected information on personal and professional characteristics of respondents and included nine items. Personal characteristics investigated in this study were age, gender, and race/ethnicity. Professional characteristics investigated included primary program area (Agriculture and Natural Resources; Community Development; Family and Consumer Sciences; or 4-H Youth Development); length of employment with O.S.U. Extension; length of employment with any other Extension organization; length of employment with other non Extension organization; highest degree completed; major area of study with highest degree; tenure track or administrative and professional; Extension geographic district; and current or previous county chair responsibilities.

Section IV of the instrument collected information on Extension county agents’ involvement in continuing professional education activities and included 12 items based on Houle’s (1980) classification of providers of continuing professional education: autonomous group, professional associations, professional schools, universities, employment setting, independent providers, and purveyors of professional supplies and equipment. Additionally, based on Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (1998), participants were asked to identify for continuing professional education activity in which they participated whether their participation was self-
initiated or initiated by their supervisor or support team. One open-ended question was included allowing respondents to react to the instrument as a whole or to specific components.

**Validity**

A pilot test with 18 members of the Ohio Extension Agents Association was conducted to determine if the directions were applicable to O.S.U. Extension personnel as one section of the instrument was originally developed for use in the for-profit sector. Pilot study participants also reviewed the questionnaire for content and face validity with the researcher making appropriate modifications to the instrument based on their input.

**Reliability**

A pilot test was conducted with current O.S.U. Extension county agents that are members of the Ohio Extension Agents’ Association board of directors to establish the reliability of the instrument. The researcher calculated Cronbach’s Alpha to measure the reliability for each construct represented in the instrument. The researcher calculated Cronbach’s Alpha for the population with internal reliabilities ranging from .87 to .95.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Justice</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Justice</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional Justice</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic Justice</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1: Internal reliabilities (Cronbach’s Alpha) of Organizational Justice Constructs and Job Satisfaction Construct for O.S.U. Extension county agents' 

Data Collection

The researcher collected data according to the mailed survey procedure outlined by Dillman (1978). The survey questionnaire (Appendix A) was mailed on March 1, 2002 with a cover letter (Appendix B) co-signed by the researcher and Dr. Keith Smith, Director, O.S.U. Extension. Also included was a self-addressed stamped return envelope. Participants were encouraged to respond by March 15, 2002. Each questionnaire contained an identification number to assist in follow-up with non-respondents.

On March 8, 2002, a reminder e-mail message (Attachment C) was sent to all subjects. The first mailing resulted in a 71% response of the O.S.U. Extension agents included in the census. Those who had not responded by March 16, 2002 received an additional follow-up letter (Attachment D) from the researcher and a second copy of the study questionnaire with a response requested by March 28,
2002. The second mailing resulted in an additional 15\% response by O.S.U. Extension county agents included in the census. The researcher established March 28, 2002 as the final deadline for accepting data for analysis. The final study response rate was 86%.

**Data Analysis**

All data were coded, entered and analyzed using the SPSS statistical program (Norusis, 2002)). After all data were entered, the researcher randomly selected ten percent of returned questionnaires to check for accuracy. An accuracy rate of 99\% was calculated.

The researcher calculated descriptive statistics to meet the study objectives. The conventions offered by Davis (1971) were used in describing measures of association (table 3.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coefficient</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.70 or higher</td>
<td>Very Strong Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.50 to .69</td>
<td>Substantial Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.30 to .49</td>
<td>Moderate Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.10 to .29</td>
<td>Low Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.01 to .09</td>
<td>Negligible Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.2: Conventions Used to Describe Measures of Association

The researcher followed the constant comparative method first suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967) to identify common themes from the transcribed responses. Of the 246 respondents, 48 contributed 57 written comments in response
to the open-ended question. Two individuals having responsibility for employee development or having extensive experience in the Cooperative Extension System read the transcriptions and identified reoccurring themes. These two individuals read the transcribed comments to identify themes to control for researcher bias. The researcher subsequently read and reviewed the themes identified by each expert and collapsed the respective themes into holistic reoccurring themes. To strengthen the internal validity of the findings, the researcher had an additional faculty member familiar with qualitative research review the themes identified.
Figure 3.1: Conceptual scheme of potential relationships between selected personal and professional variables and OSU Extension 4-H Youth Development agents' perceptions of organizational justice and their level of job satisfaction.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter includes the presentation of the findings for the study. The findings are organized according to the objectives of the study.

**Objective 1: Describe the perceptions of organizational justice held by O.S.U. Extension county agents.**

**OSU County Extension Agents Perceptions of Organizational Justice**

Table 4.1, indicates OSU county Extension agents’ overall perceptions of organizational justice as well as the individual constructs of distributive, interactional, procedural, and systemic justice. Respondents had an overall mean score of 3.08 (sd .71) on organizational justice with individual constructs ranging from 2.49 to 3.61.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Potential Min/Max</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>S.D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Justice</td>
<td>1.00/4.80</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional Justice</td>
<td>1.00/5.00</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Justice</td>
<td>1.00/5.00</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic Justice</td>
<td>1.00/5.00</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Justice</td>
<td>1.03/4.86</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>1.93/5.00</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: OSU County Extension Agents Perceptions of Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction.

Objective 2: Describe the level of job satisfaction held by O.S.U. Extension county agents

OSU County Extension Agents Level of Job Satisfaction

Table 4.1 represents the current level of job satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension county agents. Respondents had a relatively positive level of job satisfaction with an overall mean score of 4.13 (sd .64).

Objective 3: Describe relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction.

Table 4.2 shows a low, positive association between O.S.U. Extension county agents' perceptions of organizational justice and current level of job satisfaction.
Overall, a positive relationship was found between organizational justice (.199) and job satisfaction. Additionally, positive relationships were found between job satisfaction and interactional justice (.235); procedural justice (.155); and systemic justice (.215).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Job Satisfaction</th>
<th>Davis Convention</th>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational Justice</td>
<td>.199</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=246)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Justice</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=246)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional Justice</td>
<td>.235</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=246)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Justice</td>
<td>.155</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=246)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic Justice</td>
<td>.215</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n=245)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2: Relationship Between Perception of Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction of Ohio State University Extension County Agents.

Objective 4 Describe O.S.U. Extension county agents' selected personal characteristics of gender, age and race/ethnic background.

Gender, Age, Race/Ethnicity of O.S.U. Extension county agents’

As shown in table 4.3, 55 percent of the Extension agents were female and 45 percent were male. Respondents ranged in age from 25 to 67 years with a mean age for the respondents of 45 years (sd 9). Respondents were 96 percent white; 2 percent African American; 1 percent Asian or Pacific Islander; and 2 percent, other.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Median</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>9</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years with O.S.U. Extension</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5 years</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11-16 years</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>16-20 years</td>
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<td>21-25 years</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>26-30 years</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>31 or more years</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years with other Extension</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>26 or more years</td>
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Table 4.3: Personal, Professional, and Organizational Characteristics of O.S.U. Extension county agents'.
Table 4.3 continued

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<th>Characteristic</th>
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<td>Ag. &amp; Natural Resources</td>
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<td>Community Development</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective 5  Describe O.S.U. Extension county agents' selected professional and organizational characteristics, including years in current position as an Extension agent; years in other Extension organization; years in other business/industry; current program area; highest degree completed; major area of study with highest degree; county chair; Extension district of employment; appointment; and continuing professional education involvement.

Years in Current Position, Other Extension Service, or Other Business/Organization

Table 4.3 shows data on the respondents' years of experience as an O.S.U. Extension county agent. The mean was 13 years (sd nine), median 12 years and mode one year with a range of 1-35 year's experience.

Table 4.3 shows data on respondents' years of experience with another Extension service. Only 29 respondents (12%) reported working for an Extension service in another state. The mean was six years (sd seven) with a range of 1-29 years with median years of experience four and mode one year.

As shown in table 4.3, 144 respondents (59%) had worked for another organization or business. The average number of years experience was ten years (sd eight), with a range of 1-40 years. The median years of experience was seven and mode was two years.

Highest Degree Completed and Major Area of Study

A majority (88%) of the respondents had a Master's degree (table 4.3). Five percent held a Bachelor's degree, and over five percent of the respondents reported their highest degree as a Doctoral degree.
Table 4.3 also shows data concerning the major area of study with highest degree earned. Forty-three percent of O.S.U. Extension county agents had their major area of study in education.

**Primary Program Area, District of Employment, and County Chair Responsibilities**

Respondents indicated their primary program area of responsibility with the largest percentage (35%) being 4-H youth development Extension county agents. Thirty-one percent of the respondents were agriculture and natural resources Extension county agents; 26% family and consumer sciences and 5% community development agents.

Forty-eight percent of the study respondents had served previously, or are currently serving, in the county chair position. Consequently, 52% indicated that they have not previously, nor were they currently serving as county chair (table 4.3).

Table 4.3 shows data relating to the O.S.U. Extension district of employment by respondents. Twenty-four percent of respondents work in the southwest; 22% in the northwest; 22% in the northeast; 16% in the south; and 16% in the east district.

**Continuing Professional Education**

Data on participation of respondents in specific continuing professional education opportunities is provided in table 4.4. Individuals also reported if their participation was self-initiated, or if a supervisor/support team initiated their participation (table 4.4). Overall, Extension county agents are very active in continuing professional education opportunities with over 60% of respondents
participating in seven of the 12 opportunities. Furthermore, Extension county agents primarily self-initiated their participation in continuing professional education opportunities, with 80% self-initiated on each of the opportunities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuing Professional Development Opportunity</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Initiation of Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Met informally with colleagues</td>
<td>237 Yes 97 % 7 No 3</td>
<td>211 Self-Initiated 90 % 24 Support Team Supervisor 10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read books, journals, or Newsletters</td>
<td>240 Yes 98 % 5 No 2</td>
<td>234 Self-Initiated 98 % 5 Support Team Supervisor 2 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended a National Association meeting</td>
<td>145 Yes 60 % 99 No 40</td>
<td>130 Self-Initiated 91 % 13 Support Team Supervisor 9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend Non-Extension Professional Conference</td>
<td>155 Yes 64 % 88 No 36</td>
<td>146 Self-Initiated 96 % 6 Support Team Supervisor 4 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in Graduate Program</td>
<td>42 Yes 18 % 195 No 82</td>
<td>36 Self-Initiated 82 % 8 Support Team Supervisor 18 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed course work at College/University</td>
<td>52 Yes 22 % 187 No 78</td>
<td>47 Self-Initiated 87 % 7 Support Team Supervisor 13 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Education not at Ohio State University</td>
<td>52 Yes 22 % 187 No 78</td>
<td>48 Self-Initiated 92 % 4 Support Team Supervisor 8 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued on next page

Table 4.4: O.S.U. Extension county agents Participation in and Initiation of Selected Continuing Professional Education Opportunities.
Table 4.4 continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuing Professional Development Opportunity</th>
<th>Participation</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participated in O.S.U. Extension in-service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participated in Training or Education offered by a for-profit company</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Trade Show</td>
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<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Met Informally with Professionals</td>
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<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation in Continuing Education through O.S.U.</td>
<td>59</td>
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</table>
Objective 6 Investigate relationships between selected personal, professional and organizational characteristics, and agents’ perceptions of organizational justice.

Organizational Justice and Personal Characteristics

Low, negative associations were found between Extension county agents' age and perception of organizational justice (-.144) and perception of systemic justice (-.163). Low, positive associations were found between age and perception of distributive (.100), interactional (.122) and procedural (.107) justice. Low associations were found between perception of systemic justice and gender (.131) and perception of distributive justice and race/ethnicity (.149).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Race/ Ethnicity</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Academic Major</th>
<th>Highest Degree</th>
<th>Years with O.S.U. Extension</th>
<th>Years with other Extension</th>
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<tr>
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</table>

a Eta statistic  
b Point-Biserial statistic  
c Pearson's r statistic

Table 4.5: Relationship Between Selected Organizational Characteristics and O.S.U. Extension county agents' Perceptions of Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction.
Table 4.5 continued

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<tr>
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<td>.164</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.031</td>
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<td>(n=239)</td>
<td>(n=244)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procedural Justice</td>
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<td>.270</td>
<td>.167</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(n=242)</td>
<td>(n=239)</td>
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<td>(n=245)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systemic Justice</td>
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<td>(n=245)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

a Eta statistic
b Point-Biserial statistic
c Pearson's r statistic
Organizational Justice and Professional Characteristics

As shown in table 4.5, low associations were found between respondents' academic major and perception of organizational (.164), interactional (.234), procedural (.207), and systemic (.152) justice. Low associations were also found between highest degree earned and perception of organizational (.258), distributive (.227), interactional (.191), and systemic justice (.227). A moderate association was found between highest degree earned and procedural justice (.319).

Organizational Justice and Organizational Characteristics

Table 4.5 shows low, negative associations between respondents' years employed with O.S.U. Extension and perception of organizational (-.182), distributive (-.100), interactional (-.192), procedural (-.104), and systemic (-.211) justice. Low, negative associations were also found between years with another Extension service and perception of organizational (-.104), interactional (-.140), and procedural (-.147) justice. Low, positive associations were found between years with other business or organization and perception of interactional (.104) and systemic (.142) justice. Low associations were also found between primary program area of responsibility and perception of organizational (.146), interactional (.164), procedural (.167), and systemic (.233) justice.

Low associations were found between Extension district of employment and perception of distributive (.280), procedural (.270), and systemic (.246) justice. Moderate associations were found between Extension district of employment and perception of organizational (.322) and interactional (.301) justice.
Objective 7  Investigate relationships between selected personal, professional and organizational characteristics, and agents’ current levels of job satisfaction.

Personal, Professional, and Organizational Characteristics and Job Satisfaction

Table 4.5 shows low associations between respondents’ job satisfaction and Extension district of employment (.216), program area (.143); race/ethnicity (.149); and academic major (.193). A positive correlation was found between job satisfaction and highest degree completed (.137). A low negative correlation is revealed between agents’ current level of job satisfaction and years with other Extension service (-.246).

Objective 8:  Explore relationships between participation in and initiation of continuing professional education and the agents’ perception of organizational justice and job satisfaction.

Participation in and Initiation of Continuing Professional Education and Organizational Justice

Table 4.6 shows low, positive correlations between O.S.U. Extension county agents’ participation in continuing professional education and perception of organizational (.108), distributive (.127), and systemic (.119) justice. A low, negative association was found between Extension county agents’ initiation of their participation and perceptions of systemic (.122) justice.
Participation in and Initiation of Continuing Professional Education and Job Satisfaction

Table 4.6 shows a low, negative association between Extension county agents’ participation in continuing professional education opportunities and their current level of job satisfaction (-.150). A low, positive association is shown between Extension county agents’ initiation of their participation in continuing professional education opportunities and job satisfaction (.113).

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<th>Participation</th>
<th>Initiation</th>
</tr>
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<td>-.086 (n=246)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distributive Justice</td>
<td>.127 (n=244)</td>
<td>-.090 (n=244)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedural Justice</td>
<td>.033 (n=245)</td>
<td>.005 (n=245)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactional Justice</td>
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<td>-.041 (n=245)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Systemic Justice</td>
<td>.119 (n=244)</td>
<td>-.122 (n=244)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>-.150 (n=245)</td>
<td>.113 (n=245)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6: Relationship Between Participation in and Initiation of Continuing Professional Education and Perceptions of Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension County Agents
Open Ended Question Summary

The researcher identified four emerging themes from the open-ended question.

1. Inequity of salary increases in regard to academic rank, job tenure, and position responsibilities;

2. Inconsistencies in Extension Administration support;

3. Ambivalence of support team concept and practice; and

4. Dedication to job in spite of perceived inequities in decision outcomes.
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UMI
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

O.S.U. Extension has been in existence for nearly 100 years, serving the needs of Ohio citizens through a variety of educational programs, including 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, agricultural and natural resources, and community development. In recent years, change has been a constant for O.S.U. Extension, with change being more rapid and complex in the current state of economic uncertainty. A complicating factor in the management of O.S.U. Extension is the autonomy of individual employees and their evolving roles and responsibilities, coupled with the flexibility afforded to supervisors when carrying out their administrative responsibilities. For the past several years, O.S.U. Extension has prepared for and now faces many challenges including: Balancing the budget under extreme fiscal constraint; addressing pay equity among individual employees; employee workloads and balancing work/life issues; promotion and tenure review; and supporting the tremendously complex and unique county agent position as they develop and implement educational programs.
The many changes that are taking place in the organization have a direct impact on the county agent, ultimately impacting volunteers, members and service recipients. As O.S.U Extension experiences continual change and seeks to address the many challenges that such a large organization encounters, it is important and necessary to understand perceptions of organizational fairness and current level of job satisfaction of employees. Extension county agents are faced with budgetary cut-backs affecting personnel and operations; increasing structured volunteer selection and management policies and procedures; the need to balance traditional programs with expectations to engage non-traditional program audiences; emerging community and university partnerships; increasing legal implications; and the need to balance administrative responsibilities (e.g. volunteer management, county operations, staffing) with the delivery of quality educational programs.

There has been very little research conducted to investigate perceptions of organizational justice of Extension county agents. Recently, Kutiliek (2002) investigated organizational justice as it relates to work/life guidelines within O.S.U Extension. In terms of job satisfaction in other Extension organizations, numerous studies have been conducted (Boltes, Lippke, & Gregory, 1995; Bowen, Radhakrishna, & Keyser, 1994; Keffer, 1976; Mallilo, 1990; Miller, 1997; Nestor & Leary, 2000; Riggs & Beus, 1993) that have investigated Extension professionals’ current level of job satisfaction. However, no study has been conducted that
investigated relationships between current perceptions of organizational justice and levels of job satisfaction and selected personal, professional, and organizational characteristics of O.S.U. Extension county agents.

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors affecting O.S.U. Extension county agents' perceptions of organizational justice and job satisfaction. Specifically the objectives were to:

1. Describe the perceptions of organizational justice held by O.S.U. Extension county agents.

2. Describe the current level of job satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension county agents.

3. Describe O.S.U. Extension county agents’ selected personal characteristics of gender, age and race/ethnic background.

4. Describe O.S.U. Extension county agents’ selected professional (academic major and highest degree) and organizational characteristics (years in current position as an Extension agent; years with other Extension Service; years with other organization; primary program area; county chair responsibilities; district of employment; and faculty or A&P position) and participation in and initiation of continuing professional education.

5. Investigate relationships between selected personal, professional, and organizational characteristics and agents’ perceptions of organizational justice.

6. Investigate relationships between selected personal, professional, and organizational characteristics and agents’ current level of job satisfaction.
7. Explore relationships between agents’ perceptions of organizational justice and level of job satisfaction.

8. Explore relationships between participation in continuing professional education and the agents’ perception of organizational justice and level of job satisfaction.

Study Design

This was a descriptive-correlational study that utilized a mailed questionnaire to collect data about the study objectives. The instrument was developed from Beugres’ (1996) organizational justice instrument and Werners’ (1973) job satisfaction instrument. The organizational justice section was comprised of distributive, interactional, procedural, and systemic justice constructs. Additionally, the instrument collected data on Extension county agents’ participation in and initiation of continuing professional education using Houle (1980) and Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (1998) as a framework to generate instrument items. Finally, the researcher collected selected personal (gender, ethnic background, age); professional (academic major, highest degree earned); and organizational (primary program area, faculty or administrative and professional, county chair responsibilities, district, and years of employment with O.S.U. Extension, with other Extension service, and with other business/organization) data on each respondent.

A census of O.S.U. Extension county agents was used for this research. Individuals participating in the study had one or more of the following in their job titles: Agricultural and Natural Resources; Community Development; Family and
Consumer Sciences; or 4-H Youth Development. Individuals who were personnel in a district office, regional center, or employed in any position other than at a county office were not included in this study.

Findings & Conclusions

This section will discuss the findings from chapter 4 summarized by the following areas: (a) Agents’ perceptions regarding organizational justice; (b) agents’ current level of job satisfaction; (c) characteristics of the population; (d) participation in continuing professional education; (e) relationship between organizational justice and job satisfaction; (f) relationship between characteristics and perception of organizational justice; (g) relationship between characteristics and level of job satisfaction; and (h) relationship between agents’ participation in continuing professional education and perceptions of organizational justice and level of job satisfaction.

It is important as findings and conclusions are discussed that the culture of the organization be considered. The structure that is in place and the processes enacted by individuals and groups are often how organizational culture is articulated and reinforced (Zdenek, 1998). Shein (1992) defined organizational culture as:

a pattern of shared basic assumptions that a group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p.12)
Employees working in organizations, regardless of the organizations size, are affected by the culture that has been established over the time of the organizations existence. Siehl and Martin (1990) suggested that an organization's culture reflects long-standing core values that historically define the image of the organization. In fact, the culture of an organization may remain static and not really change, even though there are tremendous internal and external forces. Safrit, Conklin, and Jones (2002) found that the organizational values of O.S.U. Extension had changed only very slightly since a previous study was conducted ten years prior, indicating that the organization has remained relatively static.

Agents' Perceptions of Organizational Justice

O.S.U. Extension county agents had an average perception of organizational justice with a mean score of 3.08 (sd .71). In terms of individual constructs that comprise organizational justice, respondents did have relatively positive perceptions of interactional and procedural justice. Respondents had a relatively negative perception of distributive and systemic justice.

Considering the current financial situation of Ohio's economy and, more specifically, the financial outlook for O.S.U. Extension, a negative perception (mean 2.49; sd .91) of distributive justice was to be expected. O.S.U. Extension employees received a very minimal ($395.00) salary increase the previous year that was intended to cover additional expenses related to parking and medical benefits. Other than financial rewards, in terms of salary, O.S.U. Extension struggles to identify rewards for Extension county agents for outstanding work or for superior
accomplishments due, in part, to the tremendous size and scope of the organization. Additionally, the researcher would suggest that a perception exists within the organization that O.S.U. Extension determines salary increases in terms of equality rather than basing the salary adjustments on performance of the individual. The organization establishes a baseline salary increase with everything above being merit; unfortunately, the percentage above the baseline is very minimal, in most cases.

It is recognized that distributive justice refers to the distribution of decision outcomes broadly defined; however, the researcher does believe that respondents focused on the distribution of salaries or other financial outcomes as the initial question was generally related to salary. O.S.U. Extension has made attempts to offer additional incentives to Extension county agents by financially supporting continuing professional development, travel, professional dues, and offering competitive innovative grants or program development and specialization support. The researcher would suggest that Extension county agents do not consider this additional support as offsetting the perceived inequities in salary. Additionally, more recently, innovative grants have been eliminated due to the budget cuts, travel budgets reduced and professional development dollars limited.

The researcher further concludes that O.S.U. Extension county agents believe that the financial compensation offered by the institution is not equal to comparison positions in other organizations or institutions. This discrepancy is not uncommon with employees and is further supported by several written comments provided by
respondents. Respondents indicated that: “I love my job – salary does not justify my time or efforts. I feel my salary is not a reward for my performance”; “our financial compensation (pay) is much lower than comparable positions in other states”; and “feel salaries and benefits need to be kept level with other Extension universities to attract candidates for positions”.

O.S.U. Extension county agents had a somewhat positive perception of interactional justice with a mean score of 3.51 (s.d. 85). Interactional justice refers to the “quality of interpersonal treatment people receive during the enactment of organizational procedures” (Bies & Moag, 1986, p. 44). Extension administration has increased efforts to foster communication in the organization and offer county agents a voice in statewide issues that will affect them locally. Additionally, Extension county agents may be taking advantage of electronic communication or face-to-face meetings, viewing and participating in satellite updates, reading communiqués from administrators or program area leaders, or participating in any number of active task forces, teams, or committees that are helping guide future decision-making in the organization. The relatively positive perception of interactional justice is expected in a culture where high levels of interaction, at various levels, are evident.

While individuals may perceive the actual rewards that are distributed as unfair, they may perceive the procedures used to determine those distributions as fair (Greenberg, 1996). Respondents in this study had a somewhat positive perception of procedural justice with a mean score of 3.61 (s.d. 83). The researcher concludes that
although agents do not feel that the distribution of outcomes as fair, they do perceive
the procedures in place as relatively fair. Within O.S.U. Extension, there has been
increased effort to provide procedural information on the Extension administration
Web site, through direct communication, and through written updates and memos.
Therefore, employees have more opportunity to read and understand how decisions
are being made and are provided the opportunity to ask questions and seek
clarification. In some cases, Extension county agents are directly involved in the
development of a new policy or procedure.

Over the past several years O.S.U. Extension has placed increased emphasis
on engaging employees representing all program areas and positions in meaningful
roles related to the future of the organization. This effort has resulted in a perceived
increase in the number of Extension county agents who are serving on statewide task
forces, committees, or teams that provide input and direction to specific
programmatic and/or organizational issues. The following groups have included (or
actively sought input from) Extension county agents: Futuring Task Force;
Volunteer Selection Task Force; Directors Internal Advisory Committee; Extension
Endowment and Discretionary Fund; Revenue Generating Partnerships and
Competitive Grants; County Budgets; Specialist Staffing Patterns; Recovering Costs
of Educational Materials; and Ohioline Use Committee. Serving on one of these
committees offers Extension county agents the opportunity to not only have a voice
in the process of decision-making, but also to have direct input into the potential or
real outcomes that result in new policies, procedures or guidelines.

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It is somewhat difficult to separate interactional and procedural justice as they closely relate (Greenberg, 1993). The researcher concludes that Extension county agents perceptions of both interactional and procedural justice are positive due to the focus O.S.U. Extension administration has placed on engaging employees in teams, task forces, and committees. Furthermore, respondents feel that they are provided an opportunity for input into decisions made about their job; however, the researcher would conclude that perceptions of both constructs could have been even more positive considering the emphasis placed on engaging Extension county agents in task forces, committees, teams and the high levels of interaction that are a part of the clan culture of this organization (Berrio, 1999).

Systemic justice refers to the overall perception of justice in the organization or the perceived fairness of the structure that policies, procedures, and outcome distributions result (Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992). O.S.U. Extension county agents had a somewhat negative perception of systemic justice with a mean score of 2.94 (sd .81). The researcher concludes that this negative perception of systemic justice is the result of the many, conflicting subsystems that produce and distribute potentially inaccurate and inconsistent information (Beugre’, 1998) within the O.S.U. Extension structure. Organizations are social systems in which individuals have “norms, values, shared beliefs, and paradigms of what is right and what is wrong, what is legitimate and what is not and how things are done” (Bennis, 1989, p. 30). In an organization the size of O.S.U. Extension, informal and formal groups may be sending congruent or incongruent reinforcements that might support or
undermine the image that the individual has about the organization (Thompson & Luthans, 1990). Within O.S.U. Extension, individuals who comprise the subsystems essentially determine, based on past experiences, how the structure will operate in terms of what is communicated and how it is communicated.

The fact that Extension county agents had a negative perception of systemic justice should be reason for concern within the organization. Respondents likely feel that decision-makers do not have complete or accurate information and are not consistent in applying decision outcomes. This overall negative perception of the fairness of the system could be detrimental to the organization in attracting quality candidates in the future. Current Extension county agents may not provide a very positive overall picture of the organization based on their perceived treatment.

**Agents’ Current Level of Job Satisfaction**

O.S.U. Extension county agents have a rather high level of job satisfaction with a mean of 4.13 (sd .64). The relatively high level of job satisfaction of O.S.U. Extension county agents may be explained by the work roles of the individuals.

Vroom (1964) suggested that individuals' job satisfaction is directly related to the extent their jobs provide them with rewarding outcomes such as pay, variety of stimulation, consideration from their supervisor, opportunity for promotion, interaction with co-workers, opportunity to influence decisions that will directly influence them, and control over their pace of work. The researcher concludes that the relatively high level of current job satisfaction may be explained by the presence of several work roles in O.S.U. Extension identified by Vroom. Working for O.S.U.
Extension offers employees interaction with co-workers, a variety of types of stimulation, opportunity to influence decisions, and control over their pace of work.

O.S.U. Extension county agents have many opportunities to interact with peers through formal and informal networks. County agents have formal mentors that are assigned when starting in the job, have informal mentors who they have identified, and participate within a network that they often self-identify with based on personal interests, similar county program, or geographic location. Informal or formal mentoring and networking opportunities allow for a tremendous amount of communication between employees. Additionally, many county agents participate on subject matter teams, committees, or task forces that allow them to interact with peers and establish professional relationships that further offer opportunities for ongoing communication about program development, implementation, and evaluation.

O.S.U. Extension county agents have unique opportunities within their county to engage in a variety of programs on a regular basis, work with diverse populations, and directly see the impact they are having on clientele. Extension county agents may work with very traditional types of programs (small family farms, resident camping or nutrition education) one day; and the very next day be engaged in challenging discussions or program development efforts focusing on rural land use issues, grant writing to support after-school programs, teaching financial management courses, or assisting with attracting large business to improve economic conditions of the community. County agents taking advantage of the vast
opportunities in their communities are likely more satisfied as new and innovative programs stimulate their creative thinking and challenge them (Vroom, 1964).

There are many opportunities for O.S.U. Extension county agents to be actively involved in decisions that directly affect their everyday work responsibilities. Extension county agents are directly involved in decision-making processes through their responsibilities as county chair or co-chair, supervising program assistants, volunteers or other employees, and through their leadership positions in professional associations. It is very common for county agents to be invited to be a member of a task force or committee that will potentially impact their future responsibilities. Participation in each of these committees or task forces allow county agents to provide input and recommendations on potential impact that future decisions might have, therefore influencing how or if decisions are made.

Furthermore, the autonomy offered O.S.U. Extension allows county agents' to make their own decisions in terms of daily tasks and projects.

The Extension county agent position is very autonomous, allowing individuals to make key decisions that affect the development, implementation, and evaluation of educational programs. While the agent must work with a number of stakeholders when developing programs, it remains up to the individual agent to determine their degree of participation, level of responsibility they want to accept, and manner they choose to complete their tasks. Supervisors, regardless of how defined (e.g. district director, district specialist, or county chair) do not, on a regular basis, require county agents to work at a pre-determined pace and develop or
participate in a minimum number of programs each year. Essentially, the pace at which employees work or accomplish program goals is determined by the individual county agent.

**Relationship Between Organizational Justice and Job Satisfaction**

Overall, there was a low, positive correlation between perception of organizational justice and job satisfaction. As Extension county agents' perceptions of organizational justice become more positive, their levels of job satisfaction increase. In terms of specific constructs, interactional, procedural, and systemic justice all were positively correlated with O.S.U. Extension county agents' current level of job satisfaction. Although perceiving rewards as unfair, O.S.U. Extension county agents gain satisfaction from other sources, including the manner in which policies are developed and the level of communication and involvement.

There are several studies that have confirmed the impact of justice on job satisfaction. Specifically, Folger and Konovsky (1989) confirmed that the positive perceptions of distributive and procedural justice led to satisfaction. Additionally, several researchers have noted the importance and impact of procedural justice on satisfaction (Alexander & Ruderman, 1987; Lind & Tyler, 1988). The researcher would suggest that Extension county agents derive at least some satisfaction from interaction (e.g. opportunity for voice, participation in decision-making timely feedback) and procedures (e.g. how policies, procedures, and rules are put into place) that are in place in the organization. Furthermore, in terms of systemic justice,
Extension county agents’ job satisfaction increases as they perceive the overall organization, including the structures and processes in place, to be fair.

The culture that exists within O.S.U. Extension is one that supports interaction, communication, consensus, commitment and loyalty. Berrio (1999) found that O.S.U. Extension, like a large majority of higher education institutions, is a clan culture. The clan culture is viewed as a friendly place to work, where individuals share a lot of themselves with each other through interaction at various levels and in various forms. There exists a high level of commitment among employees, and tradition and loyalty are important. Finally, the clan culture emphasizes individual development, morale, teamwork, participation, and consensus. Like many organizations, there also exist other types of cultures within O.S.U. Extension, although not as dominant as the clan culture. These include hierarchy, market, and adhocracy cultures.

**Characteristics of the Population**

The personal demographic variables of gender, age, and race/ethnic background were investigated in this study. Of the 246 O.S.U. Extension county agents responding, 55% were female and 45% were male. Respondents ranged in age from 25 to 67 with an average age of 45 years. The large majority of respondents (95%) were white, not of Hispanic origin.

The personal characteristic findings support the researchers observations that the organization is almost evenly divided in terms of male and female Extension agents. Additionally, the findings support the importance of recruiting and retaining
Extension agents with diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds. With over 95% of Extension county agents being white, non Hispanic, there will continue to be challenges in terms of expanding programming opportunities to engage audiences that have previously not been engaged.

O.S.U. Extension county agents responding indicated that they had worked an average of 13 years with the organization. The study findings indicate that one-quarter of O.S.U. Extension county agents have worked for the organization one to five years. Additionally, nearly one-quarter of all respondents have worked for the organization for 21 years or more.

A rather low percentage (11%) of respondents had worked for another Extension organization for an average of six years prior to joining O.S.U. Extension. However, over half (59%) had worked for another organization or business other than an Extension Service. These findings would suggest that O.S.U. Extension hires individuals with previous experience. With a large percentage of individuals having prior experience with other organizations and businesses, the need for formal and informal networks becomes increasingly important to help those new employees become accustomed to the operation of this dynamic organization. Working for O.S.U. Extension presents unique challenges for individuals, therefore requiring that they have the support networks in place to help guide them through frustrating and challenging situations.

A large majority (89%) of the responding agents' hold Masters degrees while only 5.0% have a Bachelors' degree and 5.0% have Doctoral degrees. Forty-three

95
percent of respondents had education majors with their highest degree. Nineteen percent had a major in agriculture, eighteen percent in home economics, and 10% identifying “other”.

The findings would indicate that O.S.U. Extension county agents are highly educated. This would be further supported by the requirement that all newly hired Extension county agents must hold a Masters degree. The small percentage of individuals who hold a Bachelors degree likely began their professional career prior to the requirement to hire only Masters candidates and are pursuing their Masters degree and/or are engaged in academic course work. A relatively small number of Extension county agents were grandfathered and not required to pursue the masters’ degree.

The relatively high percentage of respondents indicating a major area of study being education is consistent with observations of the researcher. O.S.U. Extension is first and foremost an educational entity therefore it is appropriate that a majority of respondents would hold that degree. The researcher notes that 10% of respondents indicated that their major area of study was “other”. This may be attributed to the growth of O.S.U. Extension in terms of educational programs being offered, therefore requiring individuals with diverse educational backgrounds. In some cases, such as 4-H Youth Development, less emphasis has been placed on the technical subject matter training of potential Extension county agents and more on their communication, program planning, implementation, and evaluation skills. Additionally, the growth of the Community Development position has required the
hiring of individuals with backgrounds or academic training in economic
development, business administration, marketing, public administration, and
sociology.

Under half (48%) of respondents indicated that they currently served or had
previously served in the county chair position. The researcher believes that this
percentage has and will continue to grow, as there is an increased emphasis in the
organization to evaluate chairs’ performances and encourage and allow for co-chairs
to serve in counties. Additionally, the position carries tremendous responsibility, yet
individuals in almost every county have program responsibilities as well. The
researcher would suggest that, unless there is more financial reward or opportunity to
reduce program responsibilities, more employees will step down from the position or
serve in a co-chair capacity only. The responsibilities associated with the county
chair position in addition to program responsibilities are becoming too much for
individuals to manage, especially considering the minimal financial reward.

Respondents were relatively evenly distributed among the five Extension
districts. The Southwest (24%), Northwest (22%), and Northeast (22%) had larger
percentage of respondents due to the overall number of employees in each of those
Districts. Each of the three districts having over 20% of respondents have the larger
metropolitan areas of the state, including Cincinnati, Dayton, Akron, Toledo, Lima,
and Cleveland.
Participation in Continuing Professional Education

A majority of respondents (97%) reported that they had met informally with Extension colleagues over the past 12 months to discuss specific issues or concerns related to their program area. At the same time, 80% of respondents had also indicated that they met with professional colleagues, outside Extension. During this same time, 98% had read books, journals, or newsletters related to their specific program area and/or Extension program in general.

Over the past 12 months, a majority (59%) attended a national association meeting that represents their specific program area or Extension in general. During that same time period, 64% of respondents had attended a conference that was not sponsored or directly related to specific Extension programs or Extension in general. A majority (60%) of respondents had participated in a trade show at a conference or meeting. All respondents (100%) had participated in an in-service program offered by O.S.U. Extension. A relatively small percentage of respondents (18%) enrolled in a graduate program at a college or university during the past 12 months. At the same time, 22% of respondents had actually completed course work at a college or university.

Nearly one-quarter of respondents (22%) had participated in a continuing education program offered by an educational institution other than The Ohio State University. During that same 12 month time period, 25% of respondents had participated in a continuing education program (not credit earning or Extension in-
service) offered by The Ohio State University. Over 30% of respondents had participated in a training or education program offered by a for-profit business or organization.

Overall, O.S.U. Extension county agents actively participate in continuing professional development opportunities. The high percentage of individuals participating in informal dialogue with other Extension professionals and colleagues may be explained by the fact that this is a learning organization that encourages individuals to dialogue and seek out expertise from both within the organization and from potential partners in local communities. The high percentage of individuals reading books, journals, and newsletters may be explained by the fact that there are many more resources available on the world-wide-web and that many journals (specifically the Journal of Extension) are delivered through electronic mail.

O.S.U. Extension county agents are expected to make progress towards promotion and tenure and ultimately engage in scholarly activities. Extension county agents need to identify professional meetings and conferences to attend and submit presentations in order to include these types of scholarly activities in their performance reviews. This fact, accompanied by the past history of strong financial support for attending conferences and association meetings, likely attributes to the relatively high percentages of individuals who indicated participation in meetings, conferences, and trade-shows. The levels of participation in these national conferences may decline as future financial constraints limit the ability of the Extension county agent to travel and participate. Individuals who rely on attendance
at professional associations as a source of professional renewal or development, yet are not able to attend due to financial constraints, may become increasingly dissatisfied in their position. Additionally, Extension county agents may view their inability to attend professional conferences as unfair, especially if their colleagues in other counties are attending.

Recognizing that a large majority of Extension county agents meet the minimum academic degree requirement explains the modest percentages of individuals who have enrolled and/or completed course work at a college or university. However, there is an increasing trend for individuals to return to complete Doctoral degrees, and as several current Extension county agents are doing so at this time.

The percentages of individuals who reported participating in continuing professional education programs offered by The Ohio State University, other institutions, or for-profit organizations was higher than the researcher had anticipated. Over the past several years, there has been a noticeable increase in encouraging Extension county agents to seek new partnerships and programming opportunities. These new opportunities may have increased the need for additional professional development beyond what the Extension organization is capable of providing, consequently meaning that agents must look to other sources. The relatively large number of individuals not participating in continuing professional education offered by these providers may be due to: (1) Agents not aware of
opportunities; (2) agents not having time to participate; or (3) opportunities are not consistent with professional needs in terms of program or personal development.

Initiation of Continuing Professional Education

The researcher also collected information in relation to how an individual came to participate in the identified continuing professional education. Individuals either self-initiated their participation or were encouraged by a supervisor or their support team to participate. Large percentages of respondents indicated that they self-initiated their participation when: (a) Meeting informally with colleagues (90%); (b) reading books, journals, or newsletters (91%); (c) attending a national association meeting (91%); (d) attending a non-Extension professional conference (96%); (e) enrolling in a graduate program (82%); (f) completing course work (87%); (g) participating in a continuing education program other than at The Ohio State University (92%); (h) participating in an O.S.U. Extension in-service (88%); (i) participation in training/education offered by a for-profit (95%); (j) participation in a trade show (99%); and (k) informally meeting with professionals (98%).

The Extension county agents' supervisors or support teams did provide some encouragement for professionals to attend or participate in continuing professional education. In most cases, less than ten percent of respondents who indicated they participated did so because of encouragement by their supervisor or support team. Supervisors or support teams played a more notable role related to encouraging
agents to: (a) Meet informally with colleagues (10%); (b) enroll in graduate school (18%); (c) complete course work (13%); and (d) participate in O.S.U. Extension in-services (28%).

O.S.U. Extension county agents primarily initiate their own participation in continuing professional education programs. The individual’s supervisor or support team does not play a significant role in determining the participation in continuing professional education for Extension county agents. While this may be contrary to the desire of O.S.U Extension administration, the researcher identifies several potential reasons for this: (a) Agents’ are highly educated upon entering the organization and are skilled at identifying their strengths and weaknesses, therefore able to identify their own professional needs; (b) agents’ attend continuing professional education programs based on the types of programs they want to provide locally and the supervisor or support team may not be fully aware of local needs; (c) the support team/supervisor does not function in a manner that provides input on specific participation in continuing professional education opportunities; (d) there are no requirements to submit professional development plans as a part of performance reviews; and (e) support team members (i.e. district directors and specialist) support a large number of employees and are not able to focus on professional development opportunities.

Relationship between Perception of Organizational Justice and Characteristics

There were low, positive correlations between age and perceptions of distributive, interactional, and procedural justice. This is consistent with Leventhal,
Karuza, and Fry (1990) who suggested that as individuals grow older, they are likely to be with the organization a longer period of time, potentially leading to acceptance of established procedures. In addition to accepting the procedures, agents are accepting, as fair, the distribution of outcomes and interactions that are taking place. Perhaps agents feel that the interaction is fair as there have been increased opportunities to participate in decision-making and that the distribution of outcomes is fair as they compare to others in similar situations in the organization. On the other hand, Extension agents may indicate a fair perception as they are at a point in their lives, in terms of age, where they know it is not going to change.

There were low, negative correlations between age and Extension county agents’ overall perceptions of organizational justice and the individual construct of systemic justice. The findings would suggest that as individuals grow older they perceive that the overall system is unfair in terms of the accuracy and completeness of information obtained and the consistency that decisions are being made. The findings are consistent with Beugre’ (1998) who suggested that as individuals are with an organization longer, ultimately increasing in age, their perception of systemic justice become more negative.

There were low relationships between individuals’ highest degree received and perception of organizational, distributive justice, interactional and systemic justice. A moderate association was found between highest degree earned and perception of procedural justice. Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of the distribution of outcomes, decisions, or resources within an organization.

The researcher concludes that individuals with doctoral degrees have lower perceptions of organizational justice as they feel they do not receive outcomes, more specifically salary or other rewards (travel, professional development support), that are consistent with the level of education that they have obtained. The researcher also concludes that county agents with doctoral degrees do not perceive that the distribution of outcomes is consistent or equal with others who have doctoral degrees within the Extension organization, such as an Extension specialist, district director or faculty member with primary responsibilities of resident instruction. Furthermore, the researcher would suggest that county agents with doctoral degrees do not believe that they have sufficient opportunities to provide adequate input into the decision making process.

There were low associations between academic major and perceptions of organizational, interactional, procedural, and systemic justice. Individuals with degrees in agriculture had lower mean scores on overall organizational justice and the individual constructs of interactional and procedural justice than did the other academic major areas, ranging from 2.8 to 3.2. Additionally, there were low associations between primary program area and perceptions of organizational, procedural and interactional justice with agricultural and natural resource Extension county agents having lower mean scores than respondents in the other program areas, ranging from 3.0 to 3.4. Individuals with agricultural majors and those working in the program area likely have very strong ties to traditional program areas upon which
Extension was founded. In more recent years, Extension has not abandoned traditional programs, but has expanded programming efforts to engage individuals who have not previously participated in educational programs. This movement to expand program impact may appear as a threat to those with strong ties to the traditional agriculture programming.

While the organization is considering the reallocation of existing budget resources to support new initiatives, the perception may be that current budgets supporting agricultural initiatives are already being reduced or reallocated and applied to new initiatives, therefore leaving some individuals to perceive that the distribution of outcomes is unfair. Folger and Greenberg (1985) suggested that as these types of decisions are being made, individuals in decision-making roles should: (a) Consider employee viewpoints; (b) suppress personal bias; (c) be consistent; (d) provide feedback in a timely manner; and (e) provide an accounting of decisions. As policies and procedures are communicated that relate to program expansion, the researcher concludes that individuals having strong ties to the agriculture discipline may feel that their viewpoints are not being adequately considered, feedback on decisions is not timely enough to suit their needs, and decisions related to program expansion are not consistent with decisions being made locally about their program expansion or initiatives.

Individuals with social science degrees (e.g. rural sociology, sociology, psychology, community development, or youth studies) had considerably higher mean scores (3.3; sd .84) on perceptions of systemic justice with the next highest
being "other" with a mean of 2.99 (s.d. .63). The clan culture that Berrio (1999) identified within O.S.U. Extension supports this finding. O.S.U. Extension is an organization that is based on high levels of interaction, teamwork, morale, and working together. Individuals with degrees in social sciences likely have experienced this type of culture in the past and find that its presence in the organization is fair and, in fact, desired.

Perceptions of organizational justice were moderately correlated with Extension district of employment. A moderate, correlation was also found between interactional justice and Extension district of employment. Low correlations were found between Extension district of employment and perceptions of distributive, procedural, and systemic justice. Overall, Extension county agents from the south and southwest district had lower mean scores on perceptions of organizational, distributive, procedural, interactional, and systemic justice than their peers in the other Extension districts. The researcher concludes that the differences in perceptions of organizational justice between the districts may be attributed to differential implementation of organizational policies and procedures and the varying degrees of interactions between individuals and groups in the districts, including the functioning of the support teams.

Individuals and groups can have tremendous impact on the culture of the organization, ultimately setting the tone for how employees are treated. Schein (1992) confirmed this when he stated that "higher education leaders play an important role in creating and rooting culture in a group and also managing and
changing that culture” (p. 209). The differences in perceptions of organizational justice between Extension districts may be attributed to the management, leadership, and interaction styles of administrators and/or support teams. These individuals play important roles in helping set standards for what is appropriate and acceptable in terms of policies, procedures, and rules for that district, the quality and quantity of communication, and support and/or establishment of formal and informal groups within the organization.

O.S.U. Extension is a very decentralized organization, and district directors are very autonomous in how they implement organizational policy and procedures. While the policy or procedure may be developed with input from a broad representation of Extension employees, actual implementation may vary greatly from district to district and county to county. For example, the performance evaluation process is unique to each district with district directors, district specialists, and county chairs setting direction and implementing the evaluation process. The support team concept is encouraged and does operate in a manner that provides a formal support and professional development network for Extension county agents in some districts, yet in others it may function in a more informal manner. Furthermore, there may be additional formal and informal policies, procedures, or guidelines established within districts and counties, not implemented in other parts of the state, that Extension county agents feel are unfair due to the inconsistency of their implementation.
The researcher would further suggest that levels of interaction between support teams and/or supervisors and Extension county agents differ among districts, ultimately leading to perceptions of unfairness in terms of how policies and procedures are developed and implemented in different counties and districts. Lee (2000) supported this possibility: “when employees perceive a higher level of quality in exchange in the supervisor-subordinate relationship, the employee also perceives a higher level of perceived distributive and procedural justice” (p. 138).

Low correlations between perception of systemic justice and primary program area of responsibility and gender were found. Family and Consumer Science Extension county agents had a lower mean score on perception of systemic justice (2.7; sd .77) than their peers in the other program areas. A system may be considered unfair when it does not apply similar procedures or distributions across different types of people and situations (Sheppard, Lewicki, & Minton, 1992).

Family and Consumer Science Extension agents may feel that their salaries are not consistent with peers in other program areas; that they are not afforded a voice in overall decision-making since their program area is located in a separate college, or that the procedures that are being developed are unfair for their program area or are not being applied consistently.

There was a low association between systemic justice and gender, with females (2.8; s.d .80) having a lower mean score than males (3.1; sd .80). Beugre’ (1998) suggested that females are socialized to be more oriented toward help and compassion, whereas males are more competitive. The researcher would further
suggest that the systems that compose the organization would tend to be more competitively based, therefore creating the feeling of unfairness held by Family and Consumer Science county agents that are, to an overwhelming extent, female. Additionally, systemic justice deals with accuracy and completeness of information and consistency of decisions (Beugre’, 1996). The findings of this research would suggest that females believe that the system operates on incomplete and inaccurate information and then applies decisions in an inconsistent manner that perhaps benefits males more than females.

Low, negative correlations were found between overall perceptions of organizational, distributive, interactional, procedural, and systemic justice and years with O.S.U. Extension. As individuals are employed with the organization for a longer period of time, their perceptions of fairness become more negative. To the contrary, Leventhal, Karuza, and Fry (1990) suggested that the longer individuals were employed with the organization, the more accepting they are of procedures. While it may seem contradictory that individuals would stay with an organization that they find unfair, O.S.U. Extension’s clan culture is one where a high level of commitment among employees and tradition and loyalty are important (Berrio, 1999; Schein, 1992). Furthermore, as individuals work for an extended period of time with an organization, they likely feel that options for them to leave an organization are very limited; therefore, they are “stuck” and ultimately accept the treatment.
Beugre found a negative correlation between tenure and systemic justice, suggesting that employees may see both good and bad over time; however, they tend to remember the bad, ultimately feeling the organization is unfair.

The researcher concludes that as Extension county agents are employed longer with the organization, they experience more perceived unfair treatment than perceived positive treatment. Furthermore, while the organization does work very hard to positively interact with employees, perhaps the administration is only selecting agents with less years experience or continually asking the same agent(s) to serve on teams, task forces, or committees that help provide future direction for the organization. Berrio (1999) suggested that if the organization wants to change its culture, the leadership must assess the strengths and weaknesses of different subcultures and then select one subculture and promote from that group. The researcher would suggest that Extension administration is offering opportunities to engage Extension county agents in organizational decision-making through involvement in task forces, committees, and teams. However those serving are from a sub-culture in the organization that represents a small number of Extension county agents sharing similar, current philosophical beliefs and perhaps having fewer years experience with the organization. Selecting individuals from this sub-culture omits individuals who have been with the organization longer.

The organization is undergoing rapid change, potentially meaning more policies, procedures, and guidelines being put into place. County agents with more years experience may feel the manner that these new policies, procedures, and
guidelines are put into place is unfair; although they may be the same individuals who were employed for O.S.U. Extension when it was much more of a hierarchal structure. Perhaps they feel their input is not heard or acted upon or that the organization is not considering how the new policies, procedures, or guidelines impact individuals who have been with the organization longer.

Low, negative correlations were found on the relationships between perception of organizational, interactional, and procedural justice and years with another Extension service. As the number of years worked for another Extension service increased, perceptions of fairness with O.S.U. Extension became more negative. Individuals who have worked longer periods of time with another Extension service may become entrenched in that organization’s culture, particularly the manner that communication and interaction takes place and the type of involvement they have in decision-making. Consequently, their experience with O.S.U. Extension, (compared to a smaller or more hierarchical organization) may leave them frustrated and feeling that they are not heard or that the policies and procedures are so decentralized that they are not being implemented in a fair and consistent manner.

Low, positive correlations were found between perceptions of interactional and systemic justice and years with another business or organization. As the number of years worked for another business or organization increased, respondents’ perceptions of fairness with O.S.U. Extension became more positive. Individuals employed by another organization or business may have left because of the
organizational structure, including the level of involvement in decision-making. The researcher concludes, based on this correlation, that O.S.U. Extension might be a more fair organization than the businesses and organizations that employees left. Other businesses or organization may function in a manner that does not always allow for employee input into decisions that directly impact them.

There was a negligible association found on perceptions of organizational justice and an individual’s current or previous county chair responsibilities. The researcher had originally concluded that those currently or previously serving as county chair would have had more positive perceptions of organizational justice as they would have had more opportunities to be involved in organizational decision-making, understand budget limitations, and are afforded more opportunities to interact with Extension administrators. This is further supported by Beugre' (1998) who suggested that since managers make decisions affecting others and that they are more likely to have access to detailed information when organizations are initiating and implementing changes, they are more likely to perceive the organization as fair. While not managers in the strictest definition of the term, the county chair position has considerable responsibilities for the day-to-day management of the county office, including budgets, personnel, and public relations.

A variety of reasons may exist to explain why individuals who are currently serving or have previously served in the county chair position do not have more positive perceptions of organizational justice. First, perhaps county chairs are not being afforded the opportunity to participate in or have access to information that
other Extension county agents are not seeing or hearing about. O.S.U. Extension has done a very good job of putting mechanisms in place in an attempt to keep everyone informed equally by sharing updates with the entire organization, not limiting it to a specific group of individuals. Additionally, the many informal networks that exist within the organization may be communicating information to a wider audience that goes beyond county chairs. Secondly, a large number of individuals in county chair positions also have considerable program responsibilities and are not afforded the time to fully engage in the overall decision-making processes of the organization. In this case, they would not know all the issues or have the opportunity to be engaged in the decision-making process. Finally, O.S.U. Extension does have a county chair “sounding board” that serves as a mechanism for the organization to seek input; however, it may be that county chairs feel their input is not being used or is not truly valued by the organization.

Level of Job Satisfaction and Characteristics

The correlations found between the characteristics of gender, age, years with O.S.U. Extension, position, county chair responsibilities, and years with other business or organization and level of job satisfaction were negligible. Low correlations were found between level of job satisfaction and academic major, highest degree, race/ethnicity, district of employment, and program area. A low, negative correlation was found between level of job satisfaction and years with other Extension service. The findings of this study, in relation to job satisfaction, are
contrary on some variables to a recent study conducted with O.S.U. Extension professionals, using the same instrument. Miller (1997) investigated many of the same characteristics and found low relationships between age, years in O.S.U. Extension, secondary program responsibilities, years in current program area, county type and level of job satisfaction.

A low correlation was found between level of job satisfaction and Extension county agent district of employment. Mean scores on level of job satisfaction ranged from 3.91 to 4.24 with the South and East district Extension agents having lower levels of job satisfaction than their colleagues in other districts. The researcher concludes that this may be attributed to the management or leadership styles of supervisors, the functioning of support teams, district operating policies or procedures, or expectations placed on agents by supervisors or clientele.

The researcher would suggest that Herzberg's (1966) motivation-hygiene theory, identifying extrinsic factors such as company policy, administration, supervision, and working conditions, may be associated with lower levels of job satisfaction in some districts. The level and quality of interactions between the supervisor (district director, district specialist, county chair) and agent might impact the level of job satisfaction. Perhaps the agent does not feel that their supervisor (whomever they identify in this role) considers their input in discussions or other decision-making. The researcher would suggest that agents in some districts might perceive that they have fewer opportunities to influence decisions, or are not afforded opportunities to influence decisions.
There may be more perceived, direct supervision of agents in some districts from county chairs, district directors or district specialists, therefore leading agents to perceive that they do not have as much control over their pace as agents in other districts. On the other hand, agents in some districts may be required to provide more impact documentation, participate in more reviews or meetings with supervisors, or believe they are held to higher standards on performance reviews. All of these, while positive management practices, may lead agents to perceive that others have control over the pace of their work or they have less autonomy.

There was a low relationship between highest degree completed and agents’ level of job satisfaction. Those individuals with bachelors or masters degrees had a higher level of job satisfaction than did those who had a bachelor’s degree. O.S.U. Extension county agents are required to have a master’s degree; however, there remain county agents that have yet to complete that degree. Those agents who have completed the master’s degree do not have the additional burden of taking classes or completing a thesis or project that would add additional stress to the job. This additional burden might be impacting agents’ levels of satisfaction with their jobs as they do not have the same levels of autonomy or control of their pace of work or are simply frustrated by the requirement.

A low correlation was found between level of job satisfaction and current program area of responsibility. Those who identified their program area as “other” had a lower level of job satisfaction than those in other program areas. Not fully understanding what the program area responsibilities are for these respondents, it is
difficult to fully understand why they are less satisfied than their peers. However, the researcher would conclude that these respondents have multiple program area assignments, therefore having multiple (perhaps conflicting) roles to fill. The multiple and conflicting roles are likely adding frustration to the Extension county agents’ jobs. Additionally, having multiple program assignments may lead to growing dissatisfaction, as there are conflicting messages from supervisors or support team members in terms of program priorities and responsibilities.

Relationship between agents’ initiation of and participation in continuing professional education and perception of organizational justice and job satisfaction

There were low, positive correlations between Extension county agents’ participation in continuing professional education and perceptions of organizational, distributive, and systemic justice. The researcher would suggest that the more individuals participate in these opportunities, the more they will interact with colleagues and peers outside the Extension organization. Ultimately, this may result in O.S.U. Extension county agents gaining a greater appreciation of the organization they work for and that is, perhaps, fairer than other Extension services, non-profit organizations, or for-profit businesses. The low, negative correlation between participation and job satisfaction is attributed to the fact that the more time spent participating in these opportunities, the less time Extension county agents are spending focused on program development and implementation. Consequently, the less time being spent with county programs may frustrate agents as their job
satisfaction is derived from the autonomy of the job, ability to be creative, and establishing their own work pace; not by participating in professional development opportunities.

A low, negative correlation was found between perception of systemic justice and initiation of Extension county agents participation in continuing professional education. Extension county agents perceptions of the fairness of the system in terms of consistency of decisions and accuracy and completeness of information decreased as support teams or supervisors initiated the participation in professional development opportunities. Perhaps Extension county agents feel that they are being required to participate or that supervisors or support teams were suggesting professional development opportunities with limited knowledge of agents’ skills and abilities. A low, positive correlation between job satisfaction and initiation of participation was found. As support teams or supervisors initiated Extension county agents’ participation, level of job satisfaction increased. The researcher would suggest that Extension county agents found the professional development opportunities to be helpful in their jobs and potentially helped them address challenging situations they were facing.

Summary of Correlations

The variables investigated in this study did not have a very influential relationship to organizational justice (table 5.1). The strongest relationship was that of Extension district of employment and organizational justice. The $r^2$ (.10) indicates that the determined portion of the variability in organizational justice from
knowledge of Extension district of employment was low. The researcher would suggest that while this is important knowledge, there are perhaps additional variables that were not investigated that would further explain perception of organizational justice of O.S.U. Extension county agents.

The variables investigated in this study did not have any influential relationship to job satisfaction (table 5.2). The strongest relationship was that of number of years working for another Extension organization and job satisfaction. The $r^2$ (.06) indicates that the determined portion of the variability in job satisfaction from knowledge of the number of years working for another Extension organization was low. The researcher would not attempt to predict job satisfaction based on the correlation coefficients.
<table>
<thead>
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<th>r</th>
<th>$r^2$</th>
<th>Davis Convention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td>Position</td>
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<td>Chair</td>
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Table 5.1: Organizational Justice Correlation Coefficients
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<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Academic Major</td>
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<tr>
<td>Years at O.S.U.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>Negligible</td>
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</table>

Table 5.2: Job Satisfaction Correlation Coefficients
Recommendations for the Extension Organization

1. Recognizing that O.S.U. Extension is not able to compensate at a level that is considered fair by employees, administrators, including county chairs, should identify additional methods to reward employees. Administrators should consider additional financial support for travel to professional conferences, meetings, or workshops; support in the form of start-up money for program development; new technologies or equipment for individual agents; one-time monetary rewards for outstanding program development; increased stipends for agents’ assuming additional roles or responsibilities due to county vacancies; and additional vacation or flex-time options.

2. Extension administration should continue open communication with Extension county agents, both new hires and longer-term employees, especially during volatile, organizational change. In an effort to increase communication, members of central administration, specifically the Director of Extension and Assistant Directors, should visit individual county offices; district directors and district specialists should increase their visibility and dialogue in counties, outside of performance evaluations; state specialist and other state-level program staff should refine strategies to interact with Extension county agents.

3. O.S.U. Extension must critically analyze how the support team concept is being implemented in each district, recognize and adjust for the significant
differences, and then require a consistent implementation of the support team concept to help ensure consistent and appropriate support for Extension county agents. The basis for strengthening the support team concept and developing a consistent approach in all districts should be based on the eight constructs developed by Fourman, Ludwig, and Stitzlein (1994) and investigated by Zoller and Safrit (1999). Zoller and Safrit found seven of the eight constructs as important. The support team concept is important to county agents however the inconsistencies with the process are potentially detrimental to the organization.

4. O.S.U. Extension should form a task force, including county, district, and state representatives, to review and revise Extension county agent performance evaluation procedures. The performance evaluation process should be consistent across the organization and county situations for Extension county agent positions (faculty, and administrative and professional) based on their overall responsibilities as this would help ensure fairness in the process (Beugre', 1998). Support team members involved in the performance evaluation process (county chair, district specialist, district director) should be trained on implementation of the process and county agents should be informed of the expectations of the performance evaluation process and specific requirements at least one-year prior to the implementation of a new or revised process and offer education for employees on how to prepare for the performance evaluation.
5. O.S.U. Extension should require continuing professional education for supervisors and support teams (district directors, district specialist, county chairs) on effective communication and strategy development to support controversial or sensitive organizational change. The education should focus on Beugre’s (1998) identification of three types of change that are critical and have a great impact on perceptions of fairness, including cost-cutting changes, structural changes, and role-reduction changes. With relatively young people (in terms of position longevity) in leadership positions, this is increasingly important, since the organization has not faced these types of challenges, (in terms of budget constraints) since the early 1990’s.

6. O.S.U. Extension should require continuing professional education for support teams/supervisors in terms of supporting Extension county agents and broadly understanding the scope of others responsibilities, especially during extreme uncertainty or change in the organization. This is further supported by Zoller and Safrit (1999) who suggested that: “support team members should be cognizant of and dedicated to that agent’s unique personal interests, programmatic responsibilities, and professional development needs” (p. 6). Effectively trained support team members will do “a better job of assisting agents with program planning and development, performance evaluation, and professional growth and development” (p. 7).

7. O.S.U. Extension should engage and challenge employees having doctoral degrees or extensive and successful program development and
implementation experiences to take full advantage of their education, experience, and knowledge. The organization should identify these individuals to lead subject matter teams, provide special study assignments to further develop their knowledge and skills; offer opportunities to collaborate with Extension specialists to develop workshops and in-services; and offer part-time statewide special assignments to take advantage of expertise currently not available on a statewide basis;

8. O.S.U. Extension should develop and implement a marketing and promotion plan that effectively communicates successful O.S.U. Extension county programs to internal and external stakeholders to increase recognition of employees, ultimately drawing increased support from multiple sources, including potential program participation, program partners, and new funding agencies that would supplement existing financial support, ultimately providing more resources for programming;

9. O.S.U. Extension should evaluate the impact of having multiple communication sources delivering multiple messages to Extension county agents’ and identify consistent methods that most effectively deliver the message from the source(s) of knowledge. O.S.U. Extension administrators should balance technology delivered information with face-to-face delivery to meet the needs and expectations of employees. O.S.U. Extension should place priority on an annual, multi-day, face-to-face statewide organization
conference that includes employee recognition, discipline specific
workshops, and workshops focused on administrative dialogues on issues
identified by Extension county agents;

10. O.S.U. Extension should concentrate on rewarding individual achievements
and accomplishments rather than developing a system that rewards all
Extension county agents equally, regardless of accomplishments (Buerge’,
1998). There should not be salary adjustments or monetary rewards based on
longevity of employment, rather they should be based on impact of programs
and for positive risk-taking, new partnership development, program growth,
scholarly and creative works, and stakeholder feedback;

11. O.S.U. Extension should assist new Extension county agents’ to develop
ongoing formal and informal networks within the organization so that they
may better understand the complexity of the organization, including
communication patterns, expectations, and policies and procedures. This
initiative should include the purposeful selection of mentors who possess a
positive outlook on the organizations future, are people orientated, have
excellent communication and conflict-management skills, and are
resourceful.

Recommendations for Further Study

The researcher recommends that future research be conducted to:

1. Replicate the study with other state Extension systems to identify similarities
and differences in perceptions of organizational justice and job satisfaction.
Understanding perceptions of organizational justice and level of job satisfaction at other Extension organizations may give insight into effective management or leadership strategies that are successful in other states that may be adopted or shared in Ohio.

2. Replicate the study within O.S.U. Extension to identify perceptions of organizational justice and job satisfaction of Extension specialist, program leaders, program managers, program coordinators, program assistants, and classified civil service employees to determine if non-county employees at other levels of the organization feel they are treated more or less fairly, allowing the organization to identify and build on strategies that may be effective in other segments of the organization.

3. Replicate the study during a time of more positive financial outlook and compare differences; results will help provide insight if the organization really does adapt to change or adjusts for uncertainty, or if it attempts to operate in a manner of business as usual, regardless of the internal or external climate.

4. Further study the patterns of communication and procedures implemented within districts in terms of performance evaluations to develop an effective and consistent process for conducting evaluations that allows for meaningful input from all members of the support team, including the Extension county agent being evaluated.
5. Include Extension county agents’ involvement in leadership positions as a variable and correlate to perceptions of organizational justice. Researchers should consider an agent’s involvement in leadership positions in national associations that represent individual program areas and the association representing county agents in Ohio.

6. Conduct research that investigates employees’ perceptions of organizational justice, beyond job satisfaction, to include trust, commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, turnover, theft, workplace aggression (Beugre’, 1998), hiring process (Gilliland & Steiner, 2001) and build on Kutilek’s (2002) study that was specific to the organizational issue of balancing personal and professional life. Additional research should be conducted focusing on budget reduction strategies, new program initiative development, promotion and tenure process, and volunteer management policies related to perceptions of organizational justice.

7. Recognizing that few of the characteristics identified and investigated by the researcher were correlated with Extension county agents’ perceptions of organizational justice, additional research should be conducted that includes additional characteristics of the Extension county agent’s job. Characteristics to consider include: size of county office staff; number of educational programs delivered; number of program staff in each program area;
interaction with office team; level of involvement in teams, task forces, and committees; and level of interaction with support team, including county chair, district director, district specialist, and mentor.

8. Recognizing that few of the characteristics identified and investigated by the researcher were correlated with Extension county agents' levels of job satisfaction, additional research should be conducted that considers the facet approach (Spector, 1997). Further research should investigate satisfaction with reward structures, co-workers, supervisors, the work itself, the organization, or other specific job responsibilities.

9. Conduct further research, both qualitative and quantitative, that would assist in developing a procedure to measure perceptions of fairness in other non-profit organizations, such as Extension (those that are decentralized) with relatively high levels of autonomy among individual employees who have more flexibility within their positions than do individuals in for-profit businesses tend to have.
APPENDIX A

Survey Instrument
Ohio State University
Extension Agents
Perceptions of
Organizational Fairness and Job Satisfaction
Section I

DIRECTIONS: Please circle the response following the statement that best describes how you feel about O.S.U. Extension. The following scale applies: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

EXAMPLE: I like to eat pizza 1 2 3 4 5

The respondent indicated that they strongly agreed with this statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. Overall the rewards I receive here are quite fair. 1 2 3 4 5

2. My most recent raise gave me the full amount I deserve. 1 2 3 4 5

3. My pay is appropriate given my performance. 1 2 3 4 5

4. My pay is appropriate given my responsibilities. 1 2 3 4 5

5. I am fairly rewarded taking into account the amount of education I have had. 1 2 3 4 5

6. I am fairly rewarded considering the amount of training I have had. 1 2 3 4 5

7. I am fairly rewarded in view of the experience I have. 1 2 3 4 5

8. I am fairly rewarded for the amount of effort I put forth. 1 2 3 4 5

9. I am fairly rewarded for work I have done well. 1 2 3 4 5

10. I am fairly rewarded considering the level of stress in my job. 1 2 3 4 5
<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Objective procedures are used in evaluating my performance.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>My input is considered in evaluating my performance.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>My support team gets input from me before making a recommendation about my performance.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>My performance evaluation is based on accurate information.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>My input on what I could do to improve organization performance is solicited.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>When decisions are made about my job, my support team is sensitive to my personal needs.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I am treated with respect and dignity in this organization.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>When decisions are made about my job, my support team shows concern for my rights as an employee.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Concerning decisions made about my job, my support team discusses their implications with me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>My support team offers adequate justification for decisions made about my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>When making decisions about my job, my support team offers explanations that make sense to me.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>My support team explains very clearly any decision made about my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

132
<p>| | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I have a positive relationship with my support team.</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>My support team is completely candid and frank with me.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Overall, all decisions in this organization are fair.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Fairness is an important objective in this organization.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>When decisions are made about my job, my support team treats me with kindness and consideration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>In this organization, job decisions are made in an unbiased manner.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>In this organization, all employee concerns are heard before job decisions are made.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>In this organization, job decisions are based on accurate information.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>In this organization, job decisions are based on complete information.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>In this organization, additional information about job decisions are provided when requested by employees.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>In this organization, all decisions are applied consistently across all affected employees.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>The culture of this organization encourages fairness.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>In this organization, disciplinary actions are always fairly implemented.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section II
DIRECTIONS: Please circle the response following the statement that best describes how you feel about your job. The following scale applies: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

EXAMPLE: I like to go to the park

The respondent indicated that they strongly disagree with this statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36. My job is interesting enough to keep me from getting bored.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. It seems that my friends are more interested in their jobs than I am.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. I consider my job rather unpleasant.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. I am often bored with my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. I feel fairly satisfied with my job.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Most of the time I have to force myself to go to work.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. I definitely dislike my work.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. I feel that I am happier in my work than most other people.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

134
Strongly Strongly
Disagree Agree

45. Each day of work seems like it will never end. 1 2 3 4 5

46. I like my job better than most personnel in this organization. 1 2 3 4 5

47. My job is pretty uninteresting. 1 2 3 4 5

48. I find real enjoyment in my work. 1 2 3 4 5

49. I am disappointed that I took this job. 1 2 3 4 5

Section III
Directions: Please complete the following questions by filling in the appropriate line or circling the appropriate response.

50. What is your gender?

MALE FEMALE

51. Which of the following best describes your race/ethnic background?

A. WHITE, NOT OF HISPANIC ORIGIN
B. AFRICAN AMERICAN
C. AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKAN NATIVE
D. ASIAN OR PACIFIC ISLANDER
E. HISPANIC/LATINO
F. OTHER

52. What year were you born ______________?
53. How many years have you worked for: (Please write in number to the nearest whole year or N/A if it is not applicable to you)

Ohio State University Extension? ________

Other Extension Service? ________

Other Organizations/Businesses? ________

54. Which best describes your position with Ohio State University Extension?

FACULTY

ADMINISTRATIVE & PROFESSIONAL (A&P)

55. Are you currently serving as or have you previously served as a county chair or co-chair with O.S.U. Extension?

YES NO

56. What is your highest level of education completed?

BACHELORS

MASTERS

DOCTORATE

OTHER: __________________________
57. Please indicate the major area of study completed with your highest degree (CIRCLE ONLY ONE)

A. EDUCATION, including Extension Education, Agricultural Education, Home Economics Education, Environmental Education, Adult and Continuing Education or General Education
B. HOME ECONOMICS, including Nutrition, Family Resource Management, Clothing and Textiles, Home Furnishings, Equipment, or Family Relations and Human Development
C. AGRICULTURE, including Animal Science, Dairy Science, Poultry Science, Agronomy, Horticulture, Agricultural Engineering, or Agricultural Economics
D. NATURAL RESOURCES OR BIOLOGY, including Entomology, Biochemistry, Plant Pathology, Forestry, or Ecology
E. SOCIAL SCIENCE, Rural Sociology, Sociology, Psychology, Community Development, or Youth Studies
F. OTHER (please specify): _________________________________

58. In which O.S.U. Extension District is your current county of employment located? (CIRCLE ONLY ONE)

A. NORTHWEST
B. SOUTHWEST
C. NORTHEAST
D. SOUTH
E. EAST
59. In what Extension program area is the majority of your appointment? (circle one)

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES
AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
OTHER: ______________________________

Section IV
DIRECTIONS: Please indicate if you have (yes) or have not (no) participated in the identified continuing professional education opportunity by checking the appropriate box. If you have participated (checked yes), please indicate if it was primarily self-initiated or support-team/supervisor initiated by checking the appropriate box. If you check no, please continue on to the next item.

EXAMPLE
In the past 12 months have you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check Only One</th>
<th>Check ONE Response In This Section Only If You Checked Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Taken a day off to spend with family or friends | X | X |

This individual indicated that they did take time off to spend with their family or friends and that it was initiated (encouraged/suggested/directed) by their support team or supervisor.
60. In the past 12 months have you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check Only One</th>
<th>Check ONE Response In This Section Only If You Checked Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Met informally with colleagues to discuss a topic related to your program area and/or Extension

Read journals, books, or newsletters about your specific program area and/or Extension

Participated in a national association meeting that represents your program area and/or Extension in general

Participated in a professional association meeting/conference not connected to Extension

Enrolled in a graduate program at a college or university

Completed course work in a graduate program at a college or university

Participated in a continuing education program (non credit earning course work) offered through a college or university other than Ohio State.

Participated in an O.S.U. Extension in-service
In the past 12 months, have you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check Only One</th>
<th>Check ONE Response In This Section Only If You Checked Yes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in training or education offered by a for-profit business or company</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in a trade show at a conference or meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Met informally with professional colleagues (not employed by O.S.U. Extension) to discuss your specific program area and/or Extension.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in a continuing education program (not credit earning or Extension in-service) through O.S.U.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

61. Please share additional comments related to this study:
Please return to:

Ryan J. Schmiesing
2120 Fyffe Road
Ag. Admin. Room 25
Columbus, OH 43210

614-292-6944 (Phone)

614-292-5937 (fax)

schmiesing.3@osu.edu
APPENDIX B

Cover Letter For First Mailing
March 1, 2002

Dear

We would like to invite you to participate in a study Ryan is conducting as his doctoral research. Building on Linda Kutilek's doctoral research, the purpose of this study is to investigate factors affecting O.S.U. county Extension agents' perceptions of organizational fairness and job satisfaction. In an environment of continual change, it is important that the organization understand if employees are satisfied in their current position and feel that they are being treated fairly in terms of the allocation of resources, procedures used to make decisions, and interpersonal treatment.

We recognize your time is extremely valuable, yet we believe that the findings will benefit you and the organization as changes are made in the future. We are asking you to spend approximately 15 minutes during the next week to complete the enclosed questionnaire. A code number on the instrument will be used only to follow up with non-respondents or possible clarification of shared information. Please be assured that your response will be held in strictest confidence and only grouped data will be reported and not individual responses. As you complete the questionnaire, some items may seem repetitive; however they are not the same. If you have questions concerning the survey please contact Ryan Schmiesing at (614) 292-6944 (W) or (614) 529-0079 (H).

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the envelope provided by March 15, 2002. All individuals who have returned their questionnaire (complete or not completed) will be included in a drawing for a $100.00 gift certificate of your choice. Thanks for your cooperation and hope you will be able to take the time to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Keith L. Smith
Associate Vice President,
Agricultural Administration and
Director, Ohio State University Extension

Ryan J. Schmiesing
Interim Leader, Program &
Volunteer Risk Management
APPENDIX C

Reminder E-Mail
E-Mail Message To All Agents:

TO: Extension Agent

FROM: Ryan J. Schmiesing
Interim Leader, Program & Volunteer Risk Management

Earlier this week you should have received a questionnaire on Organizational Fairness and Job Satisfaction of Ohio State University county Extension agents; if you did not, please contact me as soon as possible so I can re-send one to you. If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept my sincere THANKS!! If you have not yet done so, I hope that you can take some time during the next few days to complete and return it to me.

Everyone who has returned (or postmarked) the questionnaire to me by Friday, March 15 will be included in a drawing for a $100.00 gift certificate of your choice.

Thanks for your help and I look forward to receiving your questionnaire!!
APPENDIX D

Cover Letter For Second Mailing
Dear [Name],

A few weeks ago you received a questionnaire that was called Ohio State University Extension Agents Perceptions of Organizational Fairness and Job Satisfaction. If you have already completed and returned the survey, please accept my sincere thanks and disregard this request.

If you have not, I would again like to invite you to participate in my doctoral research. The purpose of the study is to determine the factors that impacts Ohio State University county Extension agents’ perceptions of organizational justice and job satisfaction. As a county Extension agent, you are directly impacted by the many changes and challenges being faced by Ohio State University Extension. During this time of change, it is important that organizational leaders understand and respond to perceptions of fairness and satisfaction.

I recognize your time is extremely valuable, yet believe that the findings will benefit you individually as well as the entire organization. I am asking you to spend approximately 15 minutes during the next week to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Your code number on the instrument will be used only to follow up with non-respondents or possible clarification of shared information. As you complete the questionnaire, some items may seem repetitive; however, they are not the same. If you have questions concerning the survey please contact Ryan Schmiesing at (6714) 292-6944 (w) or (614) 529-0079 (h).

I hope that you are able to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return to me by March 25, 2002. Thanks for your help and hope you will be able to take the time to complete the questionnaire!

Sincerely,

Ryan J. Schmiesing
Interim Leader, Program & Volunteer Risk Management
4-H Youth Development
APPENDIX E

Pilot Study Participants
Seventeen county Extension agents participated in a pilot study to test the instrument in regards to the applicability of the questions to Extension agents. These individuals suggested changes in wording to the questionnaire and reported how long it took them to complete the instrument. The individuals who participated in this phase of the questionnaire development were:

- Kathy Blackford, Ashland County - 4-H Youth Development
- Lisa Bradley, Muskingum County - 4-H Youth Development
- David Civittolo, Medina County - Agriculture & Natural Resources
- Bev Kelbaugh, Belmont County - 4-H Youth Development
- Mike Lloyd, Noble County - Agricultural & Natural Resources/CD
- Mary Longo, Marion County - Family & Consumer Sciences
- Jeff McCutcheon, Knox County - Agricultural & Natural Resources/CD
- Chris Olinsky, Muskingum County - Family & Consumer Sciences
- Chris Penrose, Morgan County - Agricultural & Natural Resources
- Brian Raison, Montgomery County - 4-H Youth Development
- Joyce Shriner, Hocking County - Family & Consumer Sciences
- Susan Trutner, Clinton County - Agricultural & Natural Resources
- Treva Williams, Scioto County - Family & Consumer Sciences/CD
- Marge Wolford, Pickaway County - Family & Consumer Sciences
- Sara Kleon, Ross County - 4-H Youth Development
- Ted Gastier, Huron County - Agricultural & Natural Resources
- Pat Holmes, Preble County - Family & Consumer Sciences
APPENDIX F

Pilot Study Letter

150
February 15, 2002  

Dear  

I would like to invite you to participate as part of a select pilot group testing my dissertation instrument. I am working under the direction of Dr. Joe Gliem, Associate Professor in the Department of Human and Community Resource Development at The Ohio State University. The purpose of the study is to investigate factors affecting O.S.U. county Extension agents’ perceptions of organizational justice and job satisfaction. I recognize that your time is extremely valuable, yet believe that the results of my research will benefit you as individuals and the entire organization as decisions are made, implemented, and communicated.  

I am asking that you complete the instrument by answering all of the questions. Please note and record on the back page how long it took for you to complete the instrument and also, please circle and comment upon any directions or questions that are confusing. Place the completed instrument in the enclosed stamped envelope and return to me by February 27, 2002.  

If you have questions concerning the survey please contact me directly at (614) 292-6944 (W) or (614) 529-0079 (H). Again, I hope that you are able to participate in this pilot study. I sincerely appreciate your time!  

Sincerely,  

Ryan J. Schmiesing  
Interim Leader, Program & Volunteer Risk Management  

cc: Dr. Joe Gliem
BIBLIOGRAPHY


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