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ABSTRACT

The literature concerning the work experience of faculty members, administrators, and clerical and support staff is reviewed. The experience of these employee groups is examined in relation to: the characteristics of their work and work environment, the extent of their autonomy and power, and their relationship to their institution. In addition, the following external pressures affecting colleges as workplaces are addressed: economic pressures, labor market trends, and the decrease in the number of traditional college age students. Attention is directed to the work characteristics that affect faculty members, including faculty salary levels, governance, job security, opportunities for career growth, workload and responsibilities, and role conflict. The following factors influencing the college president's work are identified: the stress of financial pressures, declining enrollments, legislative demands, and other external pressures. The work situations for academic deans and department heads and lower-level administrators are also briefly described. In addition, job and workplace factors affecting middle-level administrators are discussed, including role complexity, the opportunity and salary structure, and their low status and low power to develop policy. (SW)

Colleges and Universities as Workplaces: Analysis and Review of the Literature

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For many years, the quality of worklife in universities and colleges has been viewed as ideal compared to working conditions in other settings. However, pressures from several directions are reducing the appeal of these academic institutions as workplaces. These external pressures heighten tensions inherent in universities and colleges because of their unique organizational structure and culture.

In the face of retrenchment, decisions are made which may have momentous consequences for the quality of life of those who work in higher education, and therefore, for the quality and productivity of colleges and universities. While issues relating to work and the quality of worklife are under considerable study in industry and increasingly in public sector organizations, relatively little attention has been directed to the study of colleges and universities as workplaces. More thorough knowledge of the nature of the work experience for those employed in universities and colleges may contribute to better decision-making on issues affecting the academic workplace.

This paper begins with a brief discussion of the external pressures on universities and colleges and the general sociological dimensions and inherent tensions in these institutions. It then analyzes the literature specifically concerning the work experience of faculty members, administrators, and clerical and support staff. The experience of each of the three employee groups is examined along three major themes: a) the characteristics of their work and their work environment; b) the extent of their autonomy and power; and c) their relationship to their institution. Relevant sources have been found in the higher education literature as well as in the broader sociological and psychological literature on organizations.

This paper is drawn from a more extensive monograph, co-authored with Zelda Gamson, to be published as an ERIC-ASHE Research Report in Spring, 1983. Thus, while findings and conclusions are presented in summary form in this paper, the

monograph includes a more complete analysis of the literature on the sociology of colleges and universities as workplaces, the work experience of university and college employees, and the external environmental forces affecting the nature of a work in academe.

I. EXTERNAL PRESSURES AFFECTING UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES AS WORKPLACES

The growth in higher education for the several decades before the mid-1960's made the university or college a desirable place to work, at least for faculty and administrators. Escalating enrollments, steady financial support, and high public esteem contributed to a feeling of growth and excitement within higher education. For the last fifteen years, however, several external factors have come together to alter the work environment within the university and college.

Economic pressures, expressed in decreasing levels of state and federal aid to higher education and increasing costs, is the most powerful external factor changing universities and colleges as workplaces. Its mildest impact is seen in fewer new pieces of equipment and more careful monitoring of expenses. Its most severe impact translates into minimal salary increases, program closures, and layoffs.

Closely related to these economic pressures are labor market trends. Though the economy is not growing and fewer jobs are available, people desire more opportunity for career growth and participation in decision-making (Kanter, 1978). In higher education, fewer jobs mean more competition for available spaces. Opportunities for young scholars to work in academia are decreasing, and those who do secure positions have little assurance that their jobs will be permanent. Faculty members who already have tenure discover that they may have traded mobility for security. Under severe economic stringency, even tenured faculty may face termination.

The decrease in number of traditional college age students is a trend affecting the nature of universities and colleges as workplaces both directly and indirectly. As declining student enrollments contribute to financial difficulties, particu-

larly in institutions which serve traditional college age students, they indirectly become a factor in the increasing centralization of decision-making in the face of economic constraints. As fewer students require fewer faculty, the enrollment decline relates to the oversupply of scholars unable to find or keep faculty positions.

While higher education was hailed in the 1950's and 1960's as the source of society's expertise and hope for the future, universities and colleges, like other symbols of "traditional authority," often are challenged today (Corson, 1979, p. 2). This weakening faith undoubtedly has jeopardized the professional status of administrators, faculty members, and staff. Diminishing public confidence also may be an element in the shrinking of public funds to higher education and the increase in regulations tied to federal monies and statewide master planning. In The Control of Campus (1982), the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching condemns state and federal demands for greater accountability as "intrusive." These regulations limit institutions' capacities to determine their own decisions.

A reduction in resources coupled with rising costs, a tight academic labor market, a smaller traditional clientele, diminshed confidence in higher education, and more regulations all are affecting the nature of universities and colleges as workplaces. The centralization of authority lessens the autonomy and threatens the informal work style which academic employees, particularly the faculty, have enjoyed. The external pressures have led to fewer jobs, less opportunity for career growth, less job security, and lower salaries.

II. THE STRUCTURE AND CULTURE OF UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

Though in many aspects universities and colleges are similar to other organizations, certain characteristics also make them unique. Universities and colleges have been viewed traditionally as comfortable, low pressure, good places to work. The special goals, purposes, and values associated with universities

and colleges are important factors contributing to their distinctiveness, as are the complexities of their organizational arrangements, in which bureaucratic, collegial, and political structures operate simultanously.

The hierarchy, the formal structure of rules and regulations, the academic ranks, the fixed salary scales, and the separation of personal and organizational property are given as evidence of the bureaucratic aspects of colleges and universities (Stroup, 1966; Baldridge, 1971; Blau, 1973). According to the collegial model, the university structure is best characterized as a system of informal communication among a community of scholars, in which professional expertise rather than official position is the source of power (Millett, 1962; Platt and Parsons, 1968). Arguing that neither of these models adequately explains decision-making in higher education, Baldridge advances the political model (1971). According to this model, universities and colleges are pluralistic organizations in which decisions emerge through the interaction of diverse interest groups, each wielding power and influence.

Neither the bureaucratic model nor the collegial model alone explains the organizational structure, because the source of power within the university and college is diffused and variable, depending on the issue. However, elements of both organizational structures are at work, with faculty tending to control the curriculum and the selection of colleagues and administrators controlling budget-making and institution-wide policies (Okun, 1981; Bess, 1982). With bureaucratic and collegial authority structures operating simultaneously and with a myriad of subgroups and individuals oriented toward their own goals as well as institutional goals, universities and colleges inevitably are laden with conflict. While some employees, such as department chairs and deans, live in both worlds, other employees (i.e., many mid-level administrators, faculty, and non-academic clerical staff) are more clearly located in one or the other. At times, authority centered in a particular office, according to the bureaucratic structure, may conflict with authority based in the collegial structure.

The current pressures from the external environment heighten these tensions already present in the mixed organizational structure of universities and colleges. One result of these pressures is to move decisions normally reserved for the collegial structure controlled by the faculty to the bureaucratic structure controlled by the administrators. The shift in balance between the bureaucratic and collegial elements in the university or college affects all employees. Some are deprived of their traditional authority while others gain new powers. The expectations and assumptions between individuals in different roles become uncertain and strained.

Response to external pressures result in changes to the climate of universities and colleges. Because of their largely intangible purposes and symbolic rewards, universities and colleges have been considered to be predominantly normative organizations. Demands for accountability, however, have led to greater emphasis on the measurement of outputs and formalized evaluation. If faculty, administrators, or staff feel that employment policies made in response to external pressures do not reflect recognition of the quality of their services and their commitment, they may experience a decline in their normative attachment to their institutions. They may perceive their work, in Etzioni's terms (1961), as based more on "utilitarian"than on "normative" grounds.

In summary, the impact of the compelling external pressures is to strain tensions already embedded in the mixed organizational structures of colleges and universities. While employment in higher education traditionally has been appealing, external pressures may be changing the desirable qualities of the academic workplace. The following analysis of the literature concerning the work experiences of faculty, administrators, and support staff identifies many of the problems.

III. THE WORK EXPERIENCE OF FACULTY

The life and work of professors has been portrayed as quiet, easy-going, and somewhat sheltered. Whether this was ever true is uncertain. In any case, "the future looks different from what most [professors] expected when they got into teaching" (Larkin, 1981, p. 1). The pressures of finances, enrollments, accountability, and societal expectations bring new problems for university and college professors.

What Characterizes the Job and the Workplace Environment for Faculty Members?

Those who view college teaching as a typical profession cite the "basic body of abstract knowledge," the "ideal of service," the high social status, prestige, educational credentials, and autonomy, and the peer review characteristic of professorial work (Blau, 1973). In some important respects, however, professors differ significantly from other professionals. While the work of the academy is based on a body of abstract knowledge, for example, that body of knowledge differs for each discipline. The service ideal of the professional generally requires serving the needs of clients through the exercise of detached, objective expertise. Professors are encouraged to be much more involved with their clients than other professionals would be.

The professorial role also differs from other professions in the career routes that are acceptable. While most professions offer several possible career routes, in higher education only one, the scholar-teacher, is promoted as the ideal. Furthermore, more than in other professions, it is the association with the employing institution that defines the professor as a professional. This close connection with one type of institution means that the structure of the institutions and the nature of academic work have always interacted with each other" (Light, 1974, p. 17). For this reason, external pressures on colleges and universities can profoundly affect the worklife of faculty members.

Faculty Activities and Workload: In recent years, as universities and colleges have been pressured to cut costs, the study of faculty workload has received con-

siderable attention. Increasingly "higher education is [recognized as] a contracting industry experiencing the full impact of the problems of today's economic workplace.... These pressures...are compelling college managers to seek ways of reducing personnel costs, while at the same time striving to deliver a quality output within a labor intense framework" (Douglas, Krause, and Winogora, 1980, p. 1).

Faculty members report long hours in work activities. Studies cite average work weeks falling between 44 and 55 hours (Wendel, 1977; Ladd, 1979; Shulman, 1980). The studies suggest that professors are engaged in a great variety of tasks, the diversity of which may diminish their efficiency. This problem may intensify as financial pressures on institutions require fewer people to do more work.

Several studies suggest that many faculty members, while they may continue to prefer teaching, feel an increasing need to publish (Rich, 1978; Willie and Stecklein, 1981). A reasonable interpretation is that the tighter academic employment market, the enrollment steady state, and the decline of resources are forcing faculty members to strengthen their scholarly credentials. Rich (1978, p. 443) notes that this trend could have long-term implications for colleges and universities:

> It will be interesting to see whether the institutional milieu will socialize future academicians into the prevailing norms, thus maintaining the large traditional differences between types of colleges, or whether the influx of research-oriented faculty, coupled with pressures from professional disciplines, will tend to lessen these differences and thereby bring about the ascendancy of discipline-oriented cosmopolitan values over institution-oriented local values.

Faculty workload is becoming a significant issue as universities and colleges must do more with less. The development of workload allocations which take account of differences in discipline area, institutional type, and teaching level will require further study.

Key Job Dimensions: Hackman and Oldham (1980, p. 73) present a model of

job structure in which three "critical psychological states" -- "experienced meaningfulness of work," "experienced responsibility for outcomes of the work," and "knowledge of the actual results of the work activities," -- contribute to such outcomes as motivation, satisfaction, quality performance, and low turnover. They suggest (1980, p. 77) that five "core job characteristics" -- skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback -- lead to these three "critical psychological states."

Skill variety refers to the variety of different activities involved in a job (Hackman and Oldham, 1980, p. 78). Task identity is defined as "the degree to which a job requires completion of a 'whole' and identifiable piece of work, that is, doing a job from beginning to end with a visible outcome" (1980, p. 78). Task significance refers to the extent to which "the job has a substantial impact on the lives of other people," and autonomy refers to the degree of "freedom, independence, and discretion" which the job involves (1980, p. 79). Job feedback concerns the degree to which the job provides the employee with information about his or her effectiveness (1980, p. 80).

This model has been applied to academic work only recently (Bess, 1981, 1982) and could be useful in analyzing the problems facing faculty members today. The diversity of faculty activities seems to ensure skill variety, though Bess (1982) points out that it may be low for professors who teach the same course frequently. If faculty members begin to feel they are stuck in the same position with little hope for career growth, the variety in their work may seem to diminish. The degree of feedback, task identity, and task significance associated with the teaching role is difficult to determine, since the outcomes of teaching are hard to assess.

Research activities, more than teaching, seem to provide feedback and variety. As pressures for research productivity increase, however, those faculty members who do not prefer this part of the professorial role will not necessarily experience these desirable job characteristics (Bess, 1982).

Faculty service internal to the institution is low in significance and feedback, while external service activities may be somewhat more rewarding.

The teaching, scholarship, and service activities which comprise faculty responsibilities vary in the extent to which each provides the key job characteristics considered important for motivating work. Variety and autonomy seem high for teaching and research activties. However, fewer opportunities for career growth and pressures for faculty to increase their productivity in particular areas (such as scholarly work) may alter the variety and autonomy generally associated with the professorial role. Empirical study is needed for verification or revision of these speculations and to provide more information on faculty motivation.

Restricted Opportunity Structure: Restricted opportunity for faculty professional development is a major problem facing higher education today. The problem involves professors and scholars of several types: 1) secure faculty members who feel "stuck;" 2) tenured faculty members whose programs are being terminated but who might be placed in other positions within their institutions; 3) tenured faculty members in institutions which are closing; 4) scholars unable to secure a position in a university or college (Keyfitz, 1975; Schurr, 1980).

Career paths within the university and college are often "fuzzy" (Kanter, p. 3), with short advancement ladders, flat salary curves, and uncertainty about the next step for career development. Growth within a job in higher education . . often comes through new responsibilities or a title change, rather than through a promotion. Higher education has a "pyramid squeeze" (Kanter, 1979, p.4) in which few jobs exist toward which employees can aspire to move.

Within the academic community, the assumption continues that " 'a good man will take care of himself.' Meanwhile, the failure to provide significant mid-career opportunities, including avenues for beginning new careers, eats at the heart of the academic enterprise (Schurr, 1980, p.2. Citing Kanter, 1979).

Faculty members who are stuck may lose their enthusiasm and self-esteem and feel less committed to the institution (Kanter, 1979).

Through a nation-wide exploration, Schurr (1980) found that the specific nature of limited opportunity varies according to institutional type, regional economic situation, and faculty members' personal circumstances. Nevertheless, the problem is widespread and increasing in the face of external pressures on colleges and universities. Schurr (1980, p. 8) concludes that "expanding career horizons for professors is probably inseparable from revitalizing their educational environments." Only a few programs exist to deal with this problem. Since it threatens the stability and vitality of the academic profession, it deserves attention at both the institutional and national levels.

Role Conflict: Role may be defined as "the formal and informal demands for behavior placed on faculty members by a variety of persons, organizational officers, and generalized cultural norms" (Bess, 1982, p. 36). The loyalties and obligations of faculty members sometimes conflict because of their dual roles in a collegial profession and a hierarchical organization (Baldridge, 1971; Stonewater, 1977). Their values and goals are affected by the standards of their discipline and their work is judged by their professional colleagues. Simultaneously they have responsibilities in the institution's hierarchical structure.

For many faculty members, a common conflict also occurs between organizational demands for research productivity and their own preference for teaching. Though most faculty members prefer teaching, they believe that research is the most rewarded activity and are troubled if they are not engaged in significant research (Ladd, 1979, p. 5).

Daily responsibilities, in addition to mixed signals about priorities, add to the role strain of the faculty position. Finkelstein (1978, p. 309) writes that "the central source of role conflict/strain lies in 'incongruence

demands' placed upon faculty." Often faculty are pressured by excessive demands and too many discrete tasks (Parsons and Platt, 1968; Barnard, 1971; Larkin, 1981; Bess, 1982).

As colleges and universities offer tenure to fewer professors, the tensions concerning time allocation will increase, particularly for young faculty members. Furthermore, economic pressures that force institutions to cut back on clerical support, equipment, or needed adjunct faculty will mean more tasks for those faculty who remain, young and old. Clearer specification of expectations would be one institutional response to improve this problem.

Reward Structure: The literature frequently mentions that faculty members are bound to their institutions as much by intrinsic rewards (i.e., the nature of their work as teachers and scholars) as by extrinsic rewards (i.e., salary and benefits). The discussion of faculty satisfaction later in the paper indicates that intrinsic factors may be most important in promoting faculty satisfaction. Nevertheless, salary, an extrinsic factor, has been linked to dissatisfaction and, given recent trends, can be a significant problem for faculty members.

The Carnegie Council report Three Thousand Futures (1980) indicates that faculty compensation has dropped in comparison to cost-of-living increases over the last decade. A ten-year study by the Institute of Higher Education at Columbia University reports that faculty have lost 20 percent of their purchasing power in the last ten years (Cited by Magarrell, Chronicle, Nov. 10, 1982, p. 28). Furthermore, faculty compensation has dropped when compared with average compensation for civilian employees (Carnegie Council, 1980).

The Carnegie Council report warns that "the situation of faculty members has generally been deteriorating...and may continue to do so in important regards for another decade or more" (1980). While faculty at different types of institutions prefer different combinations of extrinsic and intrinsic rewards (Smart, 1978), all faculty members are affected to some extent by this steady drop in financial compensation. Since professors are indispensable 'capital' in higher education (Bucher,

1981, p. 21), these compensation issues should be very important to colleges and universities.

What are the Kind and Extent of Decision-Making Opportunities Available to Faculty Members?

Expertise as the Basis of Power: Their professional expertise is the basis on which faculty members expect to participate in decision-making. It is not surprising, therefore, that faculty members exert the most influence over academic appointments and curriculum decisions and the least influence over financial matters (Baldridge, 1973; Mortimer, Gunne, and Leslie, 1976; Kenen and Kenen, 1978).

Positive Relationship between Institutional Size and Faculty Autonomy and Power: Many studies show that faculty autonomy and power increase with institutional size and complexity (Caplow and McGee, 1958; Demerath, Stephans, and Taylor, 1967; Boland, 1971; Baldridge, 1973; Blau, 1973; Ross, 1977; Stonewater, 1977; Kenen and Kenen, 1978). One explanation for this finding is that faculty members at large universities are acclaimed for their specialized expertise, which serves as the basis of their autonomy and power (Caplan and McGee, 1958; Demerath, Stephens, and Taylor, 1967; Baldridge, 1973). Another explanation is that at larger institutions, the faculty/administrator ratio is lower, and the administration is less able to exert control over the faculty (Blau, 1973).

Positive Relationship between Institutional Quality and Faculty Power: Many studies also indicate that faculty at the more prestigious institutions exercise greater power and autonomy, especially in decisions concerning collegial appointments and promotions (Parsons and Platt, 1968; Ecker, 1973; Light, 1974; Kenen and Kenen, 1978). Again, expertise seems to be the key variable. Faculty members at the more prestigious institutions are likely to be recognized experts in their areas of study. Differences in institutional quality do not seem as important, however, in the area of financial policy, where administrators retain greater control (Finkelstein, 1978, p. 316).

Relationship of Participation and Control to Faculty Satisfaction and Success: While considerable research has examined the conditions under which faculty members experience the greatest power, autonomy, and participation in decision-making, less attention has been directed to the relationship between these variables and the satisfaction and productivity of faculty members. Some recent studies, however, report declining faculty power and participation in decision-making, accompanied by decreasing morale and commitment.

Data from a ten-year study of institutions of all types conducted by the Institute of Higher Education at Columbia University indicate a drop in faculty participation in governance, with "the proportion of faculty members who said their institution's system of governance involved the sharing of authority between administrators and faculty members declin[ing] from 64 per cent in 1970 to 44 per cent in 1980" (Cited by Magarrell, Chronicle, Nov. 10, 1982, p. 28). According to the study, this decline in faculty members' involvement in planning and in institutional governance "...has the greatest effect on their morale, on their commitment to the purposes of the college, and on their support of its administration" (Cited by Magarrell, Chronicle, Nov. 10, 1982, p. 1). This study, as well as several others (Cares and Blackburn, 1978; Larkin, 1981), suggests that lack of power and opportunities for participation in decision-making may have quite detrimental effects.

The 1982 Carnegie Foundation report on academic governance (1982) warns that faculty power and participation are endangered at the present time:

> Traditional structures do not seem to be working well. Faculty participation has declined.... The breakdown of campus governance is perhaps an all too predictable reaction to hard times. Life on a campus in retrenchment becomes tense.

Little empirical study has examined the extent to which faculty members do want to participate in decision-making, as several writers have observed (Touraine, 1974; Marshall, 1976; Stonewater; 1977). These questions should be considered: "How strong is the desire of faculty to participate in the actual shaping of policy?

Is it likely that even those who sense and resent power would eschew this high degree of involvement and opt only to be able to challenge policies as issues arise on an ad hoc basis?" (Marshall, 1976, p. 11). Further research should examine the apparent trend toward centralization of decision-making within universities and colleges in order to determine more specifically the extent of its effect on faculty members. If participation and power are linked to faculty success, and satisfaction and lack of power related to stress, as must be analyzed beyond the exploratory studies mentioned, the currect decline in faculty participation could signal undesirable implications for both professors and their institutions.

What is the Relationship of the Faculty Member to the Organization?

Employee-organization goal congruence, loyalty, and commitment of faculty members to their universities and colleges are areas as yet largely unstudied. Since university goals are diverse, ambiguous, and sometimes contradictory (Cohen and March, 1974; Baldridge, 1978), faculty members receive conflicting messages concerning the activities which will be rewarded. Research should be directed toward the circumstances under which goal ambiguity and goal conflict are most pronounced and the effects on faculty behavior and attitudes.

The factors which affect faculty morale also require study. Though satisfaction has been studied extensively, morale is a somewhat different attitude and has been given much less attention. A recent study at a large university found faculty morale to be low, while satisfaction was reported high. Specifically, "respondents reported more satisfaction with their work than with their institution" (Hunter, 1980, p. 29). Results from a ten-year study of 93 colleges and universities of all types conducted by the Institute of Higher Education at Columbia University suggest that faculty members' involvement in planning and governance is the factor which most affects faculty morale (Magarrell, Chronicle, Nov. 10, 1982, p. 28).

Factors which promote and those which inhibit organizational commitment

also deserve study. Employee commitment is crucial to the success of an organization and could be a determining factor in the outcome for an institution struggling with financial and enrollment problems. Research should investigate, for example, the conditions under which professors agree to salary cuts in order to assist their ailing institutions. The study of commitment is especially interesting for faculty because of their involvement in both a discipline and a university or college.

What is the Relationship between the Work Experience of Faculty Members and Their Satisfaction?

The overall conclusion that can be drawn from the research is that "faculty tend to derive more satisfaction from the nature of their work itself, while they tend to express dissatisfaction most frequently with extrinsic factors, such as salary, administrative leadership, etc." (Finkelstein, 1978, p. 229). As yet, the research does not explain why this pattern exists nor does it satisfactorily explain any relationship between satisfaction/dissatisfaction and faculty productivity.

Current working conditions for faculty seem to be the source of both satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Willie, 1981), a situation which complicates the analyses of the relationship between work experience and satisfaction. Faculty comments illustrate the conflicting nature of their working conditions:

> Examples of responses indicating satisfaction were 'I can set my own time,' 'I am free to pursue my own interests,' and 'I like the flexible schedule.' Examples of responses indicating dissatisfaction were 'There aren't enough hours to do what I'm supposed to do,' 'Lack of autonomy and freedom,' and 'There are too many stupid meetings'" (Willie, 1981).

Reports citing overall faculty satisfaction seem in contradiction to the frequently mentioned complaints and dissatisfactions of professors. Bess, however, offers an explanation:

> To indicate otherwise, especially in the face of the present inter-institutional immobility in the profession, is to admit that the choice of occupation and institution was a poor life decision, now virtually irrevocable (Citing Varela, 1971, p. 85). Whether the reality of their personal circum-

> stances is obscure to most faculty and in their enforced optimism and "satisfaction" they are in fact more motivated and productive, or in contrast, whether in their latent dissatisfaction they are not as strongly motivated and hence less productive is indeed an empirical question worthy of explanation (1981, p. 29).

Bess points out that, since the pressures of the 1980's may force faculty back to concern with such "lower order needs" as security and salary, they may become "a new class of 'alienated' workers." This shift may be expressed in increased participation in unions or institutional governance or in "the sacrifice of quality for quantity in the striving to secure adequate rewards" (Bess, 1981, p. 28). Because intrinsic rewards seem to relate highly to faculty satisfaction, however, professors may be able to tolerate considerable dissatisfaction without a great loss of motivation (Bess, 1981, p. 35). These speculations concerning the effects of current pressures are among the most important issues requiring further study.

Summary

Many questions remain to be answered about the work experience of faculty members. While conditions vary according to institutional type and size, data from recent studies show current pressures are altering some of the desirable aspects of academic employment for faculty members. Of particular concern are the effects of these pressures on faculty salary levels, governance, job security, and opportunities for career growth.

IV. THE WORK EXPERIENCE OF ADMINISTRATORS

In the eyes of many faculty, administrators wield considerable power, autonomy, and decision-making authority within the university or college. Yet administrators themselves often express very different perceptions. The first problem in discussing the work experience of administrators is that the term

broadly includes, among others, presidents and vice-presidents, deans and department chairpersons, admissions directors, financial aid directors, and student personnel counselors. Many studies reported in the literature focus on one particular group within this administrative spectrum. Overall, the literature is rather uneven and is located only by searching in several fields (Scott, 1978).

This analysis recognizes that chief executive officers, deans, and middle level administrators probably experience the university workplace differently. Since the work of administrators at each of these levels could be discussed at length, this paper will not identify every relevant source, but rather will capsulize the key concepts that emerge from the literature in relation to each group discussed. The greater emphasis will be on general types of administrators, with less attention to specific administrative positions (such as admissions director).

A. THE SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

At the helm of their institutions, presidents may see more broadly than others the panorama of challenges facing higher education today. With these pressures, "the role, function, and structure of the college presidency have undergone dramatic changes. No longer is it a position of stability and seclusion from an increasingly complex world." Because of today's problems, "the role has become a social, diplomatic, financial, and administrative post rather than one of educational leadership" (Buxton, 1976, p. 79).

Though recent empirical investigation on the work experience of college and university presidents and vice-presidents is sparse, several studies on job satisfaction provide information about aspects of their work.

Considerable Autonomy and Power: Presidents (as would be expected given the level of their post) apparently experience a fairly high degree of professional autonomy. They report decision-making and autonomy to be their greatest sources of satisfaction (Buxton, 1976; Kanter, 1979, p. 3). According to Buxton's study of 125 presidents of state-controlled colleges and universities, they also are very satisfied with their "freedom and independence," with the "power and prestige associated with the office," and with "presidential participation in institutional policy formulation" (1976, p. 81-85). Solomon and Tierney (1977), investigating the job of chief executives and chief academic officers, also report positive relationships between satisfaction and power, influence, challenge, responsibility, and autonomy.

General Satisfaction: The demands of the job appear to account for much of the general satisfaction presidents report. Among the positive aspects of their jobs, the respondents to Buxton's study list "the challenging nature of their work, their relationship with students, [and] their role in the community and state" (1976, p. 85). However the position also brings some dissatisfaction. Presidents report that one of the most dissatisfying aspects of their office is "the lack of opportunity for teaching and conducting research" (Buxton, 1976, p. 81) and little time for work, family, and leaisure (Buxton, 1976; Solomon and Tierney, 1977). The role of fund raiser and the responsibility of handling the financial affairs of the institution are other dissatisfactions (Buxton, 1976).

Presidents particularly are concerned with the economic problems associated with declining enrollments and changing state and federal appropriations. The conflicting role expectations they feel from legislatures and boards of control, as well as from their student and faculty constituencies, also create tension and dissatisfaction (Buxton, 1976). Given the context in which colleges and

universities must operate today, it is unlikely these pressures will lessen.

Both Extrinsic and Intrinsic Rewards: Presidents' reported satisfactions and dissatisfactions also reflect the extrinsic and intrinsic rewards they value. Though their salaries are far below the level of comparable executive officers in corporate settings, studies show a positive relationship between their satisfaction and their salary and fringe benefits (Buxton, 1976; Solomon and Tierney, 1977). Their relationships with students, faculty, and administrators, from which they report high satisfaction, must be sources of intrinsic reward, as must be such other sources of satisfaction as the "intellectual and social nature of the office," their "opportunity to improve the quality of life in the world," and their "opportunity to shape the future of their institutions" (Buxton, 1976, p. 85).

Summary: The data from the studies cited indicate that presidents increasingly feel the stress of financial pressures, declining enrollments, legislative demands, and other external pressures. With outside forces intensifying, the senior officers of a university may gain more power. They also experience, however, heightened tension and perhaps less satisfaction.

B. A FOOT IN ADMINISTRATION, A FOOT IN ACADEMICS: ACADEMIC DEANS AND DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSONS

More than most other administrators, deans and department chairpersons constantly must span the administrative and academic structures of the university or college. Only in recent years, however, has the academic deanship been studied much (Kapel, 1979, p. 99). Traditionally, the dean has been a faculty member appointed to the administrative post by the president and seen as the person in the middle between the top administration and the faculty collegial structure (Gould, 1964; Meeth, 1971; Wisniewski, 1977; Okun, 1981).

As in industry and business where middle managers are links between the top management and lower levels, in higher education deans serve as "linking pins" between central administration and faculty (Likert, 1961, pp. 113-115; Katz and Kahn, 1966, p. 321; Henderson, 1974, p. 217; Scott, 1978, p. 10).

A dean's position between top administrators and faculty can lead to potential role conflict (Kapel, 1979). Carrell's study (1976) in seven Florida universities suggests that department chairs experience the greatest conflict over decisions on faculty salaries and promotions. Making such decisions, they are caught between faculty needs and institutional budget constraints.

With tighter university budgets, deans' role conflict and job dissatisfaction may increase. The impact of external pressures combined with the tensions already found in positions spanning two or more parts of the organization may make these administrative posts less desirable than in the past.

C. MIDDLE ADMINISTRATORS

The term "robots or reinsmen" (Scott, 1979b) is used to highlight the basic dilemma facing middle level administrators. While they wield considerable power, they are simultaneously quite limited in authority, often squeezed between conflicting demands of faculty members, top administrators, and students. Dubbed "lords, squires, and yeomen" (Scott, 1978), these middle administrators include directors and deans of support services and other administrative personnel to whom assistants and first-line supervisors report.

What Characterizes the Job and the Workplace Environment for the Collegiate Middle Administrator?

Role Complexity and Tension: Their positions require middle managers to interact with many constituencies within higher education -- faculty, other administrators, the president and executive officers, trustees, and students. The literature particularly highlights the tensions inherent in the faculty-administrative staff relationship (Scott, 1978; Baumgartel, 1976; Thomas, 1978). Faculty often express little respect for administrators and resist considering them as full members of the academic community. The reasons for interaction between faculty and administrators and the different values and frames of reference evoked by the job requirements for these two university constituencies are contributing factors to this problem. While faculty are oriented to the issues of their disciplines and the professorial relationships within their departments, middle administrators direct their attention to the institution and operate within the bureaucratic system.

Organizational size and complexity are factors in middle managers' role confusion as are the ambiguity and paucity of role models (Scott, 1978). With institutional growth and differentiation, middle level administrators, though they may be striving to increase their sense of professionalism, often now report to individuals lower in position than their immediate supervisors ten years previously. In this way, the status of middle level administrators declines. Often superiors have never had the positions of the middle level administrators reporting to them, and thus may not understand the concerns or frustrations of the subordinates. The combination of diverse and conflicting demands from faculty, students, and other administrators, and the limits imposed by the positions on their power can create considerable frustration and strain.

A Limited Opportunity Structure: Several researchers mention the limited opportunities available to middle administrators in higher education (Scott,

1978, 1979; Kanter, 1979). The hierarchy within a university is in the form of a pyramid with few places at the top and few levels to the bureaucracy (Millett, 1978). Middle managers tend to stay in their positions for long periods of time, with directors having greater longevity than assistants and associates. This stability inhibits the prospects for advancement of administrators lower in the hierarchy (Scott, 1979b).

A considerable literature discusses relationships between job opportunities, self-esteem, morale, and work alienation. If talented administrators are to be retained in higher education, colleges and universities face the challenge of finding new ways to provide opportunity in a period of economic stringency. Creative thought and research should be directed to this problem.

Low Status and Prestige on Campus: Faculty clearly have more prestige than administrators within the academic world. In her recent study of power in a large university, Anselm (1980) found that the status of professional staff was in direct relationship to the organizational level of their office. Though administrators must handle tasks such as admission and registration which directly relate to the faculty's work, they receive neither the formal responsibilities nor the rewards bestowed on faculty members (Scott, 1979b). In a society where self-respect and self-esteem are associated with satisfying work, the low status generally associated with middle administrators' work by their institutional associates may lead to feelings of alienation and resentment. (Parsons and Platt, 1973; Scott, 1979a).

Comparatively Low Salary Scales: Using salary levels as one measure of status, the literature indicates that many middle level administrators in higher education have lower status than both faculty and individuals in comparable positions in non-educational settings (Scott, 1978, 1979b). The tight budgets under which many universities currently operate make increased salaries unlikely as a reward in the next several years.

What is the Nature of the Decision-Making Opportunities Available to Middle Administrators?

Low Power to Develop Policy, High Authority to Implement Policy: Middle managers usually have diverse functions, and "contribute the essential knowledge without which the key decisions cannot be made, at least not effectively" (Drucker, 1973, p. 450). While their work is crucial to the smooth operation of the institution, middle managers usually have limited command authority. They often have a liaison function with the "suppliers of resources", they coordinate and implement the allocation of resources and various activities within the institution, and they often work directly with students (Scott, 1978).

The literature on middle managers particularly emphasizes the peculiar role occupied by middle managers in the university due to the "mixed organizational structure" within higher education. Linking the vertical and horizontal organizational levels of the university, middle managers often implement but seldom develop policy (Scott, 1978).

A recent study (Anselm, 1980, pp. 196-197) in a large public, mid-western research university investigated the power, status, and conflict associated with upper level professional staff members (directors of the major administrative departments and assistants to the chief administrators). This research found that a majority of the administrators and faculty respondents perceived that "the primary basis of professional staff power was found in the professional staff's role as information broker." Additionally, all groups, including the professional staff, agreed that these administrators should not be part of the academic governance system (represented by the University Senate and faculty committees). Certainly this finding was somewhat surprising.

Even though these professional staff were satisfied with "the status quo," however, "the relationship between professional staff and faculty was not organizationally defined and the potential of a conflict between them was

evident" (Anselm, 1980, p. 199).

Anselm concludes that the staff used a particular strategy to deal with the limitations on their power:

> The professional staff survived by playing a role that reflected the subservant's political acumen and which exercised power while denying the presence of power and which shifted the bases of this power to fit their organizational and personal relationship with the target office. (p. 199).

Seemingly, middle administrators walk a fine line as they make important daily decisions within their units but are barred from participation in the broader policy issues. Further investigation on the strategies administrators use to deal with this dilemma would be useful for understanding their actions and decisions.

What are the Relations of Middle Administrators to Their University or College?

Fairly High Satisfaction Reported but Areas of Strong Dissatisfaction: A number of studies report that administrators are quite satisfied with their jobs (Bess and Lodahl, 1969; Solomon and Tierney, 1977; Baldridge et al., 1978; Scott, 1978). Kanter (1979) acknowledges that individuals working in colleges and universities report general satisfaction, but she warns that respondents often will state that the average person in the job is satisfied, though they themselves are unsatisfied. From a study of administrators in 22 four-year liberal arts colleges, Scott and Tierney (1977) report that administrators indicate high levels of job satisfaction, with only 10% saying they are not satisfied. Lower levels of satisfaction were associated with vertical and transfer aspects of their jobs, and more than one-third of the respondents indicated dissatisfaction with time available for scholarly pursuits, family, and leisure. The study also found that the administrators did not rank their "visibility" positively.

Scott's study (1978) found middle managers achieve satisfaction through helping students and staff and through the opportunity to act independently and make an impact on the institution. Like Solomon and Tierney, Scott identifies lack of time as a source of frustration. Dissatisfaction is also reported to be associated with limited resources and staff, paperwork, and lack of appreciation.

Nature of Middle Administration's Commitment: Not receiving full respect from the faculty, barred from participation in the determination of institutional goals and missions, limited in opportunities for upward mobility, and bestowed with only minimal rewards, middle managers in higher education not surprisingly might experience a lessening of loyalty. Summarizing his own research (1978) and that of Thomas (1978), Scott writes (1978, p. 9) that collegiate middle managers are very committed to their careers but "are extremely frustrated by not being taken seriously, by the lack of recognition of their accomplishments, by low pay, by the lack of authority that accompanies their responsibility, and by the lack of direction given to them."

Since "commitment is a critically important attitude for organizations of any kind" (Buchanan, 1974, p. 340), research should examine the extent and nature of middle administrators' attachment to their institutions.

Summary: In sum, the literature suggests that several conflicts are directly associated with the positions of middle level administrators. They often are viewed as experts and spokespeople by those off-campus, while being overlooked or ignored by those on-campus. While they have specific, pertinent information, institutional policy-makers often fail to enlist their direct involvement in decision-making. Though they have specialized skills, institutional reward systems often do not acknowledge their professionalism. Administrators must simultaneously serve and control, sometimes with insufficient resources or staff. Job security, opportunities for advancement, and professional

recognition are areas contributing to job frustration.

As the university faces declining resources and students, increased demands for accountability, and changing societal expectations of higher education, efficiency and quality performance will heighten in importance. Middle administrators are essential to the achievement of such outcomes. Research which increases our knowledge about how these administrators experience their work, utilize the power available to them, and experience commitment thus will contribute to the effectiveness of our universities and colleges.

D. LOWER LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS

While the work experience of the entry-level admissions counselors, financial aid counselors, personnel counselors, resident heads, and other lower-level administrators may be similar in many ways to that of the mid-level administrators, little research is available on these groups to provide a specific picture. Because of their lower level in the bureaucratic hierarchy, it is likely that these positions could be among those first affected when budgets are trimmed.

SUMMARY

While administrators differ in their hierarchical level and the functional responsibilities of their office, their positions all are affected to some extent by the peculiar dual organizational framework of the university. Though many of them operate primarily in the bureaucratic system, they must acknowledge and often defer to decisions made in the more collegial academic sphere in which they have little part. Non-academic administrators must accept a lower status of university citizenship, limited participation in institutional decision-making, and often ambiguous roles. Presidents, deans, and department chairpersons, more than the others, have authority within the academic decision-making structure.

However, presidents and deans especially can be held aloof by other faculty because of their administrative responsibilities.

The current external pressures combine with the problems already created by the organizational structure to exacerbate tensions for many administrators. The chief executive officers must devote more effort to increasing the institution's funding and balancing existing resources against escalating needs. The pressures from these activities have been cited as sources of dissatisfaction. Greater centralization of decision-making, smaller salary increases, re-allocation of resources, and termination of positions are frequent institutional responses to the external environmental pressures. The results from these institutional responses lessen middle and lower administrators' already restricted power, limited monetary reward systems, and low mobility options, and heighten conflict for resources between all university units.

V. THE WORK EXPERIENCE OF SUPPORT STAFF AND OTHER GROUPS

A. CLERICAL AND OTHER SUPPORT STAFF

Which much research has focused on the nature of work and the job satisfaction of administrators and faculty, virtually no investigators have examined the work experience of clerical and support staff in higher education. Since clerical, maintenance, and service staff in such areas as the dining halls, the post office, and the health center play a critical part in the daily workings of a university or college, the quality of work life, satisfactions, and frustrations of these employees should be explored. Many of these individuals have skills equally useful in other work settings. One wonders what particularly attracts them to work in an academic environment.

Caston (1977, p. 4) suggests several sources from which this group may derive satisfaction:

> Their sources of work satisfaction, of pride, lie in their own competence - the orderliness of their accounts, the efficiency of the equipment they maintain, the accuracy of their correspondence, and the beauty of their gardens and buildings.

These staff members also may derive satisfaction from their association with an institution believed to make important contributions to society.

Since clerical and support staff work primarily in the bureaucratic structure, they may not experience the tensions between the hierarchical and collegial systems to the extent faculty and administrators do. Though they may be satisfied with their actual tasks, Caston (1977, p. 4) and Bess (1982) argue that these staff have several reasons to be discontent. Caston points out that they usually receive no direct financial or psychological rewards for working harder and that the prestige associated with research faculty does not "rub off" on the support staff. Faculty may act arrogantly in their relationships with support staff and students may show little respect. He concludes that "this group . . . feel that they are not treated by the others as full members of the university community at all, but as some sort of necessary evil (at worst), or just as non-existent servants, to be seen and not heard" (1977, p. 4). Whether clerical and support staff indeed experience these dissatisfactions must be empirically studied. Institutional type and size may be major variables affecting the work experience of these staff.

As universities and colleges deal with retrenchment, clerical and support staff are directly affected. Budget cuts may restrict their financial remuneration or result in termination of some positions. Fewer people are expected to do more. The morale of support staff, like that of faculty and administrators, undoubtedly is threatened by the increasing tensions in universities and

colleges. The sense that the university or college is a particularly good place to work, if this indeed is a factor attracting support staff to academic employment, may diminish in the face of pressures that alter these institutions' environments.

B. WOMEN, MINORITIES, AND PART-TIME FACULTY

While not within the scope of this paper, the work experiences of women, minorities, and part-time faculty deserve attention. Research suggests that these groups face problems in the academic workplace, especially in the areas of salary, mobility, tenure, and participation in decision-making. Financial pressures and the tight labor market, as well as the other problems affecting higher education, are likely to intensify these problems.

VI. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND QUESTIONS

Financial tightness, enrollment shifts, greater accountability demands, and changes in public support--appear to be exacerbating tensions imbedded in the organization of colleges and universities. While the effects differ depending on institutional type, many university employees face salary cuts, limited opportunities for power and mobility, and threats to their morale and satisfaction. Since the external pressures are likely to continue, these tensions must be met with creative strategies.

One recommendation is that university and college leaders make special efforts to provide faculty, administrators, and support staff with information about problems, statements of the priorities for the institution, and clear rationales for decisions as they are made (Larkin, 1981). The establishment of wider opportunities for participation in decision-making, particularly on issues of direct interest to employees, should foster a better working environ-

ment (Kanter, 1981). Several strategies might be utilized for expanding mobility and growth possibilities: innovative workload strategies, internships in government or industry, in-house lectureship programs for faculty, diverse retirement options, and such inter-institutional efforts as workshops, multi-campus libraries, and emergency assistance for terminated employees (Schurr, 1980; Shulman, 1980).

While questions requiring further study have been noted throughout the paper, several areas are especially important. Research needs to examine the virtually unexplored questions concerning the work experience of clerical and support staff. Many questions surround the relationships between work experience and productivity, and satisfaction and productivity. The experience of employees in different types of colleges and universities should be examined, as well as comparisons between work in higher education institutions and other organizational settings. More also needs to be learned about factors that enhance employee commitment to the university or college.

Universities and colleges need dedicated, creative, and productive faculty, administrators, and staff to deal successfully with the challenges affecting higher education. Attention to problems in the academic workplace should improve the quality of the employees' worklife and strengthen the institutional response to external pressures.

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