5-2024

Does My Voice Matter? Understanding the Lived Experiences and Turnover Intentions of Professional Academic Advisors

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This dissertation, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the College of Graduate and Professional Studies of Abilene Christian University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

Dena Counts

Dr. Dena Counts for
Dr. Nannette Glenn, Dean of
the College of Graduate and
Professional Studies

Date 03 / 14 / 2024

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by
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May 2024

Dedication

To my great-grandfather William Cook, great-grandmother Grace Cook, my mother Deshawn Douglas, cousin Corey White, and my grandfather Henry Johnson. I know you watched me throughout this journey, and I hope I made you proud.

Acknowledgement

To my Heavenly Father, I want to thank you for allowing me to get to this monumental occasion. I have had some ups and some downs, but I want to say thank you, Lord; I would not be here without your protection.

To my family, especially Yolanda, Toccara, Chris, LeJordan, Jhastan, and Rowan, I know that this journey kept me away from you all often. I want to thank you for your patience with me through this journey, and I want you to know how much I love you all! To my friends who cheered me along the way, your kindness will never be forgotten.

I want to thank my chair, Dr. Atkinson, for being a great mentor through this process. I have been a nervous wreck through this entire process, and you were able to calm my nerves and provide guidance and great mentorship. Thank you sincerely for working with me, could not have asked for a better chair. I also want to thank my dissertation committee, Dr. Zomer and Dr. Davenport, for helping me polish my dissertation and helping me get to this stage.

Lastly, I want to thank Abilene Christian University for giving me a chance to earn my doctorate at their institution and all the faculty members and staff who have helped me along the way.

Abstract

Academic advising has been a vital aspect of the higher education setting for at least a century. Academic advising has evolved from the vocational development of young men to a full-time profession, especially after the creation of the National Academic Advising Association in 1979. Although the academic profession has developed through research, master's programs, and courses designed to expand the field of academic advising, researchers still question whether full-time academic advising is a profession. Questions regarding the legitimacy of the work of academic advisors have led to miscommunication between upper administrators within the university. Universities have experienced a trend of professional academic advisors leaving the advising field within a few years, with advisors seeing academic advising as a stepping-stone and limited advancement opportunities. This doctoral study used a phenomenological approach that examined the lived experiences of eight full-time professional academic advisors to understand their experiences within the advising field. This study utilized Herzberg's motivational hygiene factors, which used semistructured interviews that reviewed work, achievement, recognition, responsibility, advancement (motivators), and hygiene factors that focus on company and administrative policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions. The participants worked at midsized universities. The study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic and, therefore, utilized a videoconferencing tool to conduct the interviews. The lack of salary and advancement opportunities caused some advisors to consider leaving their university or advising field altogether. Other concerns were needing more support from upper administrators and inconsistent relationships with faculty advisors. One positive attribute of this study was that academic advisors had great relationships with their full-time academic advising colleagues and displayed autonomy when constructing their schedules and work environment.

Upper administrators should discuss ways to help create career pathways for academic advisors to retain and limit attrition within advising departments. Moreover, upper administrators can provide a space for academic advisors to voice their concerns and have a say in the policies governing their institutions.

Keywords: midsize institution, National Academic Advising Association, higher education, vocational development, profession, full-time academic advising

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation studied the factors contributing to the departure of academic advisors from college and university settings and their role as emergent professional leaders in the student affairs subspecialty of higher education administration. Kenyon College was the first university to utilize the term advising in 1841 (Shaffer et al., 2010), and the first recognition of academic advisors occurred at Johns Hopkins University in 1877 (Gordan & Steele, 2005). However, as it is recognized in institutions today, academic advising was formally introduced in the United States within the last 4 decades (Troxel & Kyei-Blankson, 2020). Even though advisors have had a role within higher education institutions for over a century and have had a professional organization for over 40 years, academic advisors continue to have low institutional status within the field of higher education (Menke et al., 2020). Researchers have indicated that advisors experience a lack of support from upper administrators within their higher education institutions (Hart-Baldridge, 2020; Snyder-Duch, 2018) and have reported that they had vague expectations regarding their roles as advisors (Hart-Baldridge, 2020). Advising offices are responsible for increasing student retention, impacting the institution's performance (Christian & Sprinkle, 2013). However, academic advisors have received limited recognition among higher educational administrators (He et al., 2020).

Primary academic advisors come from various backgrounds and skills, shaping the advising experience (McGill et al., 2020). The inability to define and establish what constitutes advising practices and the scholarly intent of academic advising is an issue that continues to plague researchers and scholars (McGill, 2021). Some researchers, such as McGill et al. (2020), examined academic advisors in higher education to address the socialization of primary academic advisors. The socialization of academic advisors comes from colleague interaction, personal interaction with students, and participation within the occupation of academic advising communities (McGill et al., 2020). Questions that surrounded the socialization of academic advisors include (a) What ways do academic advisors socialize in their field, (b) What draws individuals to the profession of academic advising, and (c) What practices keep academic advisors in the field (McGill et al., 2020)?

With questions surrounding the professionalization of academic advisors (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2015; McGill, 2021; McGill et al., 2020), it is vital for professionals working on the frontline to consider the future of their institution and the policies and procedures that govern them (Steele & White, 2019). Moreover, higher education administrative leaders could see an improvement at their institutions by allowing professional frontline workers to provide more feedback and guidance concerning policies and practices that affect the institution (Steele & White, 2019). Advisors are seen as first responders at an institution and know where trouble spots are regarding curriculum-appropriate technology for students (Steele & White, 2019). Therefore, upper administrators should allow academic advisors a more prominent role when addressing academic advisors’ issues (Steele & White, 2019).

The beginning of Chapter 1 of this dissertation contained introductory information on the history of academic advising and issues that academic advisors have addressed within their field. The midsection of Chapter 1 includes the problem statement, the purpose of the study, research questions, and the definition of critical terms. The conclusion of Chapter 1 summarizes issues addressed in the introduction and provides the structure of Chapter 2.

Statement of the Problem

Higher education institutions employ more professional support staff who are viewed as managers, provide valuable support within their institutions, and are considered both professional and academic liaisons (Ryttberg & Geschwind, 2017). Pritchard et al. (2020) reported that the number of staff in higher education increases with the number of students enrolled. The National Center for Educational Statistics (2023) identified that student enrollment at 4-year universities increased by 10% between the fall 2009 and fall 2019 semesters. Although Ryttberg and Geschwind (2017) mentioned that professional support staff provide value to their institution, their research indicated that professional support staff still feel like outliers within their institutions. While institutions find it difficult to define the roles of professional support staff, turnover among staff could make defining the roles of professional support staff more challenging. Marshall et al. (2016) confirmed that 50% to 60% of student affairs professionals leave their jobs within the first 5 years. Moreover, Reed (2021) mentioned that higher education institutions had a 13.1% turnover rate for exempt, full-time staff members and 15.1% for non-full-time exempt staff members.

Recent recruitment, hiring, and training issues have impacted higher education attrition rates among student affairs professionals. Marshall et al. (2016) indicated that long hours, stressful work conditions, and obligations were reasons for job dissatisfaction and eventual burnout. Moreover, Marshall et al. (2016) mentioned that stress and inefficient time among student affairs professionals caused burnout. He et al. (2020) indicated that job demands within academic advising units contribute to dissatisfaction with their job. Deficient promotion opportunities, demanding workloads, and role conflicts can cause burnout and eventually lead to attrition among student affairs professionals (Mullen et al., 2018). Academic advisors do not report to the same department at every institution, creating ambiguity within the professional educational community. Troxel and Kyei-Blankson (2020) indicated that academic advisors could report to the registrar, enrollment management, student affairs, and academic affairs or be jointly filled under student and academic affairs. On a national level, the variance within advising causes inconsistencies in academic advising occupation, impacting the number of students an advisor serves, educational policies, and professional development (Troxel & Kyei-Blankson, 2020).

The work for academic advisors within higher education institutions is demanding and becoming more complex (Donnelly, 2009; Peach, 2013). Some issues regarding the complexity of academic advising focus on role ambiguity. Higher education leaders, staff, faculty, and students had misunderstandings concerning the role of academic advisors in higher education institutions (Bridgen, 2017; McGill, 2019). When there is confusion and misconception, supervisors create job responsibilities unrelated to the advisor's primary job description (Larson et al., 2018). Academic advisors reported that when job roles were clarified, their job satisfaction increased (Donnelly, 2009). Institutional support is vital to improving academic advisors' job satisfaction; however, 34% of academic advisors mentioned a lack of institutional support (Donnelly, 2009). Moreover, academic advisors felt unwelcome in rooms where decisions were made, even when those policies impacted academic advisors (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2015). Having limited evolvement in institutional governance can increase turnover in colleges and university settings (Marshall et al., 2016).

Additionally, Wilson et al. (2020) indicated that neglectful supervising is an issue for primary academic advisors. Wilson et al. (2020) also noted that primary academic advisors had unprofessional experience with administrators, especially regarding treating all advisors respectfully and even allowing inexperienced advisors to advise without substantial sufficient training. While Donnelly (2009) mentioned that 63% of advisors were content with the supervision they received as advisors, 44% of advisors said they were dissatisfied with the value given to their opinions.

Research on academic advising includes topics on faculty advising perception of advising (Baird, 2020; Hart-Baldridge, 2020), the roles of faculty advisors (Troxel, 2018), and even the emotional lives of faculty advisors (Snyder-Duch, 2018). However, Aiken-Wisniewski et al. (2015) mentioned that research that examines the lived experience of frontline advisors as active participants is rare. Although Aiken-Wisniewski et al. (2015) researched advisor perceptions, the research questions revolved around describing the occupation and the professional academic advising and did not discuss academic advisors lived experience regarding educational policies and procedures, work environment, salary, and their experience with students, faculty, and administration. Donnelly (2009) suggested that future research on academic advising should review and explore the fulfillment of work values, equity and fairness, and behaviors that contribute to motives and beliefs. Moreover, Taylor (2011) mentioned that further discussion should focus on academic advisor’s education, salaries, credentials, professional opportunities, and their ability to climb the career ladder of their profession, and a greater focus on professional academic advisors’ turnover rates.

Purpose of the Study

The following phenomenology-based study aimed to examine the lived experience of academic advisors to understand factors that cause academic advisors to leave their current institution. Moreover, I wanted to gain access to professional academic advisors who voluntarily left the institution. Using phenomenology allows advisors to provide context to what they are experiencing and how those experiences could impact advisors staying at their institution or within the academic advising occupation. The study was created to contribute to research that examines the work environments of professional academic advisors and helps administrators understand the issues that contribute to turnover within advising offices.

Research Questions

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of academic advisors in the university setting?

Research Question 1 focused on understanding the lived experience of an academic advisor regarding Hertzberg's theory, which reflects both intrinsic (motivators) and extrinsic (hygiene) factors (Smerek & Peterson, 2007). Herzberg's theory reflects Herzberg's belief that employees should control their jobs, talents, and abilities (Ghazi et al., 2013). The lived experience of academic advisors focuses on their work, growth, advancement opportunities, and their feelings about their organization (Smerek & Peterson, 2007). Moreover, the lived experience of academic advisors can focus on their salary and benefits, core values, and relationships with coworkers and supervisors (Smerek & Peterson, 2007). These two factors can reveal concepts related to individuals' characteristics or understand how individuals feel about their job aspects (Smerek & Peterson, 2007). Therefore, Research Question 1 focused on understanding the lived experiences of professional academic advisors through the lens of Hertzberg's motivational and hygiene factors.

RQ2: What phenomena are present in the lived experience of academic advisors that might generate turnover intent (i.e., policies, students, job roles)?

Research Question 2 focused on the phenomena or how things appeared (Smith, n.d.) regarding the daily lives of academic advisors. Willis (2001) noted that a phenomenon could focus on how things appear related to the job experienced or the person experiencing the phenomena. Therefore, Research Question 2 reflected how things appear at participants' jobs by focusing on Hertzberg’s motivation and hygiene factors on salary, relationships with coworkers and supervisors, and the feelings about the organization that might affect them personally.

Definitions of Key Terms

Academic advisor. The advising process comprises professional and faculty advisors and others interested in advising; moreover, advising is predicted to advance higher education knowledge through teaching and learning (National Academic Advising Association [NACADA], 2006).

Burnout. Burnout occurs when employees have prolonged exposure to stress on the job (Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017) and was first associated with helping professions (U.S. National Library of Medicine, 2020).

Criterion sampling. Participants that meet a predetermined criterion (Moser & Korstjens, 2018).

Faculty advisors. A faculty member with advising duties, and on average, advises fewer students than a professional advisor (Krush & Winn, 2010).

Involuntary turnover. Occurs when an employee is fired or laid off (An, 2019; Singh et al., 2014).

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is defined as employees reviewing psychological and environmental circumstances and determining how they feel about their job (Aziri, 2011) and their feelings about their job requirements (Donnelly, 2009).

Midsize university. A 4-year university or college where the student population is between 5,000 and 15,000 (College Board, n.d.).

Professional advisors. An advisor is housed within a department or college. Their primary duty is to advise students; professional advisors are responsible for retaining students, outreach, and career development (Krush & Winn, 2010).

Turnover intention. Turnover intention occurs when employees decide to stay or leave their jobs (Elçi et al., 2018).

Voluntary turnover. When an employee leaves an organization voluntarily (Hussain et al., 2020; Olowookere et al., 2017).

Chapter Summary

Higher education institutions have seen a continual cycle in academic advising (Figueroa, 2015). Issues that have influenced job satisfaction and turnover rates of academic advisors are pay and recognition (He et al., 2020), communication with supervisors (Donnelly, 2009), lack of recognition (Kapinos, 2020), and unclear expectations (Hart-Baldridge, 2020). Employee satisfaction within higher education can be determined or impacted by administrative rank, pay, community teamwork, and length of service (Hermsen & Rosser, 2008).

Although academic advisors are expected to maintain a high degree of professionalism by students, faculty, and staff, academic advising is still not considered a profession (Huggett, 2000). The lack of uniformity in academic advising creates an avenue where upper administration creates guidelines to hire, supervise, or assign academic advisors without proper understanding of their responsibility and influence or make a difference (Larson et al., 2018). Stakeholders with no definitive knowledge of academic advisors have the most influence over advisor’s pay and the raises they receive, promotions, and how academic advisors are viewed among faculty, upper administration, and other nonacademic advisor staff (Larson et al., 2018). The lack of understanding regarding academic advisors can affect how academic advisors are evaluated, their assessment, the resources academic advisors receive, and how they are allocated (Larson et al., 2018).

Chapter 2 introduces the literature review that supports this study's purpose. Furthermore, Chapter 2 includes research for the definitions mentioned in Chapter 1. These definitions offer readers an understanding of how issues related to turnover intention, burnout, and job satisfaction have influenced faculty, staff, and, most importantly, academic advisors and address issues that faculty and professional advisors have experienced within higher education. The theoretical framework, Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, is discussed and explains how it aligns and guides the study. Lastly, Chapter 2 will end with a summary of the chapter and prepare for the information presented in Chapter 3.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Organizations, in general, are challenged with retaining and attracting highly efficient employees (Erasmus et al., 2015). Given the cost of recruiting and retaining employees, talent retention is necessary for higher education institutions (Erasmus et al., 2015). In 1998, 7.7% of academic staff in the United States left their institution within 10 months (Jain, 2013). The College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (n.d.) indicated the turnover rate for exempt, full-time staff turnover, which included academic advisors, and according to the National Association of College and University Business Officers (2005), 11.24%, with 7.88% of those turnovers being voluntary separation. While there is increased attention to career ladder and promotion in the workplace (Thomas & Cunningham, 2018), professional academic advisors do not have a consistent structure for career advancement throughout their profession (Punches-Flick, 2021; Thomas & Cunningham, 2018).

Talent retention is an essential part of an organization, especially as retaining human capital becomes necessary for maintaining a competitive advantage (Takawira et al., 2014). When higher education institutions retain more skilled staff, colleges and universities can promote more qualified staff to make decisions, enhance academic services, and reduce the turnover cost at their institutions (Takawira et al., 2014). Although research has indicated the impact that academic advisors have on their institution and the students they serve, academic advisors continue to leave the field for other employment opportunities (Punches-Flick, 2021). Therefore, the purpose of this section was to explore previous studies that examined factors related to turnover intention in higher education institutions.

Scanlan and Still (2019) stated, "Burnout and turnover intention are positively correlated, and turnover intention is negatively associated with job satisfaction" (p. 2). Therefore, the literature review examined burnout and job satisfaction in correlation to turnover intention and how those key terms impact academic staff in higher education institutions. The research articles mentioned in Chapter 2 include research results from various articles that examined academic staff and their work environment, including faculty and professional advisors. Moreover, Chapter 2 consists of articles that discuss Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory and how the theory has been utilized to explore the workplace environment in higher education institutions. Finally, Chapter 2 summarizes these issues and discusses future research suggestions.

Literature Search Methods

I found the articles in this study by utilizing the Margarett and Herman Brown Library at Abilene Christian University and the Dunbar Library at Wright State University. Moreover, Google Scholar was also utilized to find articles for this study. Chapter 2 contains research studies written within the last 10 years. However, there were articles in the literature review written before 2009, and for historical purposes, there were articles in this study written before the 1980s. The articles written between the 1960s and 1980s included historical context to burnout and Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. The keywords used in the literature review were *turnover intention, academic advisors, faculty advisor*, *professional advisor, burnout*, and *Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory*.

Theoretical Framework

Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory guided the study. Herzberg developed the theory by interviewing and studying 200 engineers (Bockman, 1971; Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018; Khan et al., 2010; Rafferty & Griffin, 2009; Whitsett & Winslow, 1967). Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory was developed to strengthen the connection between job satisfaction and employee dissatisfaction (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018). The hypothesis surrounding

Herzberg’s two-factor theory was that factors that produced satisfaction were separate and distinct from those that produced job dissatisfaction (Bockman, 1971). Herzberg’s motivation-hygiene theory has been utilized in higher education studies to examine the application of Herzberg’s theory on faculty members in a university (Swierenga, 1970), job satisfaction of faculty teaching in higher education (Moxley, 1977), improving job satisfaction among nonacademic employees at a university (Smerek & Peterson, 2007), and university teachers (Ghazi et al., 2013). Herzberg’s theory is separated into two factors: satisfiers, described as motivators, and dissatisfiers, called hygiene factors (Alrawahi et al., 2020).

The motivation factors include recognition, achievement, job interest, work advancement, and responsibility (Alrawahi et al., 2020; Kermally, 2005), whereas hygiene factors are required to prevent employee job dissatisfaction (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). Hygiene factors are considered a block to unhappiness used to describe the environment and needed to prevent dissatisfaction (Timmreck, 1977). Hygiene factors operate on a continuum from dissatisfaction to no dissatisfaction. Hygiene factors include “supervision, co-workers [sic], company policies, administration, status, working conditions, and security” (Whitsett & Winslow, 1967, p. 395). Therefore, if working conditions are inadequate or lackluster, supervision will lead to dissatisfaction and poor performance (Kermally, 2005). Motivation factors are also a continuum from satisfaction to no satisfaction and are needed for a human’s psychological growth and building upon an individual’s self-efficacy to reinforce motivation (Whitsett & Winslow, 1967).

Bockman (1971) mentioned that Herzberg’s interview structure was a free choice, and the open-ended method left room for biases. However, Behling et al. (1968) mentioned that Herzberg’s interview structure was semistructured. Bockman (1971) further mentioned that Herzberg asked questions regarding critical incidents that led to their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their job. Herzberg developed 14 factors, which included (a) recognition, (b) achievement, (c) the possibility of growth, (d) advancement, (e) salary, (f) interpersonal relation, (g) supervision-technical, (h) responsibility, (i) company policy and administration, (j), working conditions, (k) work itself, (l), factors in personal life, (m) status, and (n) job security (Behling et al., 1968). Satisfying incidents intrinsic to the job were recognition, achievement, a possibility for growth, advancement, responsibility, and work itself (Behling et al., 1968). While dissatisfying incidents were characterized by salary, interpersonal relationships, company and administration, quality of supervision, working conditions, and factors that influence work itself (Behling et al., 1968).

Misconceptions of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory were that it covers a small area of turnover; however, it covers nearly all factors that promote or demote employee turnover rate (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). Some criticisms of Herzberg's were (a) the initial theory only applied to engineers and accountants, (b) hygiene and motivators depend on the types of individuals and the nature of their work, and (c) researchers questioned the scientific rigor of Herzberg's theory (Kermally, 2005). While some researchers question the inconsistency, others have supported or confirmed most of Herzberg's conclusions or hypotheses (Bockman, 1971).

Turnover Intention

Organizations have struggled to identify the reason behind their employee's exodus (Ivanovic & Ivancevic, 2019). When an employee leaves an organization, there could be many reasons to terminate their employment (Society for Human Resource Management, n.d.). Belete (2018) mentioned that turnover intention is not predicated on employees directly leaving their jobs but on the likelihood of leaving their current employment. While the turnover intention is not directly related to an employee leaving an establishment, evaluating an employee's intent to leave can be used to predict whether an employee leaves an organization (Ivanovic & Ivancevic, 2019).

Turnover in an organization can substantially impact an organization and is a severe obstacle that organizations encounter (Belete, 2018). When an employee leaves an organization, individuals leave with specific skills, knowledge, and other abilities acquired over time (An, 2019; Messersmith et al., 2014). Messersmith et al. (2014) mentioned that turnover impacts team experience and commonalities, which are not easily replaceable. Glazer (2019) indicated that four types of turnover could impact an organization: voluntary, layoff, internal transfer, and involuntary layoff. However, most research on turnover generally focuses on voluntary and involuntary turnover (An, 2019; Price, 2000).

Price (2000) indicated that voluntary and involuntary turnover is coined as avoidable and unavoidable turnover. Price (2000) noted that focusing on turnover generally examines employees who leave an organization voluntarily. Yimer et al. (2017) mentioned that turnover intention involves employees voluntarily terminating their current positions for membership at another organization. Voluntary turnover is incurred when an individual quits, which is different from involuntary turnover, where an individual's job is terminated (An, 2019).

Studies of employee turnover occurred as early as 1925 (Ngo-Henha, 2017). However, the employee turnover model was pushed to the forefront by March and Simon in 1958 (Singh & Sharma, 2015). Moreover, March and Simons' hypothesis was written to predict organization withdrawal (Singh & Sharma, 2015). March and Simon's model predicted that employees would stay in an organization if the pay incentives matched or exceeded employee inputs (Singh & Sharma, 2015). Other theories that address turnover intention were Mobley's intermediate linage model, Steers and Mowday turnover model, Sheridan and Abelson's cusp catastrophe model, Jackofsky's integrated process model, and Lee and Mitchell's unfolding model (Singh & Sharma, 2015).

Mobley's intermediate linkage model based their research on employee termination in March and Simon's research (Govindaraju, 2018). In the intermediate linkage model, Mobley suggests that several factors contribute to job dissatisfaction and quitting (Mobley, 1977). The initial thought in Mobley's research is to evaluate the current position and the ending when an employee leaves or stays at their current employment (Mobley, 1977). Between these two concepts in the intermediate linkage model, employees start to withdraw, evaluate the cost of quitting, search and evaluate their alternatives, compare current jobs to their alternatives, and then decide to leave or stay (Mobley, 1977).

Steers and Mowday (as cited in Govindaraju, 2018; Singh & Sharma, 2015) created the turnover model in 1981. The turnover model proposed that an employee's decision to leave or stay is based on an individual's values and job expectations, organization characteristics and experience, and job performance levels. Moreover, based on the turnover model, employees are influenced by job satisfaction, involvement, and organizational commitment (Singh & Sharma, 2015). Affective responses can lead an employee to try to change their situation (Lee & Mowday, 1987) or could impact an individual's attitude, influencing their desire to leave or stay in an organization (Singh & Sharma, 2015). Other influences that cause an individual to leave their organization, according to the Steers and Mowday turnover model, are alternative job opportunities and economic and market conditions (Singh & Sharma, 2015).

Sheridan and Abelson (1983) noted that Mobley's intermediate linkage model was a sequence of cognitive stages, while other studies viewed the termination process as linear and continuous. Sheridan and Abelson (1983) suggested that employees try to stay in an organization as long as possible. However, retained employees move toward termination as withdrawal and tension increase (Sheridan & Abelson, 1983). The cusp catastrophe model represents that every employee follows a different path; while some employees can move from job satisfaction to termination, another employee could move from stress to termination, and some employees could move through stress and dissatisfaction to termination (Sheridan & Abelson, 1983).

The integrated process model was based on March and Simon’s ease and desirability hypothesis (Jackofsky, 1984). Jackofsky (1984) noted that March and Simon’s hypothesis was created to predict organizational withdrawal, whereas the integrated process model was created to predict job turnover between organizations or in an organization. The idea behind this theory is that when an employee is looking to escape from an undesired work condition, employees will look internally for a new job and then look externally (Jackofsky, 1984). Moreover, the integrated process model considers an individual’s decision to leave a job based on an employer’s desirability or ease. In contrast, March and Simon indicated that the motivation to withdraw directly correlated with job satisfaction (as cited in Jackofsky, 1984). Jackofsky (1984) indicated that some employees might desire to leave due to decreased job satisfaction; their ease of leaving the organization could keep them at their job due to an absence of alternative employment opportunities.

Steel and Lounsbury (2009) mentioned that Lee and Michell’s unfolding theory is based on March and Simon’s organizational theory. However, Lee et al. (1996), Morrell et al. (2001), and Singh and Sharma (2015) indicated that the unfolding model is based on image theory. Lee and Mitchell’s unfolding theory builds on voluntary employee turnover (Lee et al., 1996). The unfolding theory consists of decision paths that shock the individual (Lee et al., 1996; Singh & Sharma, 2015; Steel & Lounsbury, 2009). The decision process has four paths (Lee et al., 1996).

The first path starts with an unusual circumstance or situation (shock), which causes the employee to search for the script or plan of action (Lee et al., 1996; Singh & Sharma, 2015). Lee et al. (1996) indicated that the action or shock prompts an employee to review their attachment to the organization and reassess whether they want to continue their membership. The second path can occur even if the employee does not have an alternative or script in the process (Lee et al., 1996; Singh & Sharma, 2015). In the third path, an employee focuses on whether to leave or stay at an organization (Lee et al., 1996); usually, the employee has at least one alternative to evaluate their fit within an organization (Lee et al., 1996; Singh & Sharma, 2015). The fourth and final path begins with job dissatisfaction (Lee et al., 1996). Employees in this stage conclude that they no longer fit in their jobs, their values are compromised, and their goals are not reached (Lee et al., 1996; Singh & Sharma, 2015).

In this section, several models explain why an employee would decide to leave or stay in their organization (Singh & Sharma, 2015). Traditionally, turnover-related theories have three main components (Lee et al., 1996). The first initial state usually starts with an employee experiencing some job dissatisfaction (Lee et al., 1996). Next, most turnover theories mention that employees generally search for other employment opportunities (Lee et al., 1996). After an employee decides to search for alternative employment, the employee evaluates those alternatives (Lee et al., 1996). From reading these turnover theories, the final stage generally focuses on an employee deciding to stay or leave their current place of employment.

Pay and benefits are vital to keeping an employee, and building and developing a relationship with a supervisor also has value when determining how long an employee stays within an organization (Jo, 2008). Leaders in a higher educational setting that allow employees to lead university initiatives will increase staff motivation and commitment to the institution (bin

Ab Hamida et al., 2020). While Mashile et al. (2019) did not explicitly mention leadership and the direct ties to turnover, their research stated that exerting too much power over an employee could lead them to leave an organization. When support increases, turnover intention decreases (Akgunduz & Sanli, 2017).

Price (2000) mentioned that turnover could occur due to internal and external work roles, satisfaction or dissatisfaction, and employees' experiences within their jobs. Turnover within an organization is not always detrimental or harmful (Abelson & Baysinger, 1984; An, 2019; Glebbeek & Bax, 2004; Wang & Sun, 2020); however, it is very costly to an organization (An, 2019; Vardaman et al., 2008). Within the last 10 years, turnover expenditures have cost organizations $1,068 per employee; moreover, it can take 2 to 3 months for a new employee to be fully productive in their institution (Dube et al., 2010). Vardaman et al. (2008) mentioned that organizations could spend 93% to 200% of the vacated person's salary to replace them in an organization. In 2008, turnover cost American universities 68 million dollars (Figueroa, 2015; Jo, 2008). Replacing top talent is an issue within the academic staff (Manogharan et al., 2018). Replacing top talent forces an institution to spend money on recruitment and training new staff members (An, 2019; Grobler & van Rensburg, 2019; Manogharan et al., 2018). After the initial cost of announcing a position, evaluating resumes and applications, and interviewing candidates, which has an initial fee to an organization, turnover can delay or decrease performance in an organization due to a newcomer's unfamiliarity with the organization's routine, which can cause social dysfunction and harm the organization (An, 2019).

The size of a university impacts its turnover rate and how satisfied academic advisors are at their jobs (Alleyne, 2013). Universities with a larger population have experienced a decline in their turnover rates, whereas smaller universities are experiencing an increase in their turnover rates (Shah et al., 2020). Employees seeking employment within a university should consider the ramifications of joining an institution (Alleyne, 2013). Employees at larger institutions face challenges collaborating with other units within their institution; moreover, employees at smaller institutions have a myriad of responsibilities that they must balance at their institution (Alleyne, 2013). The amount of organizational support can impact large and small institutions' turnover rates (Shah et al., 2020). Furthermore, the abundance of jobs in a community or area can impact turnover rates (Shah et al., 2020). While research has shown that institution size can impact academic advisors, studies that examine the turnover intention of professional academic advisors at midsize institutions are not abundant.

The age of employees is a topic that researchers have identified as an essential variable in studying employee turnover (Werbel & Bedeian, 1989). Healy et al. (1995) noted that age negatively correlates with turnover. However, Gandy et al. (2018b) mentioned that individuals in the workforce born between 1977 and 1994 do not plan to commit to one job for more than 5 years. Gandy et al. (2018a, 2018b) further mentioned that younger employers between 20 and 29 had a higher turnover ratio than more tenured academic staff members. Issues influencing turnover intention among younger academic employees are poor working conditions, lack of status or promotion, issues with payment or award packages, and high-level workload without regard to personal life (LindaThaba-Nkadimene, 2020).

Job satisfaction was a strong predictor of turnover intention (Ivanovic & Ivancevic, 2019; Salam, 2017). Issa and Adebola (2014) found similar results from the participants in their study and indicated employees tend to leave their jobs when they are not satisfied with their organization. Turnover among employees can be identified by measuring employees' job satisfaction, and as job satisfaction increases, turnover rates decrease (Ivanovic & Ivancevic, 2019). Motivation or the unwillingness to engage in one's work had a significant and positive relationship with turnover intentions among academics in higher education institutions (Pham et al., 2021). An organization's climate impacts turnover intention, the behavior of those with leadership roles, job facilities, and the workload of employees (Salam, 2017). Job satisfaction cannot stop employee turnover; some factors cause an employee to leave their institution even when employees are satisfied (Issa & Adebola, 2014), especially if there is a lack of future opportunities within their institution (Jo, 2008).

Previous turnover intention models have remarkably impacted the understanding of employee turnover; however, no universally accepted model guides employee turnover (Singh & Sharma, 2015). Research has shown that when higher education institutions retain employees, it improves academic services, enhances decision-making abilities, and reduces turnover costs (Grobler & van Rensburg, 2019; Takawira et al., 2014). Despite research finding positive outcomes from studying turnover intention, turnover intention has encountered harsh criticisms (Somers, 1996). Studies in management stagnated, and many theories utilized in textbooks were developed between the 1960s and 1970s (Steers et al., 2004), and studies surrounding the paradigm of employee turnover are limited (Somers & Birnbaum, 1999). Despite turnover and turnover intention being closely related, the turnover intention is more complex due to the turnover intention's close relation to an employee attitude (Ngo-Henha, 2017). While research has suggested that understanding why turnover occurs is vital, there is not extensive research to explain why turnover occurs (Somers & Birnbaum, 1999). Shah et al. (2020) mentioned that studies examining turnover should be conducted using qualitative research. Moreover, Price (2000) stated that future research should examine what influences individuals to leave an organization voluntarily.

Burnout

Herbert Freudenberger first coined burnout in the 1970s (Doolittle, 2013; Samra, 2018; Schubert-Irastorza & Fabry, 2014; Yu, 2005). A social psychologist named Christina Malachi began exploring the phenomenon of burnout within helping professions and created the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Eckleberry-Hunt et al., 2018; Heinemann & Heinemann, 2017; Schubert-Irastorza & Fabry, 2014). The MBI tested individuals' burnout by analyzing scores focusing on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and professional accomplishments (Eckleberry et al., 2018). Although burnout can be associated with any profession, burnout is usually associated with individuals helping professionals or dealing with people in some capacity (Federici & Skaalvik, 2012). While there are different clinical perspectives and definitions of burnout, most of these descriptions on burnout describe burnout as "a state of physical and emotional depletion" (Qureshi, 2013, p. 120; Yu, 2005, p. 54), which prevents individuals from positively navigating work-related pressures, (Yu, 2005).

Burnout has been associated with absenteeism, low commitment to an organization, and job dissatisfaction (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Burnout can increase tension among colleagues (Maslach & Leiter, 2016); moreover, burnout is correlated to turnover intentions and health problems (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). Some of the health problems associated with burnout are immunological dysfunction, sleep disorders, and cardiovascular disease (Doolittle, 2013). Burnout can also cause negative behaviors that can decrease job performance and self-esteem (Doolittle, 2013). Academic staff attributes burnout to balancing multiple workloads (Agarwal & Bansal, 2021). Burnout among academic advisors can increase when they are overly involved in their job and feel that they have no control or full responsibility for all situations within the job

(Murray, 1987). Moreover, burnout might also increase when an employee is asked to perform a task they are not trained to perform (Murray, 1987).

Marshall et al. (2016) indicated that burnout occurred due to workload obligations. Lack of time and staff also contribute to burnout within higher education (Agarwal & Bansal, 2021). Research conducted by Marshall et al. (2016) reported that 53% of the participants in the study experienced burnout as an issue, and 63% reported high levels of stress. Job satisfaction has a significant but negative correlation with burnout (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). Rothmann and Barkhuizen (2008) indicated that burnout is a combination of their participants having low energy and mental distance. The age of higher education staff was a factor in Rothmann and Barkhuizen's (2008) research regarding burnout. Rothman and Barkhuizen (2008) reported that staff members between the ages of 29 and 39 had higher exhaustion and burnout than those 50 years and older.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a frequently studied variable within organizational behavior research (Spector, 1997) and psychological research (Rafferty & Griffin, 2009). Job satisfaction is defined as the emotional state of a job (Aazami et al., 2015; Rafferty & Griffin, 2009). Aazami et al. (2015) further indicated that job satisfaction is determined by analyzing the emotional effectiveness of situations within an individual's job and determining if the outcomes meet an individual's expectations. Rafferty and Griffin (2009) stated that over 5,000 research studies have examined job satisfaction. Studying job satisfaction is essential because it can help an organization develop fair treatment practices, understand how employee behavior impacts an organization, and understand its functions and trouble spots (Spector, 1997). Moreover, researchers want to examine and explore the relationships between job satisfaction and individual performance (Rafferty & Griffin, 2009). Research on job satisfaction dates to the 1930s (Rafferty & Griffin, 2009; Weiss & Merlo, 2015; Zhu, 2012). One of the most impactful studies surrounding job satisfaction is the Hawthorne study (Kaur, 2012; Rafferty & Griffin, 2009).

The study of job satisfaction was developed to examine employees' working conditions (Kaur, 2012; Rafferty & Griffin, 2009); however, the study shifted to examining employees' attitudes (Rafferty & Griffin, 2009). The study indicated that innovative changes could increase production temporarily (Kaur, 2012). Moreover, understanding attitudes among employees is related to their perceptions of management, the workplace environment, and their reactions to their supervisors (Rafferty & Griffin, 2009). Evaluating the job satisfaction of individuals was highly influenced by the economic and employment crises of the great depression (Weiss & Merlo, 2015). Researching job satisfaction during this time allowed researchers to study employee morale and the attitudes employees had toward their jobs (Weiss & Merlo, 2015). The study of job satisfaction was also based on need fulfillment, which meant that job satisfaction was measured based on whether an employee felt their physical and psychological needs were met for their job (Spector, 1997). Job satisfaction can be measured based on how employees judge their work conditions (Zhu, 2012). Moreover, other definitions of job satisfaction have centered on evaluating working conditions and whether those conditions provide an opportunity to satisfy the needs of an employee (Zhu, 2012).

The factor that impacts an individual's job satisfaction is work itself, tied to Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory (Whitsett & Winslow, 1967), pay structure, promotion facilities, supervision, and coworkers (Saha & Awal, 2021). Similarly, Zhu (2012) mentioned that research indicated that the five aspects of job satisfaction were the job itself, compensation, promotion, the supervisor, and colleagues. Spector (1997) indicated that the facets of job satisfaction included security, communication, policies and procedures, personal growth, recognition, appreciation, and job conditions. Researchers have mentioned that job satisfaction is based on an employee's overall attitude toward all aspects of their job (Spector, 1997; Weiss & Merlo, 2015; Zhu, 2012). Therefore, if an employee has a positive attitude toward their job, they will have more job satisfaction; however, if their attitude is negative, they will feel more dissatisfied (Zhu, 2012). Job satisfaction theories have four extensive categories: cognitive judgment, social influence, dispositional, and affect theories (Weiss & Merlo, 2015; Zhu, 2012). While Weiss and Merlo (2015) have mentioned broad theories of job satisfaction, other theories that are continually mentioned about job satisfaction are Maslow's theory of motivation/satisfaction, McGregor's x and y theory, McClelland's needs theory, Vroom's expectancy theory, and Herzberg's motivational theory (Ahmad et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2010).

Maslow's theory is considered to have laid the foundation for job satisfaction theory and implies that an individual's needs are ranked based on their needs at that time (Khan et al., 2010). Maslow's theory indicates that an individual's need is impacted by the significance and individuals attached to their various needs and developing an understanding of what their life should have to fulfill their needs (Khan et al., 2010). McGregor's x and y theory assumes that individuals try to avoid work and must be directed (Ahmad et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2010); however, individuals can also be self-directed to achieve committed objectives (Khan et al., 2010). Moreover, an individual's commitment is determined by the rewards associated with their achievement (Khan et al., 2010).

McClelland's theory veers from McGregor's theory because McClelland believed that individuals are driven to success (Ahmad et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2010). Moreover, people are driven by a power that tends to control or influence others (Ahmad et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2010) and transform individuals' lives (Ahmad et al., 2021). Vroom recognizes the values of an employee's needs and is considered the most comprehensive theory of motivation and satisfaction (Khan et al., 2010). Moreover, this theory emphasizes that employees believe that if they try hard and do better at their jobs, they will receive more rewards (Ahmad et al., 2021). Rewards are needed to impact employees' behavior (Khan et al., 2010). The final theory historically linked with job satisfaction is Herzberg's two-factor theory (Ahmad et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2010). Herzberg's two-factor motivation-hygiene theory is essential for measuring job satisfaction (Khan et al., 2010). Herzberg's theory initially asked two questions: When did you feel good or bad about your job (Khan et al., 2010)? Moreover, Herzberg's theory is divided between motivational factors that create job satisfaction and hygiene factors that create job dissatisfaction (Ahmad et al., 2021). Moreover, Hertzberg indicated that satisfaction and dissatisfaction are measured as two distinctly different phenomena (Rafferty & Griffin, 2009). While these theories point to external issues that can impact the satisfaction that employees experience at their jobs, Aziri (2011) indicated that internal factors influence employees and affect their satisfaction levels at their jobs.

Intrinsic motivation contributes to employee academic job satisfaction (Albert et al., 2018). Intrinsic factors contributing to academic staff satisfaction are flexibility, responsibility, and job diversification (Houston et al., 2006). High levels of self-efficacy involve individuals who are highly optimistic about their future success, have hope, can withstand diversity, and display high levels of job satisfaction (Mello, 2013). Mohamed and Messallam (2016) indicated that autonomy had a significant connection to job satisfaction among academic staff. Reed and

Watmough (2015) indicated that hygiene factors are not motivating factors in job satisfaction but can cause dissatisfaction if missing or lacking.

Noltemeyer (2014) suggested that mid-level staff are not necessarily motivated by pay but by more general recognition and appreciation. However, Noltemeyer (2014) confirmed several studies that indicated that academics and administrators had identified explicitly that lack of pay and promotions caused them to be dissatisfied with their jobs. Smerek and Peterson (2006) mentioned that salary was a significant positive predictor of job satisfaction. Research conducted by Houston et al. (2006) indicated that academics were naturally or moderately dissatisfied with their job, salary, and promotional opportunities. Issah (2021) identified similar results and indicated that administrators from a mid-western university in the United States were not satisfied with their promotional opportunities.

While the pay might not motivate employees, research does indicate that the lack of financial rewards can cause dissatisfaction among employees (Rynes et al., 2005). Many researchers have included pay and salary when reviewing job satisfaction to understand how those factors influence job satisfaction in higher education institutions. Salary is connected to Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory and identified as a hygiene factor (Bockman, 1971; Chiat & Panatik, 2019; Schulze, 2006), which focuses on factors that prevent dissatisfaction (Reed & Watmough, 2015; Whitsett & Winslow, 1967).

Faculty Advisors

Faculty traditionally took on academic advising (Cuevas et al., 2015). While some schools have shifted academic advising to professional advisors (Cuevas et al., 2015), many institutions still utilize faculty advisors to help guide and advise students (Yonker et al., 2019). Although the faculty advisors option carries more weight at their institution (Lynch, 2002) and is considered the experts in their field (Yonker et al., 2019), faculty advisors still felt they had limited support from their institutions or colleagues (Hart-Baldridge, 2020). Research has shown that faculty advisors have concerns regarding their unique role as advisors. Hart-Baldridge's (2020) participants mention unclear expectations, silos, lack of centralized knowledge for faculty advisors, and uneven advising caseloads or workloads are issues found within faculty advising that administrators need to address.

Baird (2020) identified that faculty advisors had concerns about their workload, resulting in less time to create meaningful relationships with students in their advising sessions. Moreover, (Baird, 2020) confirmed that faculty advisors had concerns about the lack of rewards and compensation they received for their advising load. Yonker et al. (2019) indicated that faculty advisors lacked recognition, support, professional development, and time. Moreover, some faculty advisors thought they were unqualified to give advice due to the role being more of a counseling role than an opportunity for teaching and learning (Yonker et al., 2019).

Academic Advisor

Professional academic advising is considered a new role within higher education institutions (Cuevas et al., 2015). Moreover, professional academic advising was created to take on the additional workload usually assigned to faculty advisors (Krush & Winn, 2010). The advantage of having professional academic advisors work with students is that students are their priority and are more readily accessible (Krush & Winn, 2010). Although professional academic advisors are responsible for taking care of the student's needs, Harman (2018) asked who is taking care of academic advisors. Academic advisors are susceptible to burnout due to empathy fatigue and caseload management (Harman, 2018). When academic advisors experience empathy fatigue, it increases burnout, and when burnout rises, it reduces advisors' professional efficacy

(Harman, 2018). Burnout and empathy fatigue can negatively impact the services academic advisors give to their students (Harman, 2018).

While there has been an established professional network of academic advisors since the National Academic Advising Association in 1976, there are still questions related to the professionalism of academic advising (Shaffer et al., 2010). Aiken-Wisniewski et al. (2015) mentioned that advisors felt a lack of uniformity regarding titles in their research. Aiken-Wisniewski et al. (2015) confirmed that advisors noted titles could change how an advisor is seen or treated within their institution. He et al. (2020) indicated that academic advisors reported unhappiness due to the lack of recognition in their college or university. One participant in the Aiken-Wisniewski et al. (2015) mentioned that a faculty member at their university did not recognize their credentials as a professional. The confusion of whether academic advising is considered a profession or if advisors are just an occupation or field of inquiry is an ongoing conversation. McGill (2018) indicated that professional academic advisors did not have homogeneity regarding advisors' professional status. Some advisors wholeheartedly believed they were a profession, and others thought they lacked some professional element; however, others thought it did not matter because gaining acceptance and professionalization is not an advisor's main focus (McGill, 2018).

Academic advisors come from many academic backgrounds (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2015; Gordan & Steele, 2005). While some advisors see having diverse backgrounds as a benefit, participants in Aiken-Wisniewski et al.'s (2015) research believed that the lack of unified qualification caused professional advisors to have limited recognition. Other issues regarding advising have indicated that administrators have a limited scope of the history of academic advising and its role in higher education; however, many advisors do not know their supervisors' beliefs (Menke et al., 2020).

In the early 2000s, the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) conducted a quantitative survey regarding academic advisors' satisfaction and institutional support (Lynch, 2002). Lynch (2002) indicated that academic advisors recommended increasing funding, the number of advisors, advising support staff, advising training, technology resources, and professional development resources. Reports from this study indicated that academic advisors and administrators had different opinions regarding advisors' recommendations (Lynch, 2002). The most significant difference was that administrators wanted increased technology, and academic advisors wanted more professional development (Lynch, 2002). Lynch (2002) distinguished between the job satisfaction experience of faculty advisors and professional advisors. Lynch (2002) mentioned the discrepancies between faculty advisors' and professional advisors' perceptions of job satisfaction, which found that faculty advisors reported higher satisfaction than professional advisors.

Chapter Summary

Turnover intention is a phenomenon that occurs within an organization and should be invested and prevented due to the cost associated with recruiting and selecting new employees (Schyns et al., 2007). While some companies might view underperforming employees leaving as a positive, research has shown that the most valuable employees are usually the most susceptible to turnover (Schyns et al., 2007). The factors discussed in this chapter that impacted employee turnover were burnout and the employees' satisfaction at their jobs.

Nanayakkara and Dayarathna (2016) mentioned that when employees are unhappy with factors that pertain to salary, working conditions, and relationships with colleagues or supervisors, which are known as hygiene factors, employees tend to leave the organization. However, when employees are satisfied with factors pertaining to performance and achievement, recognition on the job, opportunities for advancement, personal growth, and the work itself, which are known as motivators, employees tend to become more motivated and continue to work hard in their organization (Nanayakkara & Dayarathna, 2016). Employees who decide to leave an organization are not always concerned about external issues. O'Conner (2018) noted that March and Simon's turnover theory model indicated that employees could leave an organization if they desire ease of moving. Turnover can also occur if the employee perceives that the new job will be more satisfactory than their current employer (O'Conner, 2018).

Historically, research has generally focused on faculty members regarding job satisfaction (Donnelly, 2009), and research on full-time and primary advisors is limited (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2015; Donnelly, 2009). While there has been historical tension between faculty and professional academic advisors (Cuevas et al., 2015), faculty advisors and professional advisors share similar concerns regarding lack of recognition and support (Hart-Baldridge, 2020; He et al., 2020). While researchers have examined the lived experience of professional advisors, these research studies have primarily examined the advising occupation (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2015) and how their lived experience of professional academic advisors influences how advisors engage and support undergraduate students (Klusmeier, 2017). While these studies do not specifically examine turnover intention, Aiken-Wisniewski et al. (2015) and Klusmeier (2017) indicated that advisors have concerns regarding the ambiguity of advisors' roles, lack of professional courtesy from upper administration and faculty members, and little voice in cultivating policies and practices that affect academic advisors. Future research should continue to explore and examine professional advisors, explore general traits, behaviors, and emotions of professional advisors (Donnelly, 2009), and discuss issues that impact advisors from various institutions' sizes, types, and regional locations (Klusmeier, 2017).

Chapter 3: Research Method

The study employed phenomenological methodology to examine the turnover intention of professional academic advisors at midsized institutions and understand their experiences within higher education institutions. The previous chapter included factors that contributed to the turnover intention regarding burnout and job satisfaction. Moreover, Chapter 2 included research that addressed previous issues that impacted faculty and professional academic advisors. This chapter consists of the research method utilized in the study and the research design. Moreover, this chapter includes the population, instruments, data collection method, sample, and data analysis. Finally, this chapter establishes trustworthiness by acknowledging limitations within the study, acknowledging potential biases, and including ethical considerations.

Research Design and Method

Qualitative research examines human beings' direct and personal experiences and allows individuals or groups to make meaning of their everyday lives (Klenke, 2015). Qualitative research has various methodologies that researchers can use in their study, including ethnography, grounded theory, case studies, narrative analysis, and phenomenology studies (Davidson, 2019). Since this study aimed to examine the lived experience of academic advising, the methodology used for this study was phenomenology. Qutoshi (2018) mentioned that finding one acceptable definition or answer for phenomenology is challenging. Understanding phenomenology is challenging because there is no defined style of phenomenology, and phenomenologists have diverse styles (Qutoshi, 2018).

Leavy (2014) mentioned that the phenomenology approach allows individuals to describe their lived experiences and allows researchers to make meaning of the participant's perspectives. Saldaña (2011) indicated that a phenomenological study provides researchers with an opportunity to study a phenomenon. Historically, the phenomenological perspective was to learn about human experience at a profound level and observe a phenomenon (Qutoshi, 2018). The phenomenon in this study was the turnover intention of professional academic advisors. The study consisted of semistructured interviews and utilized open-ended questions. Semistructured questions consist of in-depth interviews where participants answer preset open-ended questions (Jamshed, 2014). Semistructured interviews are recommended when using a phenomenological methodology (Padilla-Díaz, 2015; Peoples, 2021). Moreover, using semistructured interview questions allows researchers to form relevant research questions and gives participants an avenue to mention or discuss other information that could be relevant to the study (Peoples, 2021).

Population

The population was professional academic advisors who were working or had worked in a midsized university. Krush and Winn (2010) indicated that a professional academic advisor's priority is advising students. Therefore, participation in this study required participants to work as academic advisors, where their job description stipulates that most of their work description primarily focused on advising students currently or previously. According to the College Board (n.d.), colleges are considered small when they have a population size of fewer than 5,000 students and considered large when the student population is over 15,000. Therefore, another requirement for participation in this study was that professional academic advisors work in an institution that supports a student population of between 5,000 and 15,000 students. High turnover rates were seen within jobs connected to academic advising. However, Donnelly (2009) mentioned that academic advisors with more experience have more job satisfaction, and academic advisors with experience between 3 and 6 years have less job satisfaction. Over 50% of college and university professionals who work directly with students leave the job within 5 years

(Marshall et al., 2016). Dougherty and Andrews (2007) indicated that counselors in Christian colleges and universities had a mean of 1.9 years before they departed their respective institutions. Therefore, the final criteria for participants in this study were to work as professional academic advisors for at least 2 to 6 years.

Study Sample

The criterion sample method was utilized in this study, which was part of purposeful sampling according to Büyükgöze and Gün (2017) and Palinkas et al. (2015). Using criterion sampling as part of the purposeful sampling strategy allows researchers to study cases that meet a predetermined benchmark (Suri, 2011). Moreover, establishing a criterion enables researchers to state what specific criteria they will include or exclude from their study (Suri, 2011). Moser and Korstjens (2018) noted that phenomenology utilizes criterion sampling because researchers can look for participants who meet the criteria for their study and examine the lived experience that the researcher wants to study. Therefore, my targeted sample for this study was professional academic advisors whose primary job description revolved around advising students toward degree completion and who were in their occupation for at least 2 years and not longer than 6 years.

The goal of my dissertation was to use two Facebook groups with group members who worked within higher education with approval from the institutional review board (IRB; see Appendix) at Abilene Christian University. After I received approval to contact these groups, which were the “Expatriates of Student Affairs” and “Millennials in Student Affairs and Higher Education,” only the Millennials in Student Affairs and Higher Education allowed me to post my research solicitation methods to their Facebook group.

The goal of my research was to continue interviewing participants until I reached saturation. Saturation is utilized in qualitative research and is the criterion for researchers to decide when to stop interviewing participants for their study (Saunders et al., 2018). However, Moser and Korstjens (2018) and Creswell (2013) indicated that phenomenological research should have a minimum of five participants. To contact the participants, I included my email address to confirm their participation in the study. Once the participants demonstrated their involvement in the study, I sent them a link to WebEx's virtual videoconference application. Moreover, a consent form with the interview protocol was sent to the participant's email address.

Instrumentation

Interview questions are typically used in phenomenological research (Peoples, 2021). The basic concept for developing interview questions in a phenomenological approach is to understand the stories of others (Wimpenny & Gass, 2000). The interview questions developed in this study were in-depth interviews that allowed participants to share their stories and provide a holistic understanding of the lived experience of professional academic advisors. The questions began by asking the participants to describe their experience or to express their feelings about their lived experience (Wimpenny & Gass, 2000). Starting the questions in this manner provided the structure for open-ended questions; moreover, it allowed participants to describe the experience they encountered within their environment (Wimpenny & Gass, 2000).

Again, Herzberg's two-factor motivational theory informed the questioning in my study. Syptak et al. (1999) indicated that Herzberg's two-factor theory is based on motivation and hygiene factors. The motivational factors consist of work, achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement, while the hygiene factors consist of company and administrative policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions. The theory is divided based on factors that promote dissatisfiers (hygiene) and satisfiers (motivation) (Syptak et al., 1999). The questions encompassed two main concepts: one that asks a question regarding satisfaction (motivation) and dissatisfaction (hygiene; Syptak et al., 1999; see Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1

Questions and Themes Related to Herzberg's Motivational Factors

Theme	Motivation satisfiers
Describe a time your talents were used to overcome a challenge.	Achievement
Describe the feedback you receive from upper administration.	
Describe the policies your institution has to recognize academic advisors.	Recognition
Describe any career paths (advisor ranks) your institution provides academic advisors.	Advancement
Describe the responsibilities academic advisors have at your institution.	Responsibility
Describe the autonomy given to academic advisors at your institution.	
Describe a time you felt upper administrators valued your work as an advisor.	Work itself

Note. Interview questions and content adapted from "Job Satisfaction: Putting Theory Into Practice," by J. M. Syptak, D. W. Marsland, and D. Ulmer, 1999, *Family Practice Management*, *6*(9), p. 29 (https://www.aafp.org/pubs/fpm/issues/1999/1000/p26.html).

Table 2

Questions and Themes Related to Herzberg's Hygiene Factors

Theme	Hygiene dissatisfiers
Explain the training policy for professional academic advisors at your institution.	Company and administrative policies
Explain your average caseload, and do you think it is appropriate for advisor students.	
Explain your relationship with upper administrator (assistant director, director, dean, vice president, president).	Supervision
Describe your relationship with your supervisor or supervisors (assistant director, director, dean, vice president, president).	
Describe the compensation that advisors receive at your institution.	Salary
Describe any raises you received as an academic advisor.	
Describe your relationship with your colleagues.	Interpersonal relationship
Describe the faculty advisors at your institution.	
Describe your office environment.	Work conditions
Describe your equipment and software.	

Note. Interview questions and content adapted from "Job Satisfaction: Putting Theory Into Practice," by J. M. Syptak, D. W. Marsland, and D. Ulmer, 1999, *Family Practice Management*, *6*(9), p. 28 (https://www.aafp.org/pubs/fpm/issues/1999/1000/p26.html).

Each interview lasted between 30 to 60 minutes, based on Guetterman's (2015) suggestion that most interviews last 30 to 60 minutes. Peoples (2021) mentioned that follow-up questions should occur after the initial interview. Therefore, each participant received an opportunity to review transcripts after the interview and provided a chance to clarify any statements they made or ask further questions.

Data Collection

After receiving approval from the IRB, each participant was sent an overview of the study and contact information with a letter informing me of their willingness to participate. The participants who emailed me regarding their interest in the study were sent a link to meet through videoconferencing; I met with the participants one-on-one utilizing WebEx. Using video recording presents the opportunity to review the participant's responses and any answers I might have missed. Since this research involved studying the phenomena of turnover intention, videoconferencing software allowed the participant not to share their video and keep their anonymity. The participants were assigned a pseudonym to protect their confidentiality.

Data Analysis

After data collection, the next step in qualitative research is transcribing and analyzing the data (McMahon & Winch, 2018). Leavy (2017) noted that many researchers transcribe each interview verbatim, preserving the interview record. Before analyzing the data, Leavy (2017) recommends an initial immersion: reading, looking, and thinking about the data. After each interview, I reread the transcriptions and listened to the audio from the interview. Moreover, I wrote down my thoughts during the interview to help me with my next step, coding.

Coding is a way for researchers to break down data into individual parts (St. John & Johnson, 2000). Moreover, coding reduces and categorizes the data generated during the interview (Leavy, 2017). Phenomenological studies use data analysis strategies similar to other qualitative approaches (Manyam & Panjwani, 2019). Researchers who conduct qualitative research can analyze their data manually or use data analysis software to analyze their data (Manyam & Panjwani, 2019). Verbatim transcribing is complex and heavily influenced by sociocultural representations (da Silva Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). Since transcription is based on the sociocultural norms of the participants, researchers are responsible for interpreting the interviewee's verbal or written language (McMillin, 2021).

When transcribing, researchers must decide whether to transcribe participants' words with naturalized or denaturalized transcription (McMillin, 2021). Naturalized transcription occurs when the researcher transcribes the interviewee's language as is and unfiltered by the researcher (da Silva Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). Moreover, naturalized transcriptions are written with great attention to detail, benefiting researchers interested in spoken language's complexities (Oliver et al., 2005). Denaturalized transcription focuses on concise data collection, grammar correction, and noise or nonstandard speech (da Silva Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019). Moreover, denaturalized transcription takes away the sociocultural characteristics (da Silva Nascimento & Steinbruch, 2019) and focuses more on the information content and the substance within the interview (Oliver et al., 2005).

Phenomenology is a qualitative method utilized in research to analyze individuals' first-person viewpoints (Smith, 2018). Balls (2009) mentioned an issue that can arise when transcribing data is that the researcher transcribes it in their voice. Moreover, Balls (2009) explained that it is vital for researchers to acknowledge their bias and write down their interviewees' spoken words correctly, including their faults. Therefore, when transcribing the researcher's data, naturalized transcriptions were utilized in the study, which kept the integrity of the interviewee and limited misconceptions between the researchers and the participants (Oliver et al., 2005).

Currently, researchers are conflicted about using Computer-Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) programs. Wickham and Woods (2005) indicated that using CAQDAS could save time and money, mainly when many qualitative pages of field notes are analyzed. However, concerns with CAQDAS programs are that they favor coding methods and focus too much on the quantity of the interviews instead of the meaning behind those interviews (St. John & Johnson, 2000). Moreover, researchers are concerned about using CAQDAS if they are not knowledgeable about CAQDAS programs (St. John & Johnson, 2000). With this information in mind, the data from the research were manually coded using in vivo coding. In vivo coding is used in qualitative data analysis and allows researchers to emphasize the participant's words (Manning, 2017; Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). An advantage of using the in vivo coding method is in vivo coding is suggested for beginners conducting qualitative research (Manning, 2017; Saldaña & Omasta, 2018), and it honors the voice of a particular culture the researcher is studying (Manning, 2017).

Establishing Trustworthiness

When a research study establishes validity, the study is thought to be credible and establishes trustworthiness (Leavy, 2017). For qualitative studies, trustworthiness requires researchers to report the personal experiences of their participants accurately and account for personal biases (Noble & Smith, 2015). Peoples (2021) indicated eight ways to develop validity in phenomenological studies. For this study, validity was established through member checking and explanation of researcher bias. Phenomenology methodology examines the lived experience of cultures, and membership checking ensures that the meaning and context of the studied participants are not misinterpreted (Manning, 2017). Using WebEx to record the transcripts helped me maintain the integrity of the participants' experiences and word choices. The member-checking process allowed participants to read their responses and determine if that statement accurately reflected their perspective after they had time to reflect on the responses. Sending the transcripts back helped establish validity by ensuring what I transcribed was an accurate account of the voice of each participant and their lived experience (Peoples, 2021).

In phenomenological studies, researchers write down personal biases in field notes or journals or bracket their experiences (Peoples, 2021). Bracketing is a strategy researchers use within phenomenological studies where researchers put aside personal beliefs about the phenomenon they are studying (Chan et al., 2013). While reading the studies for my literature review, I wrote down any biases I might have had, which helped me navigate potential influences that could affect me during the research process. Next, I reflected on how these biases could impact the interview process and the questions I asked the participants in the study.

My Epoche: As a professional academic advisor who has worked at a university with extensive turnover, I must humble myself to learn new information (Chan et al., 2013) and put my biases aside to gain a more in-depth and holistic understanding of the phenomena of turnover intentions and how it impacts the lives of professional academic advisors. After generating my questions for my participants, I reviewed my notes containing my biases and checked if any of my questions would lead my participants to answer questions geared toward my biased presumptions. Moreover, my questions were revised to ensure that they were open-ended, allowing for guided but open-ended questions (Chan et al., 2013), but participants were still free to tell their lived experiences without a biased viewpoint or interruption. Once the interviews were conducted, I sent those transcriptions back for confirmation to ensure I did not write or misinterpret any of my participant's answers with my thoughts on the phenomena of turnover intention.

Ethical Considerations

Before interviewing participants for my dissertation, I completed training through the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program. During this training, I learned how to develop and conduct social and behavioral research studies and the conduct needed to conduct research. These training sessions were required before submitting an IRB application to Abilene Christian University. While videoconferencing tools are a newer tool for collecting qualitative data in research, the IRB has evolved its interpretation for data gathering methods that utilize videoconferencing software (Nehls et al., 2015). One of the critical factors in upholding ethical considerations is to ensure that participants in the study were volunteers and had informed consent (Nehls et al., 2015). Once participants met the requirements and were selected, they were sent a form to give approval and express that they were not coerced to participate in the study. Moreover, the consent form required participants to provide consent to include their interview in the study; I printed the consent form and deleted the email (Lobe et al., 2020).

Another ethical consideration was ensuring that the collected information maintained confidentiality during and after the study. The videoconferencing tool used in the study was WebEx. WebEx is a videoconferencing program created by Cisco, and I was able to disallow other individuals not in the interview to join my session. I locked the meeting to prevent nonparticipants from entering the discussion without authentication (Lobe et al., 2020). Since the study involves videoconferencing, participants were able to conduct the interview wherever they felt comfortable and safe to converse. I confirmed with each participant that they could blur their screen, change the background, or not share their video (Lobe et al., 2020).

It is vital to address the risk that could impact participants and mitigate stress and other related issues (Nehls et al., 2015). Since this was a study about turnover intention, I asked the participants not to use their work email, especially if they were currently working as an academic advisor within their higher education institution. Moreover, each participant was assigned a pseudonym to protect their name and to assure anonymity concerning the data collected during the interview. Data collected during the discussion was saved on a password-protected computer with a dual login to protect the data collected during the interview. After the data was collected, read, and transcribed for codes and themes, the information was deleted from WebEx and my computer. Participants were informed before the interview, and right before that, they were notified that they could discontinue the interview at any time (Nehls et al., 2015).

Assumptions

An assumption is a factor that can alter a researcher's study or interpretation of the study, which a researcher has no control over (Gardner & Beatty, 1980). The study was designed to understand the lived experience of professional academic advisors in midsized colleges and universities. Therefore, throughout my interview, the assumption was that the individuals in this study were professional academic advisors who previously or currently worked in a midsized institution. Moreover, since I interviewed professionals, I assumed that these individuals were honest with their lived experiences and truthful regarding their presumptions on turnover intention. Since I used purposeful sampling in this study, the assumption was that the participants met the criteria for time worked within a professional advising office between 2 to 6 years. Lastly, the participants in this study had an option not to participate in this research; therefore, I assumed that the participants voluntarily agreed to finish the interview process and were not coerced into completing this study (Nickerson, 2020).

Limitations

The methodology I used was phenomenological, and according to Hickman (2015), researchers question the biases that can occur through this methodology. Ross and Zaid (2019) mentioned that participants responding to questions favorable to the researcher and not providing authentic responses influenced research that included human subjects. Other limitations within this methodology are the issues surrounding reliability and methods used to test for reliability within the phenomenological methodology (Hickman, 2015). Moreover, Hinrichs and Mischkind (1967) indicated that researchers had questioned the rigor of Herzberg's theory and the ability to test the results of Herzberg's theory.

Professional academic advisors are not a monolith; therefore, there is a possibility that some academic advisors have lived experience that causes them to experience turnover intention more than other participants. Based on previous research, student support staff in higher education roles usually leave the field within 6 years (Marshall et al., 2016). Therefore, a criterion for this study was to interview advisors who have not spent more than 6 years in a professional academic advising setting. However, with this criterion, I limited the participants that could be interviewed, limiting the information I could receive and impacting the themes I found within the study.

This dissertation was conducted during a time called "The Great Resignation," a term coined by Anthony Klotz, a professor at Texas A&M (Sheedy, 2022, p. 8). The pandemic caused individuals to reevaluate their careers and the meaning of their work (Sheedy, 2022). Currently, one of the main reasons individuals have left their jobs during this period is dissatisfaction with pay and the opportunity to receive a better opportunity from another company (Sheedy, 2022). Other issues reviewed were the ability to pay rent and afford healthcare and those who felt disrespected or had issues with management (Sheedy, 2022). Since this dissertation was written during an economic change brought on during the pandemic, it was possible that the study participants would have a strong affinity toward having thoughts about leaving their organization due to economic changes and deeper thoughts on organization management and cohesion.

Using videoconferencing allowed me to interview professional academic advisors who were not accessible through traditional face-to-face meetings due to the initial cost of travel. However, using videoconferencing requires participants to access newer computers, phones, and high-speed internet access capable of handling videoconferencing software (Nehls et al., 2015). With these factors in mind, utilizing videoconferencing tools might limit the professional academic advisors I could interview for my study.

Chapter Summary

This study was structured around a phenomenological approach to understanding the lived experience and turnover intention of professional academic advisors in midsized universities. The phenomenological approach is utilized in qualitative studies (Neubauer et al., 2019). Interviews were utilized as the data collection method since it is the most common strategy used to collect data in qualitative research (Jamshed, 2014). Moreover, the interviews consisted of semistructured interviews because semistructured interviews are equipped to handle participants' opinions that are often sensitive or complex (Barriball & While, 1994).

The interviews occurred through videoconferencing software. Using videoconferencing software allowed for broader data collection from a more expansive geographical area and reaches people who do not have the means or are unwilling to travel (Gray et al., 2020). Moreover, videoconferencing software kept the integrity and quality of the interview, and participants could still build rapport with each other (Gray et al., 2020). Guest et al. (2006)

mentioned that phenomenological studies have at least six participants for their research. Moreover, Peoples (2021) recommended that the range of participants needed for a phenomenological study was between eight and 15. Due to the labor, time-consuming, and intensive nature of qualitative research, qualitative research did not have a large sample size (Mason, 2010). Therefore, having a smaller participant size is often comparable with previous and current research studies (Mason, 2010).

Chapter 3 provided information on the research methodology, population, sample size, and limitations and described how this study maintained validity. This study established validity by bracketing, a strategy utilized by phenomenological researchers to set aside their biases (Chan et al., 2013), and membership checking. Moreover, this chapter described the sample size used in the study, how the interviews were conducted through videoconferencing, and the ethical considerations of the study. The next chapter, Chapter 4, describes the participants in the research and the results of this phenomenological study.

Chapter 4: Results

Academic advisors are essential to the institution's mission, which is to provide effective communication for students and faculty, enhance students' educational experience, and contribute to their learning experience (Noaman & Ahmed, 2015). Additionally, academic advisors have a responsibility to help students with performance evaluations and assessments, services, setting up advising centers, and training peer advisors (Epps, 2002). Despite having these extensive roles, academic advisors have historically felt that excellent advising was not rewarded and lacked professional development (Menke et al., 2020).

This study aimed to understand the lived experience of professional full-time academic advisors. Moreover, the purpose of the study was to determine potential issues that cause a full-time professional academic advisor to leave their institution or possibly the academic advising profession. Furthermore, turnover can impact an employer's bottom line and recruitment and cause exhaustion when retraining new employees (Syptak et al., 1999). The topics included in this study revolved around satisfiers (motivator) factors and dissatisfiers (hygiene) factors. The motivational factors include work, achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement (Akdemir, 2020; Syptak et al., 1999). Hygiene factors include company and administrative policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions (Akdemir, 2020; Syptak et al., 1999). Chapter 4 includes a description of the data collection methods, interview protocol, description of the participants, and the study's findings.

Study Participants

The study was conducted using a qualitative approach using a phenomenology methodology, which focuses on another individual's experiences (Neubauer et al., 2019). Moreover, the phenomenology methodology sought to understand the phenomenon from those who have experienced the phenomenon and understand what they experience and how they experience their reality (Neubauer et al., 2019). The lived experiences targeted in this study were full-time academic advisors from midsized institutions. The participants were asked questions based on Herzberg's motivation-hygiene factors theory to narrow the focus of advisors' lived experiences of full-time academic advisors.

Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory examined what made engineers and accountants feel best or worst at their jobs (Akdemir, 2020). Moreover, the factors represented in Herzberg's theory were motivators, which focused on satisfiers, and hygiene factors, which focused on uncomfortable external outliers or dissatisfiers (Akdemir, 2020). Motivational factors focus on factors that include the work itself, achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement (Akdemir, 2020; Syptak et al., 1999), and hygiene factor focuses on company and administrative policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relationships, and working conditions (Akdemir, 2020; Syptak et al., 1999).

The study included three men and five women who identified as full-time professional academic advisors. All eight participants have a master's related degree within the field of higher education, three participants have a master's degree outside of the field of higher education, and four are working on their doctoral degrees. At the time of the study, three participants still worked within the field of higher education as full-time professional academic advisors, and three participants had left the field of full-time professional academic advising; however, they still worked within higher education in some capacity, and two had left the field of higher education.

Interview Protocol

The eight participants volunteered and signed a consent letter to participate in the study. The participants answered 17 questions based on Syptak et al.'s (1999) interpretation of Herzberg's motivation and hygiene theory. The interviews were conducted using videoconferencing via WebEx, and all the interviews were one-on-one sessions. The participants were asked if they consented to their interview being recorded for validity. After the interviews and themes or codes were written, the participants were emailed their transcripts to check for validity and add additional clarity to the study. Moreover, the themes in this study were manually written.

Data Analysis and Themes

The coding for the study was generated from the recurring themes mentioned in the participant's responses. The themes were conducted manually with no software or computer assistance. This study assumed that every participant reported their personal experience in higher education as a full-time academic advisor. Each interview lasted about 30 minutes; however, a few sessions lasted an hour. During the interviews, the participants were not interrupted and were able to complete their thought process. During the interview, specific questions were marked for clarification. However, clarification questions were asked at the end of the interview to allow the participants to complete their thoughts on each question. While I recorded and tried to utilize every aspect of the participant's answers, I incorporated the responses that aligned with Herzberg's two-factor motivational and hygiene theory.

Trustworthiness of Data

A vital aspect of qualitative research is trustworthiness, which is necessary for authenticating participant data collected within a research study (Slettebø, 2021). During the interview, I prevented myself from imputing my personal bias into the research questionnaire and influencing the participants' responses. Before I started my interview process, my chair and dissertation committee reviewed my research question for biases. Moreover, I tailored my questions for my research based on research from Syptak et al. (1999). The eight interviews were conducted using WebEx, and each participant had a private link to enter the meeting room. To prevent myself from entering biases in participants' responses, I recorded the responses of the participants, and their responses were then transcribed using the software provided by WebEx. Each participant was given a chance to review their complete transcripts and provided with a transcript of the key statements mentioned in their responses.

Participants' Narratives

Kentucky Advisor I

Kentucky Advisor I worked at a midsized institution for 1 year and 1 month. This advisor earned a master's degree in student personnel services in higher education and is currently working on a doctorate in educational leadership. Currently, this participant does not work as an academic advisor but has transitioned to another institution and worked there for 15 months as a student success coach.

Ohio Advisor I

Ohio Advisor I worked at their midsize university for 2 years and 3 months. Ohio Advisor I has now taken a job outside of higher education but did work as an academic advisor at a small- and medium-sized university. Their education includes two master's degrees outside of higher education practice.

Kentucky Advisor II

Kentucky Advisor II is currently working at a midsized institution and has worked for that institution for 4 years and 5 months. This participant has a master's in higher education/higher education administration.

Ohio Advisor II

This participant worked at a midsize university for a little over 2 years as a primary academic advisor. Currently, this advisor works as an academic advising coordinator at a large land grant institution outside of Ohio. This advisor has a master's in student personnel services in higher education.

Ohio Advisor III

Ohio Advisor III worked in the College of Liberal Arts department within their university for 1.5 years. This academic advisor has a master's degree in education, but it is not connected to a higher education background.

Mississippi Advisor I

Mississippi Advisor I has a master's outside of higher education. Currently, the participant is working on their doctorate in educational leadership in higher education. This advisor has a plan on finding a new job outside of their current institution but did not mention they were currently looking to pursue that option.

Louisiana Advisor I

This advisor worked at their midsized institution for a little over a year before they became an advisor at a larger institution. They have a master's in higher education administration and are currently pursuing their doctorate in higher education administration. Currently, they are working in a higher education-adjacent job.

Mississippi Advisor II

This academic advisor is a doctoral student in a higher education program. Although, they are not a full-time primary academic advisor, they still work as a director within the higher education and advising system.

Research Questions

The participants' responses were used to answer the research questions in Chapter 1 of this study. The questions developed in Chapter 1 were structured to gain a holistic viewpoint of the lived experience of full-time professional academic advisors who worked within midsized institutions.

RQ1. What are the lived experiences of academic advisors in the university setting?

RQ2. What phenomena are present in the lived experience of academic advisors that might generate turnover intent (i.e., policies, students, job roles)?

Themes

Themes in qualitative research are generated by researchers who compiled data from observations of the phenomena of the overall storyline from their participants (Vaismoradi & Snelgrove, 2019). According to Saldaña and Omasta (2018), phenomenological analysis tends to have data analysis that revolves around categories, themes, and assertions. Ryan and Bernard (2003) indicated that themes are expressions linked to text or found in images, sounds, and objects. Themes can be extensive or have specific expressions; moreover, themes can come from data or prior knowledge of the phenomenon (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The themes generated in Chapter 4 are based on the factors in the Herzberg motivation-hygiene theory. Table 1 and Table 2, mentioned in Chapter 3, show how I organized the participants' answers to coincide with the themes for my questions within the research. Moreover, I use these tables to code the answers of my participants.

The following pages describe the themes mentioned in Herzberg's motivation and hygiene theory and how each participant's experience as an advisor was or is impacted by these themes (see Table 3 and Table 4). Tables 5 to 18 will be discussed in the following sections. The following pages include a synopsis of how each participant answered questions from Tables 1 and 2 and then merge the questions for a holistic view of the lived experience of full-time professional academic advisors at midsize universities.

Table 3

Questions and Themes Related to Herzberg's Satisfiers

Motivation (satisfiers)	Themes
Describe a time your talents were used to overcome a challenge.	Achievement
Describe the feedback you receive from upper administration.	
Describe the policies your institution has to recognize academic advisors.	Recognition
Describe any career paths (advisor ranks) your institution provides academic advisors.	Advancement
Describe the responsibilities academic advisors have at your institution.	Responsibility
Describe the autonomy given to academic advisors at your institution.	
Describe a time you felt upper administrators valued your work as an advisor.	Work itself

Note. Interview questions and content adapted from "Job Satisfaction: Putting Theory Into Practice," by J. M. Syptak, D. W. Marsland, and D. Ulmer, 1999, *Family Practice Management*, *6*(9), p. 29 (https://www.aafp.org/pubs/fpm/issues/1999/1000/p26.html).

Table 4

Questions and Themes Related to Herzberg's Dissatisfiers

Hygiene (dissatisfiers)	Themes
Explain the training policy for professional academic advisors at your institution.	Company and administrative policies
Explain your average caseload, and do you think it is appropriate for advising students.	
Explain your relationship with upper administration (assistant director, director, dean, vice president, president).	Supervision
Describe your relationship with your supervisor or supervisors (assistant director, director, dean, vice president, president).	
Describe the compensation that advisors receive at your institution.	Salary
Describe the raises you received as an academic advisor.	
Describe your relationship with your colleagues.	Interpersonal relationships
Describe the faculty advisors at your institution.	
Describe your office environment.	Work conditions
Describe your equipment and software.	

Note. Interview questions and content adapted from "Job Satisfaction: Putting Theory Into Practice," by J. M. Syptak, D. W. Marsland, and D. Ulmer, 1999, *Family Practice Management*, *6*(9), p. 29 (https://www.aafp.org/pubs/fpm/issues/1999/1000/p26.html).

Motivational Factors

The first set of themes revolves around the satisfiers (motivators). Motivating factors create satisfaction by fulfilling the needs of employees and personal growth (Syptak et al., 1999). Moreover, Gawel (1996) mentioned that motivational factors are tied to the employees' long-term and positive effects on job performance.

Advancement

Advancement should only be measured when there is an official change in an employee's status or position within an organizational chart (Sithiphand, 1983). While there are directors and even assistant directors of advising within many of the participants' advising units, no participant specifically mentioned a process where advisors could ascend to those ranks or stated their college had an official statement that lays out a plan so advisors could reach those roles. Many advisors felt that advising was a dead path at their university or that advisors needed to leave the university to climb the ladder within the advising occupation (see Table 5). Only two advisors mentioned that they had a ranking system, and one felt that more senior-level positions could not be made due to budget cuts. The second participant had a ranking system structured with rank one advisor advising freshmen, rank two advising sophomores, rank three advising juniors, and rank four advising seniors. While this participant had an advising structure, there was no mention of how these paths were truly different regarding their responsibilities, nor was there mention of a pay raise that came with these ranks (see Table 5).

Table 5

Statement for Theme 1: Limited Opportunities for Increased Advancement in Advising Units

Statement	Participant
Yeah, so we had a director … Everyone else was on the same level.	Kentucky Advisor I
Beyond going to the different departments like making a lateral move, there was no like career path within advising.	Ohio Advisor I
The path right now is still very muddy due to budget. You know, they're hoping that maybe someday in the office, be able to get some more senior-level advisors or counselors in our office. And they're also constantly talking about possibly restructuring that ladder. It may be coming up with other ways to have other levels to put in to help people raise their pay.	Kentucky Advisor II
Yeah, that was something I know that the provost's office was working on it. You know, put in restructuring things for us like advisory 1, advisors 2, and senior advisors. But that wasn't something that was accomplished while I was there.	Ohio Advisor II
Okay, there are none. We just have one level of academic advisor. As far as your employment status is concerned, there are no levels, and there is no track to move up to a different level of academic advisor. Um, if you wanna move up, it would be literally applying for another position at the university.	Ohio Advisor III
The only higher position would be the assistant director. And so, it's like, I mean, it's kind of like a dead path if you're trying to rise up within academic advising, at least at this specific institution.	Mississippi Advisor I
So yeah, career paths there was none, and I think that was also a reason why the honors college had high turnover in regard to advisors, because the org chart was very interesting.	Louisiana Advisor I
Well, there was a strategic plan that divided the office	Mississippi Advisor II

Advising Rank. Kentucky Advisor I mentioned they had a director; however, all the other advisors had the same titles. Ohio Advisor I indicated that advisors could only make lateral moves. Kentucky Advisor II indicated that they do have senior academic counselors; however, Kentucky Advisor II also mentioned that budget cuts played a role in advisors not reaching this level. Kentucky Advisor II stated, “You know the path right now is very much muddy due to the budget constraints. But you know they’re hoping that someday in the office, to be able to get some more senior level advisors or counselors in our office.” For Ohio Advisor I, they mentioned they had no advancement system in place for academic advisors “beyond going to the different departments like making a lateral move there was no like career path within advising.” Ohio Advisor II indicated that most of his colleagues in other advising departments did not have an advising structure, but it was something that they were currently working toward. Ohio Advisor II stated:

> Yeah, that was something I know that the provost’s office was working on it. Uh, you know, put in restructuring things for us like advisor one, advisor two, and senior advisor, but that, that wasn’t something that was accomplished while I was there.

Ohio Advisor II mentioned that his advising department had a separate setup from the other advising departments within his university. For Ohio Advisor II, the advisors in the honors department had assistants and an associate director of advising, but no other vertical advising ranks. Ohio Advisor III mentioned that academic advisors at their institutions do not have any ranking system. This advisor stated:

> So, it doesn’t matter if you come in fresh out of grad school with an internship experience or if you’ve been an academic advisor for 10 years. If you’re both applying for an academic advising position, it, it’s the same.

Mississippi Advisor I expressed that their advising unit was a “dead path,” mostly due to more senior-level administrators “who are in those higher levels have been there for a while, and you know they’re not planning on leaving anytime soon.” Louisiana Advisor I reflected that lack of career advancement was the reason for the high turnover within their advising unit. Mississippi Advisor II mentioned that their office did have advisor ranks within their institution. She said, “Well, there was a strategic plan that divided the office. The advising ranks were split between first-year, second-year, and third- and fourth-year students that were considered career advisors.” Although the advisor mentioned their institution did have advising ranks, she mentioned, “No increase in pay but increase in responsibilities.”

Achievements

Achievement in Herzberg’s theory consists of resolving issues within one’s work (Sithiphand, 1983; Story et al., 2009). Moreover, it is vital that employers place their employees in positions where the opportunity to fail is at a minimum (Syptak et al., 1999). There is consistent opportunity to climb the social ladder (Story et al., 2009), and employees are given an opportunity to solve job-related challenges (Alshmemri et al., 2017). According to Engelbrektsson and Gävert (2006), talents describe what a person believes and uses in everyday life that organizations want to see. The participants were given the opportunity to express what their talents were and how their talents were utilized within their office environment. To allow the participants to tell their stories and prevent me from having prior knowledge of the participants, I did not request the participants to send any job descriptions prior to the interview. There were participants in my study that contributed to their advising offices. The participants who felt they had a contribution to their offices made pamphlets and rebranded their office, had lesson plans used as examples in their first-year seminars, were used as consultants for organizational issues, and led student groups. However, other participants felt that they were only doing their jobs to help assist the office and did not utilize any specific talent. Furthermore, one participant felt as though they did not use their talent at all. Some participants in the study alluded to their talents being sought out by directors or assistant directors, while other advisors volunteered their talents, or their colleagues sought their talents out. What was not mentioned in these interviews by any participant was whether their talents were used for promotion status, increased incentives or compensations, or if their work directly correlated with an award from upper administration.

The feedback given to advisors differed significantly between participants within the study. Advisors appreciated it when supervisors gave them positive affirmations and vocally communicated when someone complimented them from outside their division. Some advisors in the study had mixed reviews when thinking about the feedback they received. Discussion of feedback needed more meticulous detail regarding their work as an advisor, and they felt that performance evaluations were a mere formality and done as a task or checkmark, which lacked constructive feedback from upper administrators. Moreover, one participant stated that after completing their performance review, they never received feedback and felt it was more of a "checkmark" with no follow-up conversation. The lack of communication from their supervisor was expressed as feeling "fairly evaluated," but there was no feedback that expounded on the reports they received, never communicated how they could grow from their evaluations or did not guide future aspirations.

Each participant did not express if their feedback was specified between direct and upper-level supervisors. However, a participant mentioned their individual experiences when receiving feedback from upper administration that was always negative, usually due to needing to understand what was occurring in advising and only meeting with advisors if they received a concerning email from a parent or student. When another advisor received negative feedback, he mentioned that it was to help and not harm and that he still received positive feedback and compliments regarding the empathy he showed to students and diligence to students' needs at their university from their direct supervisor. There was an advisor who expressed that the only way he received positive feedback was if he brought or shared positive emails from students. Although advisors received feedback (see Table 6), these advisors' lived experience shows that sometimes advisors needed to receive more feedback or support. During these interviews, no participant mentioned wanting to leave specifically because of a lack of support or negative feedback (see Table 6).

Table 6

Statement for Theme 2: Advisors Contributed to the Advising Office and Feedback Was Given

Statement	Participant
I was able to rebrand the office … So, that was something that I felt pretty good about that I was able to kind of use my services and talents for.	Kentucky Advisor I
Well, when the pandemic started, we were kind of trying to figure out how we were going to do the remote work with our liberal arts advising team. I had actually used Microsoft Teams before at my previous job. So, I was able to get that set up and walk everybody through that.	Ohio Advisor I
In my class, my students got to brag on my self-care activity. So, they felt like it was good. They felt like it was instrumental in helping to take care of themselves … A couple of my colleagues have used that.	Kentucky Advisor II
You know, the big reason why I got the job that I got is because I had expertise in resident life. I was used very often in helping build the foundations of that honor's resident college,	Ohio Advisor II
I'll be honest, I can't think of anything. Nothing that sticks out.	Ohio Advisor III
They've come to me and, you know, asked me my opinion on when the courses should be offered.	Mississippi Advisor I
None of this necessarily is talent, but I'm pretty good at like building out plans and templates and being like, all right, this is what we're going to do.	Louisiana Advisor I
So, you know I used to during the registration process, I was the first to group advise … And so, I don't know if it's like a talent, but more like initiative to be able to see that it was done.	Mississippi Advisor II

Employees Talents. Kentucky Advisor I was able to use his branding talents to rebrand the office materials. Kentucky Advisor I indicated, “So that was something that I felt pretty good about, that I was able to kind of use my services and my talents for.” Ohio Advisor I indicated that she was to help set up Microsoft Teams during the pandemic. Ohio Advisor I indicated, “I don’t know, it was kind of something I volunteered for, but once everybody kind of got onboard, they asked me to help.” Ohio Advisor I did not believe their upper administrators asked the advisor to help solely because of their talent, but due to the pandemic, they were asked to do a job where they had expertise because of the demanding time. While Kentucky Advisor II does not mention that their talents were recognized by upper administration, this advisor mentioned that his talents with creating lesson plan for his first-year seminar class was recognized by his colleagues. Kentucky Advisor II indicated, “In my class, my students got to brag on myself care activity, so they felt like it was very good.” They felt like it was instrumental in helping them to take care of themselves, and you know, a couple of my colleagues have used that.” Ohio Advisor II stated their upper administrator hired them for a specific reason. He stated, “You know the big reason of why I got the job I got is because I had the expertise in residence life.” At the time, the university was creating an honors college residence hall. Mississippi Advisor I mentioned that upper administrators would ask for help with course management. According to Mississippi Advisor I, “Well, a lot of more times than not, there have been directors of the programs that I advise come to me when there’s a class conflict.” The advisor felt that “It is a little above what I should be doing, but oftentimes if it’s easy enough, I’ll just kind of look at the schedules and answer them.” Louisiana Advisor I did not feel that her strength was a talent and stated, “None of this necessarily it’s talent, but I’m pretty good at like building out plans and templates and being like, all right, this is what we’re going to do.” However, the advisor mentioned that the dean did notice a difference in their informational than another honors thesis advisor in the past, and that how the Louisiana Advisor I felt that “her talents were used.” Ohio Advisor III did not feel recognized by her institution. Ohio Advisor III could not remember a time their talents were used. Ohio Advisor III stated, “You know, I’ll be honest, I can’t think of anything. Nothing that sticks out.” Mississippi Advisor II stated, “And so, I don’t know if it’s like a talent, but more like initiative to be able to see that it was done.” The initiative was to try to see as many students as possible with limited staff. According to this advisor, “I was the first to group advise.” While the advisor did not mention whether upper administrators recognized it, she mentioned:

> So, you know, I would knock out like five students at a time and just to, a lot of them were taking the same type of classes because it was very regimented as to what to take. So, it was simple to do you know, and that, you know, like then people started advising two at a time or we started creating sessions later on just to reduce those lines.

When it came to feedback, all the advisors received some kind of positive feedback; however, only four out of eight advisors explicitly mentioned that they received positive feedback from their direct supervisors. Two out of eight advisors indicated that their feedback was not positive or negative but a mere formality of the job. One of the advisors mentioned they were evaluated fairly, but upper administrators lacked any feedback, and one advisor did not receive any positive feedback from their direct supervisor.

Ohio Advisor I stated, “Feedback was positive, not very detailed.” While Kentucky Advisor II mentioned he had feedback that was concerning, when asked if the feedback he received was positive overall, he stated, “Oh yeah, you know, probably for the most part.” Ohio Advisor II also mentioned how vocal and communicative their supervisor was during their time at their former institution. The advisor stated, “He always communicated, like, praise from different departments or different work, and would always pass that along to give me that, you know, positive reinforcement that I was doing a good job." Kentucky Advisor I did not receive positive feedback from their direct supervisor outside of certain situations. Kentucky Advisor I stated, "Uh, from the job, it was pretty much negative right from the jump a week in." The advisor felt targeted. Moreover, he mentioned that "I saw different types of feedback. Um, some of it was positive. Um, but I would have to bring positivity into the room." In his example, he stated:

> So, if a student emailed me and thanked me for helping them and things like that. I would have to pretty much take that email, print it off, and then kind of use it in my next one-on-one just to kind of get like an, oh, that's good (that's really good), thank you for doing that, um, good work, just to get some type of feedback. Um, otherwise, it was usually either no feedback or negative.

Ohio Advisor III received a more positive interview from their direct supervisor and the director of advising. When it comes to upper administration, Ohio Advisor III stated, "I think maybe the only negative feedback which I believe is questionable may have come from the upper, upper administration who I feel like you know, has no idea what's going on in the area I work in." Mississippi Advisor II stated, "It's nothing like too specific." Moreover, the advisor mentioned, "And I think it's more of, like, the formality of saying that they did those training or did those meetings." Louisiana Advisor I had a similar experience as Mississippi Advisor II. According to the Louisiana Advisor I, "My performance reviews were always good." However, the advisor also mentioned, "I felt comfortable that I was good at my job, but I also felt like they were just done to be done as a task, to be done." Moreover, the advisor mentioned, "But the problem with that is, like, my director just never followed up on the things I would do, and then he would be like, oh, it was good. And I'm like, but you didn't even actually follow up on what you gave me to do." Mississippi Advisor II mentioned that about feedback:

> So, I have to say that was probably one of my toughest times as a young professional. You know, I think I was evaluated fairly, but I wasn't provided guidance as to how to overcome certain things. I remember being told that I lacked leadership, but they couldn't really explain what they meant by leaders [be]cause leadership is such a broad term.

Recognition

Recognition is the art of employees being noticed by supervisors or colleagues at their jobs (Sithiphand, 1983). Recognition, according to Syptak et al. (1999), can include praises of an advisor's work, supervisors acknowledging the good work or strengths of advisors immediately, publicly thanking advisors, notes of praise, or even bonuses. Recognition of an employee's success does not need to be significant, but praise should be earnest (Syptak et al., 1999). Only two advisors had preestablished an awards recognition program, as suggested in Syptak et al. (1999), and one participant's organization was working toward creating a specific recognition program specifically for advisors. For the advisors that did not receive rewards, no advisor discussed leaving their institution due to lack of recognition; however, one of those advisors did leave higher education altogether because of disdain regarding another Herzberg factor (see Table 7). Moreover, only one advisor had a strong reaction regarding the lack of recognition at the job; this advisor currently works at a higher education-adjacent organization. Besides formal recognition, advisors received pizza or cookies or threw parties for themselves (see Table 7). The advisors who received notes never expressed excitement or disappointment regarding the lack of a recognition program. However, one advisor said they never received even a pizza party and laughed it off.

Table 7

Statement for Theme 3: Awards Not Always Given but Advisors Recognized by Some Gesture

Statement	Participant
There was a system they created; I believe it was called the master advisor program … At the end of it, you got recognized at a banquet and you got certified as a master advisor on campus … There wasn't any like, you know, extra pay or anything like that.	Kentucky Advisor I
Oh none, none of that. I mean, I guess I got to say that I got a thank you note from president one time, but I think she had her assistance write it and send it. But I mean that, that it. I cannot think of a time that we got like a pizza party to be honest. It's a fine thought.	Ohio Advisor I
Okay, so our students recognize us as a student champion. This is just something that we may receive every summer where our students have nominated somebody who has vitally contributed to help them and they're building a journey … Our system team does a good job of constantly recognizing.	Kentucky Advisor II
I think (blank institution) did a pretty good job of giving recognition to advisors. They also had a program where you could get basic level training, if you get a master sort of certificate … So, the provost office, they did like a dinner, and they recognized advisors.	Ohio Advisor II
There is something called a shout out at our institution, which is not specific to academic advisors, but if you feel that a colleague has done something really great, then there is a form you can fill out every month. They'll send a PDF of all the names that were submitted as a shout out for good job.	Ohio Advisor III
So, there's not anything put in place for advisors specifically, but we do have nominations for different like different awards specifically for the (blank) campus.	Mississippi Advisor I
Um, no, I would definitely say they did a horrible job at recognizing the academic advisors.	Louisiana Advisor I
You know, that's what they didn't have any policies. I have to say my dean at the time really did do a good job at like having us feel appreciated.	Mississippi Advisor II

Advisors Recognition. Kentucky Advisor I indicated that the academic advisors in their office received awards as master advisors once they completed the mastery advisor program. After the advising program, Kentucky Advisor I stated:

> At the end of it, you got recognized at a banquet, and you got certified as a master advisor on campus. So, I was able to get a certificate and then also be recognized, um, along with others at a banquet at the end of the year.

Kentucky Advisor II indicated that students recognize advisors as student champions and said:

> Okay, so our students can recognize us as student champions, and this is just something that we may receive every summer, where a student has nominated us as somebody who has, um, vital contributions to helping them in their collegiate journey.

Ohio Advisor I indicated that the advisors at their institution received no acknowledgment. Moreover, Ohio Advisor I stated, "None, none of that. I mean, I guess I got to say that I got a thank you note from president (blank) one time, but I think she had her assistance write it and send it." Ohio Advisor II indicated that they had a conference for advisors, and academic advisors received awards at that conference. Ohio Advisor II also mentioned they had awards advisors could earn, which would give them recognition. Ohio Advisor III mentioned that this was their institution's first year of having awards for their division and a specific award for academic advisors. This advisor's was is normally through their direct supervisors. Ohio Advisor III stated:

> I can only speak for myself if she receives an e-mail from someone saying that I did a great job or I was very helpful for a student, then she'll send an e-mail back, and then she'll cc her supervisor, you know, provost and whoever else.

However, previously, the advisor mentioned that the only time advisors were recognized was from outside the institution. Ohio Advisor III stated:

> The only time you got recognized would be if someone sent an e-mail. So, from a parent or a student and either it was sent directly to your supervisor or like if I get something that's more than the normal thank you.

Mississippi Advisor I mentioned that there were now awards specifically made for academic advisors. However, Mississippi Advisor I stated, "But recently we did receive an e-mail, and it was saying, like, nominate different people. You know, based off their excellence, or based on their outstanding performance, but nothing specific to advisors." Louisiana Advisor I mentioned, "I would definitely say they did a horrible job at recognizing the academic advisors." Louisiana Advisor I stated:

> But there was never a national advisor thank you weekend or whatever. There was never anything that thanked the advisors. I think that; I personally feel like that led to turnover because it's kind of like (institution name) is not a small campus, and you've got thousands of students you have to advise.

Mississippi Advisor II mentioned that their institution did not have a university or department celebration for academic advisors. However, she stated, "You know, that's why they didn't have any policies, and I have to say my dean at the time really did do a good job at like having us feel appreciated." The advisor indicated that advisors had to spearhead any celebratory events for advisors and stated, "You know, we often threw a lot of parties, and you know, we did like, I mean, we found camaraderie within ourselves."

Responsibilities

Responsibility revolves around the freedom to make decisions within the workplace (Alshmemri et al., 2017). Moreover, this employee has the power to carry out tasks that help employees grow (Syptak et al., 1999). NACADA provides an outline of the responsibilities that academic advisors face, but none of the advisors have a consistent preestablished list of what their work consists of in their profession, even with the recommendation of NACADA. While mentioning their responsibilities, there were many pauses from most advisors to think about all their responsibilities; basic responsibilities revolved around helping students schedule classes and signing graduation requirements. NACADA does express that advisors should work with all stakeholders of student success; listening to the advisor's responsibilities seemed hectic and sometimes inconsistent outside of graduation and degree reviews. When seeing the responsibilities of these participants as advisors, those outside of higher education and the advising community can pontificate if these responsibilities should fall outside of the authority as advisors (see Table 8).

Table 8

Statement for Theme 4a: Responsibilities Vary Among Advisors

Statement	Participant
They included meeting with students to first-year checking, first-year orientation.	Kentucky Advisor I
Determine what courses they needed to take … preparing graduation certificates. So, I would work with them to make pretty detailed degree completion plans that they could use and kind of adjust as needed.	Ohio Advisor I
Some of our responsibilities is to assist our students with information for registration. We support degrees, group checks, clear degrees. We have to teach a first-year experience course at least once a year.	Kentucky Advisor II
I assisted students, honors students and selecting their honors courses that they needed to take, but I was not responsible for their overall course registration. Some of them had responsibilities of teaching the first-year experiences courses in their department.	Ohio Advisor II
You help them make sure they're on track to graduation by reviewing their degree audit, the software we use to track book classes they've taken and how those are going towards their program. We connect them to resources on campus. So, I always say as advisors at our institution, we're the first point of contact.	Ohio Advisor III
So, it does kind of change depending on the seasons that we're in. Oh yeah, graduation applications for students. Graduating in the spring semester because we do it a semester in advance.	Mississippi Advisor I
Doing a degree audit to make sure that they did in fact meet all their senior requirements to graduate in good standing.	Louisiana Advisor I
They actually had to do the SAP appeals. Which was an added responsibility they had to, I mean, of course, responding to emails.	Mississippi Advisor II

One advisor was a housing liaison, and two advisors once taught first-year seminar courses to help first-year students navigate the university. Despite not being an international admissions counselor, another advisor was responsible for writing a letter to the embassy of international students. One of the more unique job requirements of the participants was to oversee their advising department's social media account or plan the first-year welcome, which included organizing breakfast. One participant summed up their experiences as an advisor as having "hidden responsibilities."

While the advisor had various responsibilities, most participants had the autonomy to construct advising styles and schedules or even work with other departments. However, there were times when they questioned the autonomy of all the advisors at their institutions. Three participants mentioned that autonomy could depend on the advising unit within their institution, and one participant mentioned that colleges did things their way. Others felt micromanaged even with the autonomy to create their schedules. Two participants mentioned how upper administrators focused on advising numbers or how many students were advised. Another advisor mentioned that while they had autonomy in certain situations, there were grey areas. This advisor mentioned that if an advisor asked for help or guidance, the supervisor would look at the advisor like they were supposed to know. However, if an advisor advised without asking for help, they were at risk of getting in trouble if an advisor did something differently than the upper administrator wanted. One advisor also felt upper administrators managed advisors differently than staff within their institution, which made this participant question how much autonomy the advisors in their institution were allowed.

Advising Responsibilities. Kentucky Advisor I was responsible for "writing letters of satisfactory academic progress (SAP) and then we would also have to write letters in support of other types of financial need." One of the specific letters of support of financial need he mentioned was writing to other countries. He stated:

> We would have to write a letter of support for them to send back to their country so that they could get approved for larger amounts of money through their government to pay for their education, and that was unique for me.

Kentucky Advisor II had to "teach a first-year course at least once per year. Moreover, other responsibilities included assisting students with information and degree checks." Ohio Advisor I had responsibilities on meeting with other stakeholders to increase students' success and stated, "Um, and then, I was also responsible for working with other internal stakeholders like, like faculty members or other staff offices like the registrars to make sure students were on track to maybe advocate for students." Ohio Advisor II was responsible for students' experiences both academically and socially. Ohio Advisor II stated, "I was our resident's life liaison and had responsibilities surrounding that when it came to the honors college in my work on the advisor's association." Ohio Advisor III mentioned, "So, I always say as advisors at our institution, we're the first point of contact. So, no matter if they're asking a question about financial aid, housing." Ohio Advisor III also mentioned:

> We have systems where you kind of check up on the students, so you're able to monitor their midterm grades. You can put alerts on the students if you think they need a wellness check. You create degree plans for students to graduate. You help them make sure they're on track to graduation by reviewing their degree audit.

Mississippi Advisor I indicated that their responsibilities could change depending on the year. Specifically, Mississippi Advisor I stated, "So, it does kind of change depending on the seasons that we're in." Most of their advising revolves around helping first-year students with registration, then helping students if they need to drop a course. Louisiana Advisor I mentioned, "I would say the largest part was just like auditing students' degrees to make sure they were, one, on track to graduate with honors." However, even within the honors college within their university, Louisiana Advisor I mentioned that some advisors within their division had "additional tasks." Mississippi Advisor II advising unit helped students both academically and with financial help. Mississippi Advisor II commented, "They met with the sophomore advisors for a scholarship." Moreover, just like Kentucky Advisor I, Mississippi Advisor II mentioned that students "actually had to do the SAP appeals." See Table 9 for information on advising styles.

Table 9

Statement for Theme 4b: Advisors Have Autonomy in the Development of Advising Style

Statement	Participant
We were given the autonomy to work with students, and really make sure that, you know, our styles were our own styles, and we could work with them, you know, to best serve the students … There was a lot of grey area.	Kentucky Advisor I
We had a good amount of autonomy at my job, I never felt like a supervisor was hovering. I mean like, we all had consistent guidelines to follow, but you know, we were allowed to kind of advice with the best fit for our program.	Ohio Advisor I
I mean, we pretty much play with our schedule, and this institution, we're trying to control our own schedule. We can meet with as many students once a day.	Kentucky Advisor II
I had a lot of autonomy, but I definitely feel like it depended on where you worked. For every advisor in every college, and for the supplemental advisors, there was an expectation of this is generally how we do things with our students and here's like a timeline that you work through and that you work on.	Ohio Advisor II
I think that that depends again on which advising unit you're in. I think currently with my advising unit we have a lot of autonomy. You know, like no one's really looking over our shoulders.	Ohio Advisor III
Okay. So, I would say when it comes to advising appointments … we're kind of in control of our schedule, we accept appointments Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM, or sorry 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM and we work 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. So that kind of leaves some buffer to answer emails in the morning or catch up on things in the afternoon.	Mississippi Advisor I
So, we had the autonomy to do what we needed to do. But there was also this like second level of like, hey, I went through and saw that you didn't do this correctly. Can you do this this way?	Louisiana Advisor I
It's always about the numbers, you know, and knowing like why they're not enrolled, or what's happening, or what could be done, or they have a financial hold… So, there's, there's not a lot of autonomy.	Mississippi Advisor II

Autonomy in Advising. Kentucky Advisor I stated, “On one hand, I think there was a lot of autonomy because we were given autonomy to work with students.” However, Kentucky Advisor I suggested that in some cases, they felt there was no autonomy at the job. He mentioned that there was some “grey area” when it came to making decisions regarding their job. Kentucky Advisor I commented:

> If I went to my supervisor and said, what do you think we should do, this is what I think, then it was almost like I was supposed to already know the answer. But then, if I let’s say in another scenario where I went with that, I believe to be right, there was a fifty-fifty chance on whether or not I was supposed to go get that approved or not, so, there was a lot of gray area.

Because of this situation, Kentucky Advisor I felt “challenged” when thinking about the totality of the autonomy they received: “I think that challenged whether or not, you could say I had an autonomy or not.”

Ohio Advisor I stated, “Um, I think we had a good amount of autonomy at the job.” Moreover, the advisor indicated that every college was different when it came to their advising unit. Kentucky Advisor II stated, “So our autonomy, we have pretty good autonomy here.” Kentucky Advisor II indicated that creating their schedules was a reason for the great autonomy.

Ohio Advisor II stated, “I had a lot of autonomy.” Moreover, Ohio Advisor II indicated that advising styles and flexibility differ depending on the university's advising departments. Ohio Advisor III stated, “I think that that depends again on which advising unit you’re in. I think currently, with my advising unit, we have a lot of autonomy.” Mississippi Advisor I mentioned that they have autonomy when creating their schedules and said, “Okay. So, I would say when it comes to advising appointments, we are, you know, given we’re kind of in control of our schedule.” However, their department does not give the advisor the same flex time as other departments within their university. Louisiana Advisor I indicated that there were some micromanaging issues from the assistant director. Ultimately, Louisiana Advisor I stated:

> So there was a little bit of micromanaging, but for the most part, we were autonomous and, hey, just making sure you meet with your students, keep your calendar open outside of that, do your job, and do whatever it is that you need to do.

However, Louisiana Advisor I wanted the assistant director to advocate more for the office.

Mississippi Advisor I mentioned having a basic work schedule from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. However, while they have some control over their work schedule, they do not have as much autonomy as other nonacademic advising units within the university. Mississippi Advisor II initially answered no regarding the autonomy advisors received at their institution. However, she eventually stated, “I mean, it’s autonomy and like trying to get your work done. But there was always okay, how many students have you gone through; what do you know, what are the numbers?”

Work Itself

Making employees feel that the work they are doing is vital for the establishment is seen as instrumental for employee motivation (Syptak et al., 1999). Each participant in this study had support during their advising experience; however, the participants’ support varied between participants. Some of the academic advisors had support from upper administrators, whether from directors or deans. Other participants felt valued by their direct supervisors but not by upper administration. One advisor mentioned they felt supported by their direct supervisors but did not mention anything specifically toward upper administration. Others focused solely on how they felt regarding their upper administrators; one participant felt supported once they were promoted. Most of the support from upper administrators comes from little thank you notes, expressing verbal appreciation for their work, or, as one advisor mentioned, receiving cookies or pizza parties. The difference between support from direct supervisors and upper administrators is how much the participants appreciated the open communication or the fact that their direct supervisors had caseloads themselves. The four advisors who did not feel supported by their upper administrators felt they were either difficult to reach or had spotty communication, felt standoffish or aloof, or did not provide any individualized support. However, no advisor mentioned the lack of support caused them or another colleague to leave the university due to a lack of support from upper administrators (see Table 10).

Table 10

Statement for Theme 5: Advisor Receives Support but Not Always From Upper Administration

Statement	Participant
I don't know that they did, but I will say if you are thinking about upper administration in general, I would say if you get beyond my direct supervisor, I think some of the people that were above her really valued all the professionals.	Kentucky Advisor I
Um, okay, so my direct supervisor I think definitely valued our work because she also had a caseload and was in the thick of it. Um, and then her (direct supervisor) was at the director's level and certainly valued our work. Um, but I think (pause), but it seems to me she was very busy with a lot of other things going on. Um, beyond her (pause/sigh), beyond that level, the people you know said they valued the work that we did (sigh). It did not always seem sincere, it kind of felt like lip service just to keep us around.	Ohio Advisor I
She was the one that got us the keyboards for all advisors. The cookies with the name on them and just said, you know, thank you for what you did, you know, wrote a nice letter … I felt really appreciated when she did that. We've had in the past; we've had the dean's office maybe give us a gift for our work.	Kentucky Advisor II
I would say that specifically, and this was right before the pandemic started. Uh my supervisor recognized that I had a good sense for working with students on leadership, and in doing some like coaching with our student group.	Ohio Advisor II
Well, one time, I was at an open house event. You know, sitting at a table and the president came over and said thank you for all you do.	Ohio Advisor III
It's hard to think of one specific time, but she's always very positive and very encouraging, and we have a good like open communication. Whereas the director of student services, you know, she's kind of more standoffish, and when she does say you're doing a good job or acknowledges something good that you have done, it kind of feels fake or, you know, just, you know, trying to say something.	Mississippi Advisor I
I would say they valued my work as an academic advisor … So, like in December like the dean was like, whoa, you're already registering everybody for thesis… So that was one day where like the day was like, man, you were on your job.	Louisiana Advisor I
Probably said when I got promoted but. Probably that's when I got promoted … There wasn't anything like individualized or made me feel special or you know, this person did a good, you know, it wasn't individually praised like that.	Mississippi Advisor II

Upper Administrators Support. Kentucky Advisor I did not believe that his direct supervisor showed appreciation; however, Kentucky Advisor I mentioned upper administrators "pulled them to the side" and let the advisor know they were doing a great job, especially if they heard something from a student. Louisiana Advisor I mentioned, "I would say they valued my work as an academic advisor." She mentioned how impressed the dean was regarding how efficient she was with her job and said, "In December, like, the dean was like, whoa, you're already registering everybody for thesis" and "I'm here very impressed with the good work that I do."

Ohio Advisor I felt supported more by their direct supervisor. According to Ohio Advisor I, "Um, okay, so my direct supervisor definitely valued our work because she had a caseload and was in the thick of it." However, this advisor noticed that as titles increased (i.e., directors and upper-level management), support for advisors decreased. Ohio Advisor I stated, "Um, beyond her (director of advising), I mean (sigh), beyond that level, the people, you know, they said they really valued the work that we did, but it (sigh), it did not always feel sincere."

Kentucky Advisor II mentioned that their direct supervisor gave gifts. Specifically, this advisor mentioned that their direct supervisor gave the advisors "cookies with our name on them." Moreover, the advisor felt that he had support from the dean's office and said, "In the past, we've had the dean's office give us gifts, maybe give us a gift for our work; mostly, we just tend to hear it, good work." Ohio Advisor II indicated that their supervisor recognized their leadership ability and wanted them to lead a leadership program for students and said, "Um, my supervisor recognized that I had a good sense for working with students on leadership." However, the advisor mentioned, "He was able to value the work that I had done with that group of students and reward me for that." Ohio Advisor III alluded to upper administrators giving more generic thank you’s than showing value to their work and stated, “Well, one time I was at an open house event. You know, sitting at a table and the president came over and said thank you for all you do; that’s all I got.”

Although one Mississippi advisor could not think of a specific time they felt valued, they mentioned, “It’s hard to think of one specific time, but she’s (assistant director) always very positive and very encouraging.” However, when it came to their director, the advisor stated, “She’s kind of more standoffish, and when she does say you’re doing a good job or acknowledges something good that you have done, it kind of feels fake or, you know, just, you know, trying to say something.” Louisiana Advisor I felt their supervisor supported them, but felt their supervisors were surprised by their results. She mentioned, “But so I just remember him coming to my office. He was like, I’m impressed, and I’m like, I don’t know why you’re like, you coached me from my last job for this specific reason.” Mississippi Advisor II mentioned the lack of individual praise regarding their work in their advising unit. Specifically, the advisor stated, “Here wasn’t anything like individualized or made me feel special or you know, this person did a good, you know, it wasn’t individually praised like that.”

Hygiene Factors

According to Syptak et al. (1999), hygiene factors cannot motivate employees; however, they can minimize dissatisfiers within an office. Hygiene factors include company and administrative policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions (Syptak et al., 1999).

Company and Administrative Policies

Company policies allow employees to review or describe an organization’s management, factors, or sequences of events with a job and determine the mutual benefits of an organization

(Sithiphand, 1983). Reviewing company policy is vital for an organization because employees can experience frustration due to unclear company policies and requirements (Syptak et al., 1999). During this section, it is vital to note that no advisor expresses satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their universities' training policies. Moreover, no advisor directly or explicitly mentioned that they left or saw an advisor leave their respective university because of the training they received. Every advisor received training; however, it was surprising that there was no constant formula across the board to help onboard advisors to their institution. Two advisors from the same institution were interviewed, and surprisingly, they had different training regimens regarding their onboarding process within their advising unit. However, one participant expressed that training depended on the unit they advised. Some advisors had modules that needed new advisors to complete. Other advisors had specific timelines. They would shadow appointments of other advisors before they received their caseload of students. Some advisors had to review their university's policies. However, some advisors felt they needed a formal training or onboarding process for advisors (see Table 11).

Table 11

Statement for Theme 6a: Multiple Participants Had Training or Onboarding Policies With a Few Inconsistencies

Statement	Participant
So, the first few days, there was a little bit of shadowing. Well, I think there was like 3 or 4 people I shadowed that was there and I got to really see everyone's advising style.	Kentucky Advisor I
I think we had about two- or three-week training period before we were even started to see students and interact with students over email.	Ohio Advisor I
So, like a new advisor coming in may not be with their own student for about a month, about a couple of weeks. Three weeks to a month before they actually like are on their own meeting with students. You sit in and observe someone else advisor appointment, rather than be in person or online. You just observe how they, how that person is in an appointment. Some of the topics they may or may not break up in an appointment.	Kentucky Advisor II
Pretty decent, there is a canvas module that they developed to be a part of the onboarding process for all advisors." And before you could get access to navigate, and before you get all of your access to things … you had to pass, you had to go through the trainings and complete all the modules.	Ohio Advisor II
It depends on each unit and how they deal with training. So, I think the last time that we've trained and advising our unit, we used our online learning management system to create you know. We have modules that the advisor can go through and read and learn about the institution and about the different systems we use, and then meetings are just set up with either of the different departments.	Ohio Advisor III
When I began the position last May, we started out, it was kind of a lot of dead time at 1st, and you know… So, there is a structure to the training, but there wasn't ever any like formal.	Mississippi Advisor I
There were no universal training policies … So, we have to do all those standard H.R. requirements … I just remember my training session with me sitting at a computer and the assistant dean, not even my not my director, the assistant dean, going over like the course catalog.	Louisiana Advisor I
So, we learned all the curriculum, we had to learn policies. We had to learn any like documents you know, or systems training. Absolutely like learning the system tricks on you know how to pull like 10 transcripts at a time, how to review grades, things of that nature. But there was always formalized training at one month, at a minimum, a lot of shadowing, shadowing first and then you, I mean, we automatically had a caseload.	Mississippi Advisor II

During this section, participants discussed policies regarding the advisor's caseload at their respective institutions. During these interviews, some advisors mentioned that their caseload was a lot, and some were manageable. Three advisors believed their caseload was manageable, especially since they felt most of their students never showed up to appointments. However, one of those advisors mentioned that if their department lost an advisor, it would strain their advising unit. The other stated that their advising unit's caseload was more than NACADA recommended, which, according to Robbins (2013), was 333 for midsized institutions.

One advisor mentioned that an advising unit should only see 150 students based on their research. Another advisor mentioned that their caseload was "a lot," considering the pay advisors receive and the work required within their institution. A third advisor mentioned that their caseload only allowed them to react to students' needs and did not allow them to be proactive and navigate what students needed before an issue arrived. One advisor explicitly mentioned that their advising unit "very much needed" more academic advisors. While most advisors indicated their caseload was a lot, or they needed more advisors, none of the advisors expressed that they were thinking or wanted to leave their institution because of their caseload, nor did they express that any of their colleagues decided to leave the institution due to the caseloads that were assigned to them.

Training for Advisors. Kentucky Advisor I training consisted mostly of shadowing their colleagues' appointments and said, "The first few days, there was a little bit of shadowing. Um, well, I think there was like three or a couple of weeks." Moreover, Kentucky Advisor I stated, "It's slow, but it's quick. So, like, a new advisor coming in may not be with their own students for about a month." Ohio Advisor I mentioned their supervisor conducted training for 2 to 3 weeks before they interacted with a student in person or through email. Ohio Advisor I stated, "So, we had plenty of time to get our feet wet and adjust to the university." Kentucky Advisor II mentioned shadowing as well for their training, along with reviewing the policies and procedures of the university. Ohio Advisor II mentioned that each advising department in their university had its own way of training advisors. Ohio Advisor II stated:

> Uh, and so I think that at least offered a baseline of training that every advisor was getting, and then it was up to the departments to develop that further, and to like, you know, whatever they decided to do.

Ohio Advisor III stated, "I mean there, there is no official training policy." Moreover, Ohio Advisor III mentioned, "Um, again, it depends on each unit and how they deal with training." Each of the advising units within Ohio Advisor III's institution conducts or has different ways they conduct training; however, according to Ohio Advisor III, "No matter which unit they're going to, there is not a structure training policy that they have to adhere to or go through before they go into their individual unit." When it came to the advisor from Mississippi, her training was mixed with informal and formal training. This Mississippi advisor indicated, "Um, so there is a structure to the training, but there wasn't ever any like formal." However, the advisor mentioned:

> We did have a formal training, you know, meeting with somebody on the main campus. We did like a virtual meeting, and they were showing us specific things, but then we go back with the advisor that was helping us better learn and understand the system.

Louisiana Advisor I had sentiments similar to those of Ohio Advisor III. According to their experience with training, Louisiana Advisor I said, "I would say there was no training in policies, and again, there were no universal training policies." However, this advisor mentioned, "The assistant dean, going over like the course catalog." Mississippi Advisor II stated, "I remember having a month's worth of training." In those trainings, the advisor stated, "So, we learned all the curriculum we had to learn, policies we had to learn any, like documents, you know or systems training."

Caseloads for Advisors. Kentucky Advisor I mentioned, "Sure, so, we were responsible for, I would say a caseload that averaged about 200 to 400 per adviser." Ohio Advisor I mentioned their caseload for their academic department was between 300 to 500 students. Kentucky Advisor II mentioned they had 340 students, and Ohio Advisor II mentioned they had 370 students. Ohio Advisor III stated, "Um, I think right now, I mean, if we count students who are considered active, I, let's say I probably have around like maybe 350." One Mississippi advisor stated, "I think [it] is around, well not including new newly admitted students, I think it's around 230 students and that I've seen that case." Louisiana Advisor I mentioned, "So, my first-year students was just divided by four out to about 300 students." Mississippi Advisor II stated, "So we had to advise in some cases, we had (pause); I had a caseload once of 255 students; another was like 300." See Table 12 for participant statements regarding caseloads.

Table 12

Statement for Theme 6b: Caseloads Were 200 or More; There Were Concerns Regarding Caseloads

Statement	Participant
So, we were responsible for; I would say a caseload that averaged about 200 to 400 hundred.	Kentucky Advisor I
I think it was anywhere between 350 and like 500 something people. I mean we were short staffed for most of the time I was there, so it was, it was a lot.	Ohio Advisor I
I have a caseload of 340 students. Now, do I think that's feasible for an advisor, uh no. We talked about it all the time in this office. Our caseloads are very much, very much a lot. We very much could use more advisors.	Kentucky Advisor II
So, my average caseload was about 370 students, and that was pretty consistent, so it was manageable in my option.	Ohio Advisor II
I think right now, I mean, if we count students who are considered active; I, let's say I probably have around like maybe 350 students. If I count students who are actually registered probably be in the low, low, 200, maybe like 250.	Ohio Advisor III
I think is around well not including new newly admitted students. I think it's around 230 students. So, with the newly admitted students growing, and so, I would say that is a pretty big caseload for one academic adviser, especially because in our advisement center; we are advising them, you know, from day one to graduation.	Mississippi Advisor I
So, my first-year students were just divided by four out to about 300 students. So, I set my case up, was like 125 students when I was at (blank university).	Louisiana Advisor I
So, we had to advise in some cases we had; I had a caseload of 255 students; another was like 300 … Studies show like 150 is probably like the best number so that you can build a relationship.	Mississippi Advisor II

Five out of eight advisors believed that their caseload was a lot or not manageable. Kentucky Advisor II did not believe his caseload was manageable. When speaking about his caseload, he said, “We talk about it all the time in this office. Our caseloads are very much, very much a lot.” He also mentioned that their office “could use more advisors.” Ohio Advisor I commented about their biggest concern with their caseload:

> I could keep up with appointments and everything, and emails, but it was not really enough time to do anything proactive in terms of maybe trying to do through and see what students were gonna need assistance, it was very (it was very) much reactive.

Mississippi Advisor I mentioned, “So, I would say that is a pretty big caseload for one academic adviser.” Moreover, the advisor mentioned, “Just, you know, given what academic advisors are paid and what our duties actually are, I would say it’s a lot.” Louisiana Advisor I stated, “The caseload was appropriate but not manageable because of the lack of resources offered in support by the university.” Mississippi Advisor II had concerns regarding the number of students she advised. While her caseload was between 255 and 300 students, she mentioned, “Now, I mean, studies show that you need to have at least 150.” The advisor mentioned that the number of advisees and relationships matter and said, “Like that number is not the real number, but studies show like 150 is probably like the best number so that you can build a relationship.”

Kentucky Advisor I believed the caseload was manageable; however, they admitted that it was manageable because they did not know another way to organize an advising caseload. Ohio Advisor II mentioned that his caseload was manageable because students only had to meet with their team once as a minimum requirement. Moreover, Ohio Advisor II noted that their department’s advising caseload was over the NACADA limit. Ohio Advisor III mentioned that they felt their caseload was manageable based on the number of students they advised in their unit. However, the advisor mentioned, "So to me right now it feels manageable, but definitely if we lost an advisor or two, then I think it definitely would become unmanageable."

Supervision

Supervision examines whether employees see their supervisor as fair or unfair (Sithiphand, 1983). This section examines the relationships with supervisors, particularly with employees' feedback from upper administrators. Most advisors started their interview in this section by discussing their relationships with their direct supervisors. During this time, the participants discussed openly communicating with direct supervisors or collaborating directly with their supervisors. They talked with them daily, or they could go to them with problems and were not scared to interact with them when problems arose.

Moreover, some advisors expressed that their direct supervisor had caseloads and understood the challenges they faced every day, which helped foster a genuine relationship. Open communication and access were vital for the advisors who had great relationships with their direct supervisors. Moreover, one advisor expressed that having access to them made it "less scary" to interact with their upper administrators.

Whether an advisor felt supported by their direct or upper administrators, the key concepts were that their supervisors provided open communication, access, and a warm environment where they were not scared to message or see them if an issue arose (see Table 13). For those advisors who felt a greater connection with their direct supervisors and not the upper administrators within their institution, there were vital issues these advisors addressed that caused this separation. One advisor mentioned that one of the upper administrators within her college stated, "I could never be an advisor." The advisor never mentioned whether there was malice behind that statement; however, the advisor did specifically express that those words were noted. Another participant mentioned that their supervisor was “nice;” however, they were never constantly there or would disappear when needed, and they could not process their feelings toward their executive director. A participant mentioned that in their experience, upper administrators only contacted them if they received an email from a student or parent. Even in those situations, the supervisor would email them or forward them the message and never meet with them one-on-one. Two other advisors stated they had no relationship with the upper administrators who were not tied directly to their advising unit or supervised them directly. These two participants never stated why; they had no contact with them, or one was never established.

Table 13

Statement for Theme 7: Relationships With Upper Administrators Seemed to Decrease as Titles Increased

Statement	Participant
In terms of other administrators such as faculty, staff, upper administrators, deans, associates’ deans’ things like that, I would see them occasionally … They would ask how they could be supportive of advisors, things like that, so they were often very supportive.	Kentucky Advisor I
Her (associate directors) supervisor was a director’s level, and I didn’t really talk with her much, she was always there with help if we needed it. Um, you know, I did not really have any issues with her. Her (director of advising) supervisor, um, I don’t know if he was vice president or what he was, um, I can’t really remember, associate provost maybe… He was always really busy, but really nice. But sometimes, like when I really actually needed something, he would disappear or stop responding to staff.	Ohio Advisor I

Statement	Participant
So, my relationship with my assistant dean is great, but she's also a part of our advising team as well. I don't really have a great relationship with the dean. I don't really have a great relationship with anyone in the dean's office.	Kentucky Advisor II
I work pretty closely with the director of the honors program because he was my supervisor. We didn't have a whole lot of like interaction with his supervisor. We really didn't have any interactions with the deans of the other colleges. The only reason I had interactions with the provost, and the provost office was because he was on the leadership team for the Advising Association.	Ohio Advisor II
Um, well, definitely with my supervisor, and my supervisor, supervisor. I feel like I have a really good relationship, but beyond that, if we talk in the realm of the division, I'm in, I would say I don't talk to any of those administrators, don't have a relationship with them unless again they receive an e-mail from a parent or a student.	Ohio Advisor III
With the director, I kind of explained that a little bit to the director for student support It's a little more standoffish and it's I feel like it's definitely, you know, because she has that title, she thinks she's super important. And then the vice president for (university) is kind of in charge of everything. He's very kind, very polite, but we don't; I wouldn't say we necessarily have a relationship. I know that in a meeting, he said once himself like oh, I would never be an academic advisor or something like that, and so, it was kind of not like belittling our position, but just like well, like I'm too good to be an academic advisor and it's like, okay, interesting noted.	Mississippi Advisor I
I would, you know, my relationship with them was social, but also professional.	Louisiana Advisor I
So, we had direct access to the dean. The dean was in our office at that, you know, at that time when I was an advisor. So, I felt I had direct access to here, we also had direct access to the VP of Enrollment because of all of those like orientation and admissions, related events.	Mississippi Advisor II

Advisor and Upper Administration Relationships. Kentucky Advisor I mentioned that he would see the direct supervisor every day. However, their relationship with their direct supervisor was inconsistent, and they had more contact with the upper administrator. Kentucky Advisor I stated, “They would ask how they could be supportive of advisors, things like that. So, they were often very positive in their interactions, and I would see them probably once a week if I went out and visited.” When asked about their direct supervisor, they indicated:

> You know, usually in the morning, she would be in a good mood. We would chat, see how things were going and then, you know, towards the middle of the day, you just didn’t know what kind of mood she would be in.

Ohio Advisor I had a better relationship with their direct supervisor. Ohio Advisor I mentioned, “I had a good relationship with her,” regarding their assistant director. When it came to the director, Ohio Advisor I stated, “She was always there with help if we needed it.” Ohio Advisor I described the executive director as “nice;” however, Ohio Advisor I mentioned, “When I really actually needed something, he would disappear or stop responding to staff.”

Kentucky Advisor II mentioned that, outside of their assistant dean, who was a part of the advising team, he did not have any relationship with the provost or president of their university. Ohio Advisor II echoed this sentiment when he stated, “Yeah, we did, I mean, I worked closely with the director of the honors program because he was my supervisor, we didn’t have a whole lot of like interactions with his supervisor.” Ohio Advisor III said they have a great relationship with their director supervisor and the direct supervisor’s supervisor. When it came to the interaction with upper administration, Ohio Advisor III had limited interaction or a relationship with them. According to Ohio Advisor III:

> But beyond that, if we talk in the realm of the division, I mean, I would say; I don't talk to any of those administrators, don't have a relationship with them unless they receive an e-mail from a parent or a student.

Mississippi Advisor I collaborated closely with the assistant director. She mentioned their direct supervisor is also an advisor herself, "so she is kind of going through the same thing that we're going through." In relation to their administrator, their relationship was not as strong, and she said, "My relationship with her, I just don't really wanna associate myself with her." When it came to the provost and president, Mississippi Advisor I stated, "I wouldn't say we necessarily have a relationship." While they pointed out that the president was nice, according to this advisor, the president stated, "Oh, I would never be an academic advisor." While this advisor did not believe it was belittling, she felt that the president was saying he was "too good to be an advisor," it was always something Mississippi Advisor I kept in mind or "noted."

Louisiana Advisor I never mentioned whether their relationship was more prominent with their direct supervisor or upper administrators. However, the advisor explained, "I'm a social butterfly," and, therefore, "I would always go like, you know, talk to the associate dean and be like, hey, what's going on?" This social network allowed her to meet directors, associate vice provosts, and presidents. Mississippi Advisor II mentioned, "So we had direct access to the dean. The dean was in our office at that, you know, at that time when I was an advisor. So, I felt I had direct access to her." Moreover, she also felt that the advisors had a "very open door" when it came to accessing upper administrators.

Salary

Salary examines how compensation impacts employees (Sithiphand, 1983); this section reveals how employees felt about raises and bonuses and their stories about what they expected regarding their salaries versus what they received. For many of the participants, they deemed that the compensation they received could have been better. One of the advisors mentioned how leaving higher education allowed them to make way more than if they had stayed an academic advisor. Another advisor mentioned that their salary made them contemplate leaving their private institution for a public institution within the city that paid more. Another participant mentioned that salary discussions often occur in their advising unit. This advisor indicated that low salaries were a present issue university-wide. This advisor mentioned, "Because of pay, we have a lot of turnovers in this office for sure."

The most significant salary mentioned by an advisor was $48,000; however, that was negotiated from $44,000 for their first offer. While other advisors eventually reached at least $40,000, those came after a few years of salary stagnation. Again, negotiations were possible, but that only occurred with three participants in this study. A few participants had increased salaries within the last few years after the COVID-19 pandemic. The rising cost of healthcare and inflation were issues with three advisors. While these participants mentioned they were receiving some small bonuses or pay raises, those small salary increases were being eaten up by the rising cost of healthcare or by the steady increase of inflation within the last few years for these three advisors. Another advisor mentioned that healthcare costs kept increasing and becoming expensive; this advisor ended the statement by saying, "It was not enough to live on."

Two of the advisors mentioned that the cost of rent impacted how they viewed their salary. One advisor mentioned that rent within their city could cost between $1,000 and $1,200. This cost in rent caused one advisor to reexamine how far their salary could carry them, especially when this advisor thought about festivals in the area they wanted to attend or having social experiences as a young adult. Another advisor mentioned that they recently moved independently and struggled after the first week.

Three advisors discussed education requirements. These advisors eluded that for the education attainment, which was a master's degree, the compensation they received was undesirable. Two advisors mentioned that educational level did not increase an advisor's salary at their institution. One of the advisors, a doctoral student, mentioned that her educational levels did not account for the compensation received by advisors. For this advisor, whether advisors in their unit have a bachelor's degree or some doctoral-level education, each advisor receives the same salary. Years of experience did not equate to a larger salary for one advisor; moreover, this participant mentioned that if an advisor with a decade of experience and an advisor who was brand new to the field were hired simultaneously, their institution would pay them the same. One participant admitted that they researched the institution and selected the best option for their needs. This advisor also mentioned that they could negotiate their salary to include the maximum. Even though this advisor was satisfied with their salary, they admitted some of their colleagues were not, and they were more optimistic than their colleagues. There was a participant who mentioned his office never spoke on salary. Moreover, when being interviewed for the job, this advisor never receives information on the compensation for the job. One advisor confessed that at first believed their salary was enough, then changed their mind. In her interview, she mentioned that their advising department had a rule that advisors could not speak about their wages. However, the advisor never stated whether this policy was institution-wide. See Table 14 for participant comments about compensation and pay.

Table 14

Statement for Theme 8: Inadequate Compensation and Pay Raises

Statement	Participant
I knew that the range was when I applied for it, I think the range was between $35,000, maybe like $42,000, or something like that when I got there … The answer to your question I was making $36,000. Nope, everybody had when I worked there … So, if they had left gotten a raise, it was before I had gotten to know them very well.	Kentucky Advisor I
When I went to (W university) um, at that point, I had a master's degree and at that point, I had two full years of full-time experience, Um, they offered me $37,000 even. Not long before I left, got a cost-of-living adjustment of 2.5% or something like that. So, I think when I left, I was making like $42,000, but I left higher education completely, and make like way more now.	Ohio Advisor I
I don't think I get paid as much as the work that I do. I don't, I really personally don't feel like I'm bringing home enough money. The pay, I really wish it was a lot better, but honestly, that's what hurts our office, and that's why we tend to lose their advisors.	Kentucky Advisor II
That is really hard for me to answer. I especially negotiated above what was told to me was the max offer because of the experience that I was bringing in. I'm more positive in general; I'd say some people, some of my colleagues, specifically complained about it not being adequate.	Ohio Advisor II
So, when I started, academic advisor pay was $35,000 and now, in what? 2023, it's $40,000 to start off with. So, uh, to me, that's pretty low when our positions require a master's degree. So, yeah, I'm personally in my situation, I don't think my salary is enough to live on, and thankfully I have a, you know, significant other who's contributing with their salaries.	Ohio Advisor III

Statement	Participant
So, when I first got hired, the compensation was $35,500 around that … no that was the lowest that you could get paid as a salaried employee. Shortly after, we started the university as a whole gave everybody a 3% raise. And so obviously, that was given to me, but it was still, like, it was forced, like, it was an institution rule. So, it's not like you were, you were getting compensated, you know, by your good works or your experience.	Mississippi Advisor I
I'm, you know, I was about 45(K). Um, I felt like I was born because I had just come out of life, like, 30 (years old). I was like, oh, but then I was like, I got rent. So, like, that $12,000, like, pay raised, got eaten up quickly with rent … I don't know, they don't like to pay a living wage here.	Louisiana Advisor I
Um, at that, at that time, I thought it was enough, at that time, but then I started realizing I was underpaid for the amount of work, but I chalked it up that I was at a private institution. We also only ended up getting 2% raises, and that oftentimes was, I mean it was just a flat-out 2% raise. There was merit pay, but it was unclear how you got a merit increase.	Mississippi Advisor II

Advisor Pay and Compensation. Ohio Advisor I stated, "It was just enough to live on, but the things were going up so much in price, it was not great." Moreover, Ohio Advisor I stated, "I left higher education completely and make, like, way more now." Kentucky Advisor II stated, "I don't think (laugh) I get paid enough. I don't think I get paid as much as the work I do. I personally don't feel like I'm bringing enough money." Moreover, Kentucky Advisor II mentioned, "Because of the pay, we have a lot of turnovers." Louisiana Advisor I mentioned, "They don't like to pay a living wage here." The advisor mentioned that being an academic advisor paid more than their previous higher education job in residence life. While Louisiana Advisor I saw an increase in their advising salary from another higher education job, the pay increase was still not sufficient to cover rent. Mississippi Advisor I mentioned that each advisor was paid the same, no matter their educational level. Mississippi Advisor I mentioned, “It doesn’t matter how much experience you have, that’s just what you’re gonna get paid.” Mississippi Advisor I mentioned that, at first, they did not have an issue with their salary; however, during the interview, she changed her mind. During the interview the advisor stated, “At that time, I thought it was enough at that time, but then I started realizing I was underpaid for the amount of work, but I chalked it up that I was at a private institution.”

Kentucky Advisor I stated:

> Sure, so when I first got there, I don’t know if they ever disclosed the salary to me when I interviewed. Now that I’m thinking about it, like, I don’t think I knew to ask about that and I don’t think they overly shared that.

Kentucky Advisor I further went on to mention, “I don’t know what other advisors are making; I don’t know if that was more or less, I don’t know.” Ohio Advisor II mentioned that while they were fine with their salary, he had heard from other colleagues how disgruntled they were regarding their pay scale. Ohio Advisor II stated, “Okay, I’m more positive, in general; I’d say some people, some of my colleagues specifically complained about it not being adequate.” Ohio Advisor III had mixed reviews when it came to their salary and if it was enough to survive. Their biggest assumption was based on relationship status. Ohio Advisor III stated:

> I think if you are a single, and again I’m making assumptions ‘cause I don’t fit this, but if you are a single person with no other, like, you don’t have anyone else, be it a human or animal that you’re responsible for, you’re not in debt you just got normal, you eat normal portions of food and your home situation is, you know, manage, I definitely think it’s enough for a person to survive.

While Ohio Advisor III did mention that she believed it enough for a single person to survive, she stated, “Now, as far as you know, going out and having, getting a new car or, you know, going and buying a house, no, I definitely don’t.”

Overall, the raises advisors received were limited to four advisors: Ohio Advisor I, Kentucky Advisor II, Ohio Advisor III, and Mississippi Advisor II. Ohio Advisor I eventually got a market adjustment based on the cost of healthcare, and their salary went from $37,000 to $41,000, which was another 2.5% raise right before she left. Collectively, Kentucky Advisor I saw a 5% to 6% raise, and one year, they received a bonus. Ohio Advisor III went to the same school where she now advises. During her undergraduate years, the advisor made about $35,000 in the mid-2000s; however, academic advisors at her institution made around $41,000. Mississippi Advisor II did receive a raise and said, “They, you know, we also only ended up getting 2% raises, and that oftentimes was, I mean, it was just a flat out 2% raise.” Mississippi Advisor II mentioned that while there was a merit raise, “There was merit pay, but it was unclear how you got a merit increase.”

Kentucky Advisor I stated, “Nope, everyone had left before I left. So, if they had gotten a raise, it was before I had gotten to know them very well.” Kentucky Advisor I had only been there for a little over a year. Ohio Advisor II did not receive a raise; however, the advisor was only there 2.5 years. He stated, “In my time, I did not receive a raise.” For Louisiana Advisor I, they never gave bonuses, but the university was supposed to have merit raises; however, the advisor mentioned, “We never saw any of that money.”

Interpersonal Relationships

The interpersonal relationship tells the stories of employees and their connection, relationships, or characteristics with supervisors, peers, or subordinates (Sithiphand, 1983). In these sections, participants explain their lived experiences with their peers and the faculty advisors should they have those distinctions. Regarding the participation relationships with their advisors, all had reasonably positive experiences with the advisors they considered peers. Advisors pinpointed their ability to grab lunch, help one another with questions or tasks, and mentorship. Some advisors make a clear distinction between being friends and friendly with their coworkers, and some mention that they do not go beyond “water cooler chit-chat” or stating that they were not best friends; however, these advisors mentioned that they felt supported, could vent about issues at work, and had a healthy environment. One advisor admitted that while they do not go out, they do see their colleagues have a drink and go out to eat. While another participant wished there had been more interaction with faculty advisors, they did not have any complaints from their colleagues at their institution.

However, some advisors felt that their coworkers were family. Others saw their friendship with their colleagues lasting even if they were to leave the university and doubled down by saying, “I want to keep in touch with these people.” Despite not working with all their former colleagues, one participant created a group chat and was even invited to weddings. This participant stated, “I wanted to go to war together, you know.”

When learning about the advisor’s experience with faculty advisors, there were some extremes in how these participants felt toward faculty advisors. Moreover, how the advisors felt about their faculty advisors was split even within the same university. For example, one advisor stated that dealing with faculty advisors was a “mixed bag.” This advisor mentioned that there were faculty advisors who loved helping students, were proactive, and were easy to communicate with during their time as an advisor. Then, there were faculty advisors who would purposely speak ill of their students and forward emails that were mean and rude. Another lived experience from this advisor regarding faculty advisors in their university was that full-time professional advisors would avoid working with some faculty members. Other advisors mentioned that their faculty were all different and their relationship with faculty advisors could be “hit or miss.” While this advisor loved working with their math faculty advisor, he still wished faculty advisors would communicate more. Two participants did not communicate with faculty advisors; one of the advisors mentioned faculty advisors were not assigned within their college, and another mentioned that there was no interaction with them unless they were on a committed or in an awards ceremony; however, they were not a part of the advising association.

Two participants had excellent communication with their advisors (see Table 15). One of these participants stated that the faculty advisors within their unit had their direct number and had open communication. One of the advisors with excellent relationships with faculty advisors mentioned that they were never scared to contact the faculty advisors or send students to meet with them if an issue arose. The other advisors stated, “I am friends with some faculty” at their institution. Moreover, this advisor would have a luncheon with the faculty advisors to build rapport and show the faculty advisors the alert systems. Two advisors did not have any faculty advisors at their institution. These experiences express that relationships with faculty advisors were never consistent, even within the same college or division (see Table 15).

Table 15

Statement for Theme 9a: Good Relationship With Advising Colleagues

Statement	Participant
I got along really with all of them, except for probably one of them, or two of them. We would routinely go to lunch together, and I think they saw me as like a new person. So, they took me under their wing as much as they could.	Kentucky Advisor I
Yeah, I enjoyed all the colleagues I have work with. Um, I think the advisors that I have worked with have all been great and have really truly wanted to help students and enjoyed the work that they did.	Ohio Advisor I
Oh, it's pretty, solid. I think they all care.	Kentucky Advisor II
Good, professional, and supportive; I think you know; we weren't best friends and didn't spend a ton of time with each other outside of work. But I felt supportive about my colleagues if I had issues or needed to vent about things.	Ohio Advisor II
I think I have a good relationship with most of my colleagues. I think it just kind of depends on what type of relationship. You know, if someone's asking about it, I would say working relationships are definitely great. I feel like we can come to each other if we have questions or if we need assistance.	Ohio Advisor III
So, my relationship with my colleagues, uh, it's friendly, but we don't really do anything as a group, you know as whole like team building.	Mississippi Advisor I
We were all Black, so we're all friends. Like, I don't know; I don't know a better way to say that than like, we were all in the same community.	Louisiana Advisor I
The relationship, you know, I'm still friends with them. Like we are, we still have, we have created group chats because we you know, we've formed that much of a bond.	Mississippi Advisor II

Relationships With Other Professional Advisors. Kentucky Advisor I stated, "We became friends on Facebook and things like that. So, I would say my colleagues were pretty nice and awesome. Now, I am still friends with a few of them on Facebook." Ohio Advisor I had trust and faith in the other full-time professional academic advisors and stated, "Yeah, I enjoyed all the colleagues I have worked with here. I think that advisors that I have worked with have all been great and have really truly wanted to help students and enjoyed the work that they did." Kentucky Advisor II stated, "I really think they care about me and my success, and at the same time, they're very loving people." This advisor goes on to state, "These are people that I could see myself taking to for a long time. Even if I don't choose to stay at the university, I want to keep in touch with these people." Ohio Advisor II did mention they were not necessarily friends outside of work; however, he stated, "I felt supportive about my colleagues if I had issues or needed to vent about things." Ohio Advisor III stated, "I think I have a good relationship with most of my colleagues." While the Ohio advisor did mention that the "work relationships were great," she stated that these relationships were mostly "water cooler chitchat." However, she indicated that different units within their university are different; "And at least in this unit, I feel like everyone equally pulls their weight, um, I know in other units it can be different." Mississippi Advisor I mentioned that their experience with her colleagues was "friendly, but we don't really do anything as a group." While Mississippi Advisor I mentioned, "Currently I have no complaints with the advisors that I work with," she did not feel as though she was a part of a team. Louisiana Advisor I mentioned, "So friends, all of them to this day, most of them until this day." She also mentioned that having relationships with her advising colleagues was easier because "We were all Black, so we're all friends." Mississippi Advisor II stated, "The relationship, you know, I'm still friends with them. Like we are, we still have, we have created group chats because we, you know, we've formed that much of a bond." She also stated her relationship bond with colleagues went past their office relationship and said, "We all attended each other's like family functions. You know, we all supported if something went bad." See Table 16 for participant comments.

Table 16

Statement for Theme 9b: Faculty Advisors and Professional Advisors' Relationships Were Inconsistent

Statement	Participant
I don't think we had any faculty advisors.	Kentucky Advisor I
Some of them were really (really) great. Some of them were really mean to the point where I had other advisors tell me that if they got assigned that program to advise again, they were going to have to have a talk with somebody.	Ohio Advisor I
So, we do have some faculty advisors, and they are all different. In so many words, like I say, it's hit or miss. You're either going to get a real good one that really going to work with you, or you are going to get somebody which will give you a little bit more.	Kentucky Advisor II
I didn't have any interaction with faculty advisors.	Ohio Advisor II
At least the faculty advisor that I interact with. I think it; when it comes to their specific responsibilities for faculty advising, I think they do their job.	Ohio Advisor III
We don't really work together with them, especially because there's no faculty advisors within our programs that we advise.	Mississippi Advisor I
What we decided was like to build relationships with faculty. We'd have luncheons with them and be like, this is our system; this is how we want you to use it, but please utilize us before you use the system.	Louisiana Advisor I
So, at that time, there were no faculty advisors. Each of the schools had professional advisors. So, the School of Business had two people, Pharmacy school had two people, School of Nursing had two people.	Mississippi Advisor II

Relationships With Faculty Advisors. Ohio Advisor I stated that there were two types of faculty advisors at their institution. Ohio Advisor I stated, “I mean, there were some that were really fantastic and super proactive and knew what to do, and easy to work with and worked together.” However, Ohio Advisor I went on to say, “Some of these people were really mean to the students, and you know it was really a mixed bag.” Kentucky Advisor II did have some concerns about the faculty advisors’ communication. Kentucky Advisor II stated, “You’re either going to get a really good one, that’s really going to work with you, or you are going to get somebody you wish would give you a little bit more.”

Ohio Advisor II mentioned their university had a faculty advisor; however, Ohio Advisor II stated, “So, yes, we did have them, but there was not a good mix of interaction, and collaboration and community with a faculty advisor in professional advisors.” Kentucky Advisor I was the only advisor who stated, “I don’t think we had any faculty advisors.” Ohio Advisor III stated, “I think they do their job.” Ohio Advisor III did mention that not every advising unit had faculty advisors and said, “Though I don’t have anything to compare it to because in my previous academic advising unit, we didn’t. We did not work with faculty.” Mississippi Advisor I mentioned that they had faculty advisors at their institution; however, she mentioned this about her advising unit’s interaction with them, “We don’t really, like, we don’t really work together with them, especially because there’s no faculty advisors within our programs we advise.” Louisiana Advisor I stated that she was “friends with some faculty at (university).” Moreover, the Louisiana Advisor I mentioned, “We’d have luncheons with them.” Mississippi Advisor I mentioned that the faculty advisor did not exist at first and stated, “So at that time, there were no faculty advisors. Each of the schools had professional advisors.” However, the advisor mentioned that faculty advisors fell into two categories and said, “Now, my last job and here, there are faculty advisors. Some of them are excellent, where they, you know, really know their students and meet with them on a regular basis, and others just send them my way."

Working Conditions

This section reviewed the physical condition, facilities, work environment, tools, and equipment (Sithiphand, 1983). The participants in this study described their experience with work environments, which included diversity discussions and the equipment used for their day-to-day responsibilities. Many of the participants who spoke on diversity had less than four academic advisors who identified as a minority. One advisor who identified as an African American male mentioned that he was the sole African American in his advising unit; moreover, he expressed that the diversity within his advising unit was better than that of other departments within his university. Two other participants mentioned having a whole department of one ethnic group. One of these participants mentioned that their university had not been impelled to increase diversity within their advising center, and they tend to hire similar individuals at their university. Another advisor mentioned that having an advising unit with half identifying as non-White, and that unit was considered an outlier for their university for diversity advising hires. There were also discussions regarding noticing the lack of diversity; however, advisors in that institution never brought those issues to human resources, and this advisor did not know if their institution was actively looking to address the lack of diversity among advisors.

Another issue brought up regarding their environment was the lack of gender diversity. Out of the eight participants interviewed in this study, three individuals identified as male. As mentioned previously, one advisor's advising colleagues were primarily female. Other advisors indicated that there were only two males in their advising unit. Moreover, the final male-identified participant mentioned that there are only two male advisors, and one is their supervisor. Some participants identified as women who mentioned the lack of male advisors. One participant who identified as female indicated that they had one African American male in their unit but eliminated the position, which left an all-female advising unit. Another participant who identified as female mentioned that out of 12 advisors, only three advisors in her unit identified as male (see Table 17).

Table 17

Statement for Theme 10a: Diversity Issues Within Advising Offices

Statement	Participant
There were six advisors at the time in the office … There were only me and one other male, and everyone else was female or identified as female. From the time I was there till the time I left identified as White or Caucasian.	Kentucky Advisor I
Um, really was nothing fancy, (I don't know), there were fluorescent lights and stuff like that, it wasn't great. I mean the people that I work with were all fine. You know, it was just kind of your generic office, nothing really to say about it.	Ohio Advisor I
I want to say twelve to thirteen advisors in my office. There is three no four advisors to who identify as African American, so we work with mostly Caucasian females.	Kentucky Advisor II
I was in a staff; there was five of us on the advising team … I was the only person of color on our team, and then we represented about like a little over two thousand students. So, that s kind of like the demographics most for women you know, I was the only male advisor, and then my director was the only other. We were the only two guys in the office.	Ohio Advisor II
I think I could confidently say there are two of us who would identify another race or ethnicity that is not white out of one, two, three, no three. Sorry, three of us out of one, two, three, four, five out of six people who reside in that office. So, I guess half and half.	Ohio Advisor III
Yeah. So, we are all White females in our office, so that would be the gender makeup. There used to be a director that was an African American male, but they got rid of that position. So currently it is an office of just females.	Mississippi Advisor I
We were all Black, so we're all friends.	Louisiana Advisor I
It was a welcoming environment; it was open. We all got along great, the staff, you know. It's just tricky to talk with students in that type of space, because they, you know, there was minimal privacy. I was the only Latina … Yeah, there were three males, and then there were sorry, there was three African American.	Mississippi Advisor II

Diversity Within Advising Offices. Kentucky Advisor I, Kentucky Advisor II, Ohio Advisor II, Ohio Advisor III, Mississippi Advisor I, and Mississippi Advisor II indicated that their office had fewer than three male advisors within their department.

Kentucky Advisor I indicated that there was no academic advisor within his advising department that considered themselves a minority, and Ohio Advisor II indicated that he was the only person of color in his office. Ohio Advisor II noted that out of the five advisors within their division, only two advisors would consider themselves a minority. Ohio Advisor III stated, “But I think that’s an outlier for the campus. I don’t know if that’s gonna come up later, but I, um, that’s not the norm, at least from what I’ve seen.”

Mississippi Advisor I indicated, “So, we are all White females in our office, so that would be the gender makeup.” While their division did have an African American male within their advising unit, they eliminated that position. Mississippi Advisor I mentioned, “I guess there hasn’t really been a push for diversity with within the center, which I was kind of wondering, you know, like we’re all we all look the same, we all act the same.” While there have been concerns about the lack of diversity within their advising division, these concerns were not brought up to upper administration or the human resource department within their university. Mississippi Advisor II mentioned that out 10 advisors, only three were male. When it came to ethnic background, Mississippi Advisor II stated, “Let’s see the ethnic background. I was the only Latina.” Moreover, Mississippi Advisor II mentioned that there were only “two African American” advisors. The rest of the advisors within her university identified as Caucasian.

Office Equipment. The tools that most advisors use are advising software to help students transcribe their transcripts, create graduation plans, or put in notes from advising appointments. In this section, many advisors felt that their equipment was adequate. However, some advisors suggested that the onboarding was challenging when learning how to use the equipment effectively. Training on the software was challenging, as mentioned by an advisor; this advisor mentioned that each advising unit had a different structure for teaching new advisors to use the software. Another participant mentioned that their onboarding process was hectic to use at first. One advisor had a supervisor described as a “gatekeeper of knowledge.” This advisor mentioned that one supervisor would take over certain aspects of the software, which did not leave room for growth or to learn the full potential of the software adequately.

Most of the physical office equipment was typical for an office setting and was considered average or nothing special. Three participants received updated equipment, which included laptops or webcams. Only one advisor mentioned they were downstairs and had to share an office suite with another division. There were no complaints about their office set-up. However, some advisors mentioned that their office equipment could have been updated. One advisor mentioned that since they had to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic, they could have had a faster laptop where they would not need to use their personal computer at home. One of the biggest challenges I saw from advisors was the multitude of software that advisors needed training in to do their jobs effectively. No advisor mentioned the stress of using these systems, nor was turnover discussed within this section. However, these participants would list one software program and stop mid-sentence to discuss another program they use to help students. One advisor suggests they wish they had one program for all the work they do for students. See Table 18 for participant comments on challenges with onboarding and software.

Table 18

Statement for Theme 10b: There Were Challenges With Onboarding and Software

Statement	Participant
It was decent software. I think it was adequate, but I would say the onboarding of learning that software was not adequate.	Kentucky Advisor I
Yeah, um, at (university), the equipment was all fine. Um, I think they actually got me a new computer sometime after I started which was a little bit smaller, a little bit faster, so that was nice. I guess my only complaint was that I wish the monitors had been the type that could kind of swivel, so that I could turn it around and show the student hat was on the screen	Ohio Advisor I
I do not believe our computer is the fastest it could be ... I just don't think advisors should have to come in, in the morning and it be a fifteen-to-twenty-minute process to get a computer started.	Kentucky Advisor II
I mean, I'd say it's fair. We use Navigate on (universities) campus for like our advising hub kind of a thing, and it, it had its limits. It was not super easy to be assigned and for the students to be able to kind of find us as their honors advisors … It was not easy to navigate, but it was fair.	Ohio Advisor II
Oh, not user friendly at all. I mean there is no official training program or for that software … So, I would say, depending on how long you've been at (university), it may be user friendly cause you've been there for a while, but if you're brand new, it's like just throwing someone into the water and hoping they swim.	Ohio Advisor III
I mean the onboarding process for me was, you know kind of hectic, kind of confusing at first, but then it all made sense, you know, like a few months in.	Mississippi Advisor I
I got lucky, and I got, like, the brand-new laptop because the associate, the assistant dean was trying to test out new software for the honors college in general, and he wanted to move from having like fixture desktops to having laptops and docks.	Louisiana Advisor I
We didn't have, it was very minimal laptops at the time.	Mississippi Advisor II

Software and Technological Onboarding. Kentucky Advisor I indicated that the equipment was decent. However, he also mentioned, “Learning the software was not adequate. Ohio Advisor I mentioned the equipment was fine. However, the advisor complained, “I wish the monitors had been the type that could kind of swivel so that I could turn it around and show the students what was on the screen.” Kentucky Advisor II mentioned, “When it comes to our students, I feel like the equipment, it’s decent enough to where it gets the job done but could be better.” Ohio Advisor II mentioned this regarding their software and stated, “I mean, I’d say it’s fair.” However, the advisor mentioned that some of the software used, such as Navigate, “has it limits.” Moreover, when it came to the ease or customization of the software to fit their advisor needs, Ohio Advisor II mentioned:

> It was not easy to navigate, but it was fair. Like, it did everything we needed it to do for the most part, but like, when issues would happen, we’d have to get the, the people who own the software involved, and their response wasn’t always the best, and we wanted to customize it.

Ohio Advisor III mentioned, “I think it fits the baseline, but yeah, as far as software, I mean, I think it’s pretty much updated.” However, when asked about onboarding or learning about the new software, Ohio Advisor III stated, “Oh, not user-friendly at all. I mean, there is no official training program or for that software.” When it came to the onboarding process, she mentioned:

> So, I would say, depending on how long you’ve been at (university), it may be user-friendly ‘cause you’ve been there for a while, but if you’re brand new. It’s like just throwing someone into the water and hoping they swim.

Mississippi Advisor I's issue with the software was a university issue rather than the program itself. Mississippi Advisor I mentioned:

> We used to have a texting app, but the university as a whole got rid of it because it was too expensive, and they're currently looking for a new platform. So that's kind of been a hindrance, I would say, not having the texting app because not a lot of students are checking their emails.

At the time of the interview, Louisiana Advisor I received a new laptop. Moreover, the advisor stated this about the software: "It was up to date when I worked it, and the office equipment was standard at a decent level; allows you to make sure that I could do my job." For Mississippi Advisor II, her office lacks laptops, and she said, "We didn't have, it was very minimal laptops at the time." However, the advisor admitted that this was "over eight years" when she was a full-time academic advisor.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 consisted of the questions, responses, and themes of the eight participants in the study. In this chapter, I sought to highlight the participants' responses and shed light on their lived experiences as academic advisors from midsized institutions. This research is necessary to continue the conversation of understanding the environments of academic advisors. Findings from this research can help upper administrators in higher education learn issues that could cause academic advisors to consider leaving or leaving a university. Hopefully, these responses will create conversations to examine the environment of academic advisors and resolve issues and challenges that negatively impact academic advisors. Chapter 5 will compile a summary of the participant's responses, recommendations for upper administrators, and suggestions for future research in the hopes of making a better environment for academic advisors and advising experience for students.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The previous three chapters introduced the problem and purpose of the study, a literature review regarding the turnover and retention rates of staff in higher education, the history of academic advising, issues full-time academic advisors encounter in higher education, and questions surrounding the professionalism of academic advising and methodology. Chapter 4 included the demographics and the description of the participants, a holistic review and responses of participants, and the themes that emerged from the research. Chapter 5 summarizes my original problem and the purpose behind this qualitative study, as mentioned in Chapter 1. After reiterating the original problem and purpose of the study, I will discuss the findings related to the study's original questions, themes, and responses from the participants and the observed limitations of the student. Finally, Chapter 5 will discuss potential recommendations from higher educational studies, review recommendations from researchers that studied motivational and hygiene discussions with turnover and office management and include the conclusion from the overall study.

Study Problem and Purpose

Academic advisors have fought for the professionalism of academic advising despite academic advising falling short of the defined framework of what is considered a profession (Severy et al., 1996). There are many stereotypes related to the academic advising occupation and the professionalism of academic advising (Aiken-Wisniewski et al., 2015). Moreover, Epps (2002) indicated that little is known about the daily lived experiences of academic advisors. While the number of professional academic support staff, including academic advisors, has increased, many professional support staff feel like they are outliers within their institutions (Ryttberg & Geschwind, 2017). Burnout is caused by role ambiguity (Mullen et al., 2018);

moreover, He et al., 2020 indicated that deficient promotion opportunities, demanding workloads, and role conflicts had caused increased dissatisfaction among academic advisors. In this study, I wanted to view the lived experiences of professional full-time academic advisors through the lens of Herzberg's motivation and hygiene factors, which historically examine satisfaction.

Research that focused on nonstudent-related concepts of academic advising involved faculty advising regarding faculty advising perceptions (Baird, 2020; Hart-Baldridge, 2020), roles of faculty advisors (Troxel, 2018), and the emotional lives of faculty advisors (Snyder-Duch, 2018). Moreover, there has also been research regarding administrators' perceptions of academic advising (Menke et al., 2020) and leaders' perceptions of academic advisors (McGill, 2018); however, research that examines frontline advisors is sparse (Snyder-Duch, 2018). While scholarly articles have discussed academic advising and its role in higher education, it still needs to be understood by administrators, faculty, staff, students, and even other academic advisors (McGill, 2018).

The reason for conducting this research was to understand better the experience academic advisors face regarding policy and procedures within their departments, social interactions among staff, faculty, and students, economic advancement, and equipment the academic advisors utilize within their occupations. As discussed in Chapter 1, future research regarding academic advisors should focus on salaries, credentials, professional opportunities, education, promotion ability, and turnover rates within academic advising (Taylor, 2011). Therefore, in this research, I wanted to utilize Herzberg's motivation-hygiene factors to gain a holistic understanding of full-time professional advisors' lived experience with hygiene factors that include company and administrative policies, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations and working conditions and motivation factors that include the work itself, achievement, recognition, responsibility, and advancement. While Herzberg's two-factor theory does not explicitly review turnover, it does analyze an employee's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their current employees based on the factors mentioned in Herzberg's theory.

Discussion of Findings

To preserve the dialogue of the full-time professional academic advisors, I wrote down their responses verbatim utilizing naturalized transcription, which preserves the candidates' responses and does not take away or add any biases due to filtration by the researcher for grammar or data collection purposes. The participants for this study were eight previous or current full-time professional academic advisors from midsize institutions. Each academic advisor spent less than 6 years in their previous or current role as an academic advisor. While all the advisors in this study were full-time, the units the participants advised ranged from exploratory, liberal arts, honors college, arts and humanities, and information technology. Each of these full-time academic advisors worked at an institution that met the requirements for a medium-sized institution. The participants consisted of individuals from various ethnic groups and educational experiences. While there were different educational experiences among the participants, all the participants earned their master's degrees, and most of the participants had a master's degree that focused on student personnel services. The participants all came from Kentucky, Ohio, Louisiana, and Mississippi. The data collected within this study was based on the lived experience of eight full-time professional academic advisors. I conducted the research using a semistructured method, which allowed the participants to speak about life experiences (Henriksen et al., 2021).

Findings for Research Questions

RQ1: What are the lived experiences of academic advisors in the university setting?

Based on the themes identified in this semistructured research, academic advisors' lived experience consists of few advising departments offering advising rank talents being recognized by supervisors, but compensation based on talents was limited, with little to no title changes, check-ins, graduations, and student advocacy are responsibilities of advisors, support and good relationship with direct supervisors, limited support from upper administrators, onboarding consist of shadowing and training sessions, onboarding consist of shadowing and training sessions, good relationships with advisors, and inconsistent relationships with the faculty advisor.

RQ2: What phenomena are present in the lived experience of academic advisors that might generate turnover intent (i.e., policies, students, job roles)?

While multiple motivational and hygiene factors created negative emotional lived experiences for the advisors, the participants in this research only mentioned turnover in the motivational factor of advancement and the hygiene factor of salary.

Discussions of the Findings With Past Literature

This study examined the lived experience of full-time professional academic advisors from midsized institutions. This phenomenological study gives insight into the environmental factors that satisfy or cause dissatisfaction for full-time professional academic advisors who work at midsize institutions. The study examined the lived experiences of full-time academic advisors related to Herzberg's motivation and hygiene factors. Herzberg's two-factor theory allows researchers to examine complex interactions and study how individuals react to internal and external factors (Bassett-Jones & Lloyd, 2005). As demand increases for university staff to provide research, teaching, and leadership support for student wellbeing, concern for staff wellbeing has also increased (Brewster et al., 2022). This study allowed participants to focus on their environment regarding connection with faculty advisors, other colleagues, upper administrators, salaries, institutional practices, advancement, and less on students' needs.

Satisfiers

Motivators within the Herzberg two-factor theory revolve around an action or force that satisfies employee needs of personnel or drives the proper behavior (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). Using motivators within a job aims to develop positive long-term effects to increase job performance (Chiat & Panatik, 2019). Most participants identified that their institution needed a consistent ranking or promotion system for their academic advising team. Providing advisors an opportunity for upward mobility increases motivation because it gives academic advisors encouragement or a reason for doing something (Chiat & Panatik, 2019), which in this case would be staying within an institution.

Advancement

Having a ranking system among academic advisors is not an uncommon practice (Iten & Matheny, 2008). The development of the hierarchical or tiered system was seen as a significant change within the academic advising occupation, which was established to provide academic advisors with professional advancement opportunities (Baldwin, 2020). The creation of advising ranks occurred because of the increased recognition of academic advisors, and having those structures created career pathways for advancement, which is vital for the professional development of the academic advising occupation (Thomas & Cunningham, 2018). Although NACADA has established and written proposal for advising tiers 1–4 (Thomas & Cunningham, 2018) and advising tiers have became more relevant in the advising field (Baldwin, 2020), my research has shown that advancement for academic advisors is not consistently established through an academic advising promotional system. Seven of the eight participants within these midsize universities had no ranking system associated with their advising roles. Mississippi Advisor II was the only advisor with pathways, but there were no incentives that came with an increased title. The participants expressed other frustrations, such as the fact that degree status does not always equate to advancement within their division. Ohio Advisor I mentioned that advancement for her mentions applying to another university.

Another advisor who expressed frustration with the lack of advancement opportunities was the Mississippi advisor, who mentioned that advancement at her institution is a “dead path.” The dead pathway was mainly due to current people already in those positions. Mississippi Advisor I said, “Individuals who are in those higher levels have been there for a while, and you know they’re not planning on leaving anytime soon.” Moreover, “So, if I wanted to, you know, continue my career, it would have to be in a different office or at a different institution.”

Louisiana Advisor I had similar issues as Ohio Advisor III and Mississippi Advisor II regarding degree completion and advancement within their institution. According to Louisiana Advisor I, “I thought you could move up, get a degree, but there was nowhere to move up to.” Moreover, this advisor explicitly mentions that she believed the turnover in her office was directly related to a lack of advancement and said, “I think that was also a reason why the honors college had high turnover in regard to advisors because the org chart was very interesting.” This research aligned with Aiken-Wisniewski et al.’s (2015) research that an advisor wanted a title or authorization. Moreover, Alrawahi et al. (2020) indicated that promotional opportunities were vital for employees and seen as motivators within Herzberg’s two-factor theory. Managers who cannot provide adequate motivation are not prepared to manage adults (Herzberg, 1974).

Achievement is considered a vital motivator for employees; however, many participants experienced that obtaining a higher-level degree, such as being a doctoral candidate, had limited influence on the rank they received as an advisor.

An article written in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce by Johnson (2022) indicated that low pay was not the main reason employees left an organization; it was also due to a lack of advancement opportunities and stunted career growth. Understanding the growth in higher education or outside of advising is a concept that many participants in this study have experienced and contemplated. Therefore, the participants in this study were currently facing a decision that advancement in the field of higher education meant they needed to make a lateral move outside of advising or leaving their institution.

Achievements

According to Burton (2012), providing employees an avenue to present their skills within the workplace increases employee motivation. Talent is generally an umbrella term for what we believe an organization wants (Engelbrektson & Gävert, 2006). In this research, participants were given space to define what they considered a talent and the impact it had on their institution. All the academic advisors could showcase their talents to either rebrand the office, provide training on software, create and develop course materials for first-year seminar courses, develop a leadership program, manage and organize an honors thesis program, or create group advising. Burton (2012) indicated that this motivation should be used to (a) help with the organization’s goals and (b) help develop the employee’s personal goals.

Achievement is considered a significant factor in job satisfaction (Herzberg, 1974). While every advisor indicated or expressed how using their talents made them feel, there were some explicit examples of how upper administrators using the talents of advisors increased morale, which came from Kentucky Advisors I and II and Ohio Advisor II. Kentucky Advisor I indicated that his ability to rebrand the office materials and update brochures allowed the department to save money. When asking a follow-up question, Kentucky Advisor I mentioned, “I enjoyed it. It was challenging to work within the brand standards of the institution, but I enjoyed that aspect of my role since I was able to make it a secondary responsibility.” Kentucky Advisor II was able to create a passion for creating information for self-care and provide lesson plans to colleagues. Kentucky Advisor II advisor mentioned that it was “really good” that colleagues used his lesson plans. Ohio Advisor II mentioned that their supervisor “put me in places where I can help the team win.” Herzberg (1974) mentioned that achievement can increase satisfaction if employees have an opportunity to increase responsibilities at their workplace. In the study, some participants who were not explicitly asked to use their talent by a direct supervisor or upper administration still found a way to increase their responsibility within the workplace. Advisors who volunteered their talent set up teams for virtual appointments and team meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic, initiated and started to help advisors start group advising in the unit, and created and shared lesson plans with their colleagues. Therefore, the drive to use one’s talent as an advisor may be strong enough to create responsibility for the good of the team, even if a director or supervisor does not ask them.

Recognition

The participants in this study were recognized in various ways, including master advisors or student champions, supervisors sending emails thanking advisors, or throwing parties. Five out of eight participants had an award or banquet recognizing academic advisors. However, one out of those five academic advisors’ institutions did not give awards to advisors until 2023. Three of the eight academic advisors did not receive any awards, banquet, or ceremony.

However, one of those three advisors who did not have an awards ceremony or institution recognition mentioned that their dean recognized the advisors in other ways. Two academic advisors, Ohio Advisor I and the Louisiana advisor, who did not receive recognition at their institution, have left their institution. The Louisiana advisor is now in a higher education-adjacent job, and the Ohio Advisor I have left higher education altogether. Organizations must provide awards and commitment; if employees do not have these incentives, research indicates they will not find a reason to excel at their jobs (Burton, 2012; Chiat & Panatik, 2019).

According to research, recognition in an organization can be viewed as either a motivator, as initially seen in Herzberg's theory, or a hygiene factor, as expressed in Alrawahi et al.'s (2020) research. The research could confirm or deny whether academic advisors see recognition within their job as a satisfier (motivator) or a dissatisfier (hygiene). Only two participants mentioned how they felt about advising recognition. Ohio Advisor I indicated their advising unit never received recognition and mentioned that it was fine. However, this could be due to this advisor not being in the academic advising field anymore and looking at this situation from a fresh perspective. Kentucky Advisor II mentioned his frustrations with his inability to attend the event due to other obligations he has for their university. While this research could not expressly indicate if recognition is a motivator, as expressed in Herzberg's theory, or hygiene, as discussed in Alrawahi et al.'s (2020) research, two advisors did mention they would send emails from students to their supervisors to receive recognition. One advisor explicitly mentions sending emails to their advisors when a student sends them something positive to bring positive affirmation to their one-on-one meetings. These examples indicate that advisors can seek recognition from supervisors; however, seeking recognition is not exclusively targeted toward supervisors. From my research, advisors seek recognition regardless of whether their recognition is supported by upper administration, direct supervisors, or colleagues. My findings are similar to those of Noell (1976), who indicated that recognition or feelings of positivity from one’s job could come from peers, colleagues, or customers, which, from a higher education standpoint, would-be students.

Responsibility

The advising experience and responsibilities become vastly different as each advisor discusses their institution’s job responsibilities. However, each academic advisor’s responsibilities revolved around selecting courses and course registration for graduation. Advisors’ various work descriptions or responsibilities are consistent with Aiken-Wisniewski et al.’s (2015) research, which mentioned the diversity in training advisors receive in their occupations. In my research, the advisors wrote SAP appeal letters, and others met with external stakeholders outside of academia, which included Ohio Advisor II working with residence life, the Mississippi advisor helping students with scholarship and financial aid, or Kentucky Advisor II and Ohio Advisor III advisor teaching first-year seminar courses.

Multiple advisors mentioned that the needs and responsibilities of each advising unit within a college vary. When it came to the university providing the academic advisor’s autonomy within this study, each advisor mentioned that they were provided some autonomy. Advisors need the freedom to meet the unique needs of students in a unique way (Vardeman & Dykes, 2020). The type of autonomy given to advisors was flexibility with their advising style and varying degrees of controlling schedules.

Each participant had some level of autonomy at their institution, whether it was their advising style, control of their schedule, or how they met with students. However, a few of the advisors had concerns with micromanagement. Kentucky Advisor I stated:

> We were given the autonomy to work with students and really make sure that, you know, our style was our own styles. I could work with them too, you know, best serve the student. So, on the one hand, I think we had the autonomy to do that, and on the other hand, I think we were micromanaged quite a bit.

Louisiana Advisor I had some autonomy with working with students and scheduling and mentioned, “So there was a little bit of micromanaging … but the wild part was like the micromanaging didn’t actually come from our director. It came from the assistant.”

Three of the academic advisors from Ohio had similar stances on autonomy and the differences within various advising units at their institution. Ohio Advisor I mentioned, “Um, and I know that the other colleges did things their own way, too, because of the specifics of their program.” Ohio Advisor II had a similar experience and stated, “I had a lot of autonomy, but I definitely feel like it depended on where you worked.” Ohio Advisor III said, “I think that depends again on which advising unit you’re in. I think currently, with my advising unit, we have a lot of autonomy.”

The participants in my study had similar life experiences related to their responsibilities; however, there were variances between academic advisors’ responsibilities at their institutions. My research has findings similar to those of Aiken-Wisniewski et al. (2015), who found contrasting responsibilities between advisors. Aiken-Wisnieswski et al. (2015) found that advisors’ responsibilities can differ between different institutions. Some advisors in my research stated that advisors in different units could have separate job responsibilities or experiences.

The participants in the study were neither motivated nor demotivated by their numerous responsibilities, which varies from Moxley’s (1977) research that puts responsibilities as a hygiene factor. This current research aligned more with Ghazi et al.’s (2013) research, where teachers in higher educational settings were found to be “undecided” about their feelings about being satisfied or dissatisfied with their respective responsibilities.

Work Itself

According to Giese (2018) and Smerek and Peterson (2007), work itself was the most powerful predictor of job satisfaction. Moreover, Gibson (2021) and Teck-Hong and Waheed (2011) indicated that the work itself was statistically significant for job satisfaction. This section reviewed academic advisors’ lived experience of feeling valued by upper administrators. The work itself in this section also reviewed whether academic advisors felt upper administrators let them know that their work was essential, and their task had meaning (Syptak et al., 1999).

Five out of the eight participants had a better relationship with their direct supervisors and little to none with their upper administrators as it pertained to the value that was placed on their work. The participants in my research did not mention turnover as a factor in their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the work itself. However, some participants mentioned frustrations with administrators valuing their work. While this study agrees with the statement from Sofranko’s (2004) research that verbal encouragement is observable in higher education, it seems that verbal encouragement from upper administrators in higher education toward academic advisors needs to develop and increase.

Some academic advisors expressed the differences between their direct supervisors and upper administrators. Kentucky Advisor II felt valued because their supervisor saw how well they worked with students and then created a pathway for them to become a certified career coach. Ohio Advisor I felt that as the title of the director increased, support decreased. The advisor stated, “It felt a little less genuine the further it went up.” Ohio Advisor III also mentioned that their president would come by their table and say, “Thank you for what you do.”

However, for Ohio Advisor III, it felt generic, something that the president would say to everyone and nothing specific. Mississippi Advisor I had a similar experience as Ohio Advisor I and Ohio Advisor III, feeling more support from their direct supervisor than their upper administrators. The Mississippi advisor felt “very encouraged” by their direct supervisor but felt that their director was more “standoffish” and “did not seem sincere.” For Mississippi Advisor II, promotion was the only form of value she felt, but this advisor mentioned that there was nothing specific, individualized, or personal outside of that. Mississippi Advisor II was so impacted by their advising experience and lack of feeling valued that now that she is in an upper administrator position, the advisor makes it a source of habit to remember subordinates’ names and what they have done to value the work they have done and acknowledge how they contribute.

When making employees feel valued, it is vital to share stories or express how valuable their work is to the team or organizational goals (Syptak et al., 1999). A few participants mentioned they felt valued by upper administrators. Kentucky Advisor I mentioned being pulled aside for their work after an administrator met with one of their students and was specific when mentioning what they did for students or the team. The Louisiana advisor mentioned that their upper administrators were specific in their praise for the work they had done for the team by completing thesis signups for the honor students. Kentucky Advisor II felt supported by the thank you notes, which is the opposite of Ohio Advisor III, and they received gifts usually in the form of food. However, Kentucky Advisor II did not mention a time when their deans or upper administrators explained what their advising unit did specifically to help the team. While work itself is viewed by researchers as the most powerful predictor of job satisfaction according to Giese (2018) and Smerek and Paterson (2007) and is statistically significant according to Gibson (2021) and Teck-Hong and Waheed (2011), my research, cannot confirm or deny that the motivational factor of work itself impacted advisors' decision to leave or stay in the advising field or their university. However, some advisors displayed frustration when their efforts were not acknowledged, which can play a role in decreased satisfaction.

Company and Administrative Policies

Aiken-Wisniewski et al. (2015) indicated in their research that academic advisors have a standard, required knowledge or training that they must have to carry out a task. Each of the advisors who participated in this study received some training from their advising department. However, three of the eight advisors indicated no specific formal or universal training for academic advisors in their institutions, and each training varied and was organized differently among the participants. While a few academic advisors mentioned informal training, a few participants mentioned that they had a mix of formal and informal training.

Ohio Advisor II noted that there was a "baseline of training that every advisor was getting, and then it was up to the departments to develop that further." Ohio Advisor III stated, "I mean, there, there is no official training policy." Moreover, Ohio Advisor III mentioned, "It depends on each unit and how they deal with training." Louisiana Advisor I stated, "I would say there was no training in policies, and again, there were no universal training policies." Few advisors mentioned they had a consistent formal policy for training; however, this research indicates that not all advisors have standard training, as Aiken-Wisniewski et al.'s (2015) research suggested.

Regarding the caseload of the participants, the smallest caseload was from Louisiana Advisor I, with a caseload of 125, and the advisor that saw the most students was Ohio Advisor I, with 500. The rest of this study's advisors had a caseload of 200 to 370 students. According to Shaw (2021), the average caseload for advisors at 4-year public colleges is 270 students. Half of the participants had fluctuating advising caseloads that exceeded the recommended 270 students from Shaw (2021). Kentucky Advisor I had a caseload of 200 to 400 students, Ohio Advisor I had 350 to 500 students, Ohio Advisor III had a caseload of 350 but might only see 200 to 250, and Mississippi Advisor II's load was between 255 and 300 students. Many of the advisors eluded that these fluctuations occur because of the turnover in their advising centers and the need to take on other advisors' caseloads or the ebb and flow of fluctuating student populations.

Six of the advisors in this study were assigned caseloads upward of 270 students, as mentioned by Shaw (2021). Half of the academic advisors participating in this study indicated that their caseload could have been more manageable. Kentucky Advisor II mentioned they discussed the caseload in their office often and mentioned they "could use more advisors." Mississippi Advisor I mentioned their caseload was "a pretty big caseload for one academic adviser." Louisiana Advisor I felt that the caseload size needed to be more manageable. Mississippi Advisor II believed their caseload of 255 to 300 students needed to be more appropriate based on their research. According to Mississippi Advisor II, "Like that number is not the real number, but studies show, like, 150 is probably, like, the best number so that you can build a relationship."

Two of the academic advisors who indicated that their caseloads were manageable spoke about some issues and concerns regarding their caseloads. Ohio Advisor II noted that their caseloads exceeded the NACADA limit. Ohio Advisor III noted, "If we lost an advisor or two, then I think it definitely would become unmanageable." According to Robbins (2013), NACADA suggested that medium-sized institutions should have a student caseload of 333 students. Most advisors had a caseload larger than the suggested amount for midsize universities.

While the caseload was more than average or suggested, no advisor mentioned that their caseloads caused them or another colleague to leave the university or the advising profession.

Company policy is one of the most common dissatisfiers, according to Herzberg (1974), which Gibson's (2021) research also found. While a few advisors mentioned the need for a more consistent training policy, no advisor expressed dissatisfaction with training, even with the discussed inconsistencies. However, advisors were more concerned with the number of students on their caseload, and many advisors mentioned it was a lot or more than the NACADA standards, which is discussed in Epps's (2002) research, which studied the workload of academic advisors. One advisor reflected on their ability to be proactive with their caseload and how having more advisors would help better address student's needs. Even advisors who felt their caseload was manageable mentioned that a loss of even one advisor in their unit could make their caseload unmanageable. Kentucky Advisor I believed his caseload assignment was appropriate, but "did not know another way that it could have been done." This advisor's most significant concerns were how the advising caseload was allocated, and they wanted students to have the opportunity to see any advisor and not be assigned to specific advisors. Their main issue was that if they missed a day or took a vacation, it would harm the student by not responding, and the student would need to wait to see a specific advisor instead of visiting any available advising professional.

A few advisors mentioned the job requirements and responsibilities, plus their caseloads made it difficult because of reviewing graduation requirements, teaching responsibilities for first-year seminar courses, or being the spokesperson for other offices within the university. Moreover, inconsistencies with caseload could cause administrators issues. At least three participants indicated that the advising caseload across their campuses differs depending on the college they advise. Some advisors might have a caseload of around 300 students, while other advising units can have a caseload of close to 500 or 600. These inconsistencies could cause one advising unit to have more turnover than another and disrupt the advising flow of other units.

Supervision

The supervision theme showed similar patterns to the theme of *work itself*, according to Herzberg's theory. Five advisors had good relationships with their direct supervisor and limited interaction with upper administrators. Two advisors had access and were comfortable speaking with their direct supervisor and upper administration. One advisor had a better relationship with their upper administrator than their direct supervisor. When it came to having support from upper administration, most advisors did not have many positive interactions with them. The research identified that turnover within the workplace was mainly due to negative relationships between leaders and their subordinates (Alkhawaja, 2017). While none of the academic advisors stated they left or wanted to leave their jobs because of upper administration, many were concerned about the lack of support they received from upper administrators.

Most academic advisors' relationships with upper administrators needed to be more extensive and present. Ohio Advisor I stated, "They would disappear when needed." Ohio Advisor III explained they had "limited interaction unless the upper administrators received an email from a parent or student." Mississippi Advisor I suggested that they "felt upper administrators undervalued academic advisors."

In their research, Smerek and Peterson (2007) indicated that having effective senior management and supervisors had a positive and significant relationship with job satisfaction. Marshall (2015) mentioned that employees' dissatisfaction with their jobs and attrition are impacted by relationships with leadership. None of the advisors who reported issues with upper administration indicated that poor relationships with them caused turnover or an increased desire to leave their organization.

Salary

Four of the eight advisors mentioned that the salary was insufficient to sustain their livelihood. One advisor needed more information regarding the salary or raise received at their institution. Three out of eight participants felt their salary was satisfactory; however, they acknowledged that their colleagues had issues with their pay. According to Andersson (2017), salary does not influence job satisfaction, while Smerek and Peterson's (2007) research indicated that salary was a positive predictor of job satisfaction. The participants were concerned about being underpaid for their level of work, the compensation rate for their education, and the need for more proactive opportunities to help students. Similar concerns were found in Donnelly's (2009) research when advisors wanted better compensation for educational requirements and their responsibilities and to have more in-depth work with students. Kentucky Advisor II mentioned turnover due to salary was an issue and discussed it within his advising unit and the university; however, they never confirmed whether he knew anyone who left the university specifically because of salary. Ohio Advisor I mentioned that they left the university and higher education altogether because of the lack of compensation. The participants who were dissatisfied with their salary did not directly state that their lack of compensation was enough for them to leave an institution or the advising occupation; however, other issues combined with salary, like inflation, the cost of healthcare, and increased rent rates, caused many advisors to examine the advising occupation or staying at their institution based on the pay they received.

Even when academic advisors felt that their salary was fair, they made comments that suggested they understood that this was an issue among their colleagues. There was an advisor who was thankful for their spouse and suggested that this was a reason for their more positive outlook on their compensation. Ohio Advisor II understood that they were more positive when it came to their outlook on their salary. Moreover, this advisor negotiated their salary to the maximum offer due to previous higher education experience in residential life and the need for their university to create a division where academic advisors work with housing for honors students. Each participant I interviewed had a master's degree, and three were pursuing an educational doctorate (EdD). While many university stakeholders require advisors to have more advanced degrees, academic advisors' salaries are still averaging around $36,000 to start, with a top wage being $50,000, according to data on Salary.com (2017), which was posted on the NACADA website. These salary ranges found on Salary.com (2017) were similar to the advisors who participated in the study. These participants came from various states and cities; some lived in small, medium, and large towns. However, no participant indicated if their institution based their salaries on the market value of advisors in similar colleges within their state or the market value of academic advisors overall.

Interpersonal Relationships

Advisors in Donnelly's (2009) research identified teamwork as a top variable regarding satisfaction in the workplace. Marshall's (2015) research addressed longevity in a university and found that job dissatisfaction and turnover can come from conflict with a colleague. This research found that all eight academic advisors had positive relationships with most of their colleagues who were not supervisors or upper administration, which entails that these participants found satisfaction when working with their full-time professional colleagues. The participants mentioned these phrases in response to their feeling's other advisors within their university: "Friends on Facebook" (Kentucky Advisor I), "enjoyed my colleagues" (Ohio

Advisor I), “cared about my success” (Kentucky Advisor II), “I felt supported” (Ohio Advisor II), “good relationships” (Ohio Advisor III), “friendly” (Mississippi Advisor I), “friends” (Louisiana Advisor I), and “formed a bound” (Mississippi Advisor II). Advisors in Joseph and Carty’s (2012) research indicated that staff works well together, even if staff morale could be higher. The advisors within this research has shown that advisors have synergy among other full-time academic advisors and are satisfied with their colleagues within their academic advising units.

While there was cohesion among their full-time professional academic advisors, the same cannot be said with their views on faculty advisors. Six out of the eight academic advisors had faculty advisors on their campus. However, the research showed mixed feelings toward faculty advisors. When it came to faculty advisors’ perceptions, some advisors felt that their interactions with faculty advisors “was a mixed bag” (Ohio Advisor I). Kentucky Advisor II mentioned a similar statement when he stated, “You’re either going to get a really good one … or you are going to get somebody you wish would give you a little bit more.” Mississippi Advisor II stated, “Some are excellent … others just send them (students) away.” Ohio Advisor I stated, “Not a good mix of interactions.” Mississippi Advisor I acknowledged that their university had faculty advisors; however, she stated, “I don’t really work with them.” Not all of the interactions with the faculty advisors were negative. Ohio Advisor III stated, “I think they did their jobs.” Louisiana Advisor I stated, “We’d have luncheons with them.” Kentucky Advisor I was the only participant that did not mention their college used faculty advisors.

Working Conditions

As mentioned in interpersonal relationships, each advisor was not dissatisfied with their full-time academic advising colleagues. However, five of the eight advisors mentioned that their workplace lacked diversity regarding ethnicity and gender. The participants in this research consisted of four advisors who identified as African American, one advisor who identified as mixed-race with Asian heritage, another who identified as Latina, and two who identified as Caucasian. As it relates to gender, three advisors identified as male. Hauret and Williams (2020) found that employees start to see beyond stereotypes and increase trust in other nationalities as diversity increases. When reviewing diversity within higher education, Deem and Morley's (2006) research suggested inequalities between gender, ethnicity, and race are ramped within higher education. Research by Luong (2022) found that diversity and inclusion policies within higher education could increase or decrease turnover. The participants in this study mentioned the diversity of advisors as it related to the work conditions in their office. When the advisors mentioned the ethnicity or gender of their colleagues, I noticed a pattern that often, advisors were in an office with sparse diversity regarding the gender and ethnicity of colleagues in their advising unit. However, no participant in the research discussed whether the lack of diversity created satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The diversity issues extended not only to ethnicity but also to gender. Out of the eight participants, only three of them identified as male. Kentucky Advisor I mentioned when it came to males in the office was himself and one other male advisor. Ohio Advisor II indicated he was the only male advisor in his unit. Moreover, Mississippi Advisor I identified as female indicated that all her advising colleagues identified themselves as White and female. Mississippi Advisor II mentioned that only three academic advisors identified as males within her college.

The use of equipment and functionality of office space is a vital aspect of employee job satisfaction (Au-Yong et al., 2020). Some participants appreciated their software program's usability, newness, or up-to-date equipment. The participants in this study utilized at least two software programs. Therefore, while advisors had positive things to say about software programs, some advisors mentioned that other software programs were not always user-friendly, had complex onboarding, and had difficulty including secondary advisors. Some felt that their equipment was utilized slowly or could have been updated to include monitor swivels for students' use, and one advisor mentioned that their university had to outsource help when issues arrived and thought that could have been more effective for customization. Epps's (2002) research noted that academic advisors objected to needing more equipment and supplies. While my research did support that advisors could become dissatisfied with the equipment utilized in their office, their dissatisfaction seemed to depend less on the number of software equipment used in their office and more on whether that equipment positively impacted the students they served and the ease it helped advisors do their jobs.

Discussion of Phenomenology

Phenomenology is under the qualitative research umbrella (Polkinghorne, 2005). Polkinghorne (2005) stated that phenomenological study is a social science explicitly focused on human experience; moreover, phenomenology research is to understand the lived experience of subjects chosen for research (Polkinghorne, 1989, 2005). Since phenomenology focuses on human experience, it is vital that researchers who use phenomenology bracket or pause their knowledge and focus on the research gathered from participants and refrain from outside resources not collected from the participants (Polkinghorne, 1989). When using phenomenology, it is also vital that the information received is from participants' first-hand experiences and their direct connection to the subject (Polkinghorne, 2005).

This research was shared in a Facebook group that solely focused on individuals whose careers were focused on higher education. The participant request and consent form stated that participants needed to have lived experience as full-time academic advisors from a midsized institution. Including this information in these forms ensured that the participants were informed that participation required participants to have lived experience as a full-time academic advisor from a midsized institution. Polkinghorne (2005) suggested using audio phenomenological research. The interviews were conducted using WebEx, a videoconferencing software, and each participant verbally consented to record and transcribe the interview. My interview questions were sent to Abilene Christian University's IRB to avoid inputting any bias in the research questions used in the research. During the interviews, to the best of my ability, I avoided mentioning the challenges I have faced as an academic advisor. I allowed the participants to express their full thoughts with minimum interruption.

Sampling and Data Collection

The sampling method used in this study was the criterion that allows researchers to pinpoint potential participants that meet a predetermined standard (Polkinghorne, 2005). Since the research was to understand the lived experience of full-time academic advisors from midsized institutions, this method allowed me to include or exclude participants from the study (Suri, 2011). According to Polkinghorne (2005), researchers utilizing the qualitative method have fewer participants. Creswell (2006) and Bartholomew et al. (2021) research pointed to Polkinghorne's (1989) suggestion that, generally, qualitative research can have between five to 25 individuals who have experienced a common phenomenon. Other research suggested that having between one and 20 participants is acceptable for phenomenological research, depending on the time frame the study was conducted (Alhazmi & Kaufmann, 2022). This research study contained interviews with eight participants, and based on previous research, the number of participants interviewed for this study met the requirements for a phenomenology study.

Discussion of the Findings Within the Theoretical Models

Herzberg's (1974) two-factor theory is predicated on how employees feel about their jobs. Furthermore, Herzberg (1974) suggested how employees are treated weighs more on their happiness than what they do at work. While many of the advisors in this research mentioned they had a heavy caseload, no advisor stated they felt negatively impacted by the number of students they advised. However, advisors reciprocated the engagement they received from their leadership team, which impacted their office environment, especially in meeting upper administrators' concerns. Those advisors who felt wanted or appreciated felt a strong relationship with their leadership team, whether direct or upper administration. However, advisors who felt shaded by their leadership team avoided them and had limited interaction. My research suggests that advisors take into account how they are treated, which can alter or impact their relationships, which coincides with Herzberg's findings.

Satisfiers allow employees an opportunity to use their talents, and growth can only come from opportunity (Herzberg, 1965). The findings of my research partially aligned with this statement. While there were advisors whose supervisors directly called on them to use their talents, many volunteered their services. Regardless of whether they were given an opportunity for growth, many advisors created opportunities for themselves and appreciated any support received, whether from their colleagues using their work, continuing to use their brochure's advising techniques, or improving virtual communication during a pandemic. Therefore, this study suggested that whether the opportunity for growth comes from intrinsic or extrinsic motivating factors, employees could foster growth from those experiences if their talents are supported. According to a Herzberg (1965) study conducted with Finnish supervisors, motivator factors rarely had dissatisfiers, and hygiene factors rarely generated satisfiers. This study aligned with this statement because there was only one instance where a dissatisfier (hygiene) was viewed as a satisfier, salary, and a satisfier (motivator) was seen as a dissatisfier, advancement.

Limitations

With approval from the IRB, I sent my participation request to the Millennials in Student Affairs and Higher Education and Expatriates of Student Affairs Facebook groups. Unfortunately, the Expatriates of Student Affairs group denied my request to garner participants. Therefore, the participants only came from the Millennials in Student Affairs and Higher Education Facebook group, which can impact the study since participants came from one centralized group.

The study focused on academic advisors from medium-sized institutions. Therefore, this limited my study, which could have provided more substance from full-time academic advisors who worked within smaller or larger institutions. Moreover, only reviewing full-time professional advisors limited the potential of learning more about the advising environment from athletic and part-time advisors. Herzberg's theory has limitations documented from previous research (Ahmed et al., 2010), and some limitations center on consistency. Herzberg's theory suggested that job motivation measures job satisfaction and hygiene measures job dissatisfaction (Malik & Naeem, 2013); however, Ahmed et al. (2010) mentioned that motivational factors can lead to dissatisfaction and hygiene factors can lead to satisfaction. Even Herzberg (1974) indicated researchers could make mistakes when listing satisfies as hygiene factors and dissatisfiers as motivators, which can show the inconsistency when utilizing Herzberg's two-factor theory and identifying satisfiers and dissatisfiers in a company or workplace. Results using Herzberg's theory can be impacted by external variables that are not accounted for in Herzberg's theory (Gangwar et al., 2022). One variable that can cause discrepancies or alter results is dealing with the participant's ego and the reliability of their negative experience (Stello, 2011). As mentioned in Chapter 3, the timing of this research study was conducted during the great resignation (Sheedy, 2022); advisors during this period could be more sensitive to subjects pertaining to salary and advancement. Therefore, it is possible that when using Herzberg's two-factor theory, results are influenced by issues unrelated to a researcher's initial question concerning the participant's job or occupation. It is also vital to know that when using Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, results are often impacted by age, gender, and socioeconomic status (Malik & Naeem, 2013). Since my research did not collect any information on age, I cannot confirm that Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory was impacted by age. However, the lack of financial progression felt by some advisor's thoughts on their advising experience could have been impacted by the salaries they received and their answers to the questions. When it comes to gender, there is a possibility that being a male can influence the results of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory. In my research, Kentucky Advisor I, Ohio Advisor II, and Mississippi Advisor I indicated a noticeable difference in the number of male advisors at their institutions, which could impact how males lived experience with supervisors, colleagues, and salary. However, more research is needed, including a comparative analysis, to test this theory.

Recommendations for Practice

Attention should be given to the design and function of the workplace to increase workplace satisfaction (Lusa et al., 2019). Upper administrators should allow their full-time academic advisors to review the functionality of the office and workstations, which should include software, advising technology, caseloads, and responsibilities to increase satisfaction and limit painful environmental factors or dissatisfiers. Hart-Baldridge's (2020) research suggested that there should be a cultural shift in defining advisors' workload, creating, and establishing clear expectations for advisors, and redistributing services. While Hart-Baldridge's (2020) suggestions were focused on faculty advisors, upper administrators in colleges and universities should review policies related to work responsibilities, student caseloads, and training for full-time professional academic advisors. Moreover, upper administrators should consider conducting joint meetings between faculty and professional advisors to discuss expectations and create conversations about their roles and responsibilities for student success.

According to a demographic survey conducted by NACADA (2019), over 50% of academic advisors identified as White. Researchers using Herzberg's two-factor theory have not included discussions surrounding diversity within an organization (Hsiao et al., 2017). While increased diversity has been found to increase job satisfaction (Hooker & Johnson, 2011), as it currently stands, many states are discussing bills that could limit diversity, equity, and inclusion work within their universities. Historically, advisors and other educators of color have expressed difficulties navigating complexities within higher education to support minority students (Museus, 2021). When universities hire staff from various economic backgrounds, they promote trust and humanize college environments for racially diverse populations (Museus & Mueller, 2018). Therefore, administrators should review hiring practices and policies focusing on increasing diversity among academic advisors and eliminating dehumanizing environments. Hsiao et al. (2017) suggested that organizations should have policies that value, justify, and reward diversity.

Recommendations for Future Research

Academic advisors are leaving the educational advising occupation, and according to Marshall et al. (2016), 50% to 60% of academic advisors leave higher education within the first 5 years. Some of the participants in my research left their institutions for better opportunities at other universities or positions outside of higher education. Academic advisors are seen as the front line of defense for student success; therefore, future research can address how advising attrition impacts student retention rates. Suvedi et al. (2015) researched student perceptions of advisors, which focused on accessibility, knowledge, problem-solving, advising services, the accuracy of the information, and overall satisfaction with advising. However, research should also examine the lived experience of students who have experienced advisor turnover and address student satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Students are more likely to finish their degree with consistent academic advising where they are receiving clear and consistent institutional guidance (Young-Jones et al., 2013). However, if academic advisors leave their institution to pursue better opportunities, how does this exodus impact students' perception of advising and willingness to seek advice from academic advisors?

The participants in my study had various viewpoints related to their experiences with working with faculty advisors. Therefore, more research should examine full-time professional academic advisors' perceptions of faculty advisors. Research can include topics that surround willingness to collaborate and foster meaningful relationships, job descriptions, and responsibilities (Krush & Winn, 2010). Examining professional academic advisors' perceptions, full-time academic advisors could present discrepancies advisors have regarding their role and job functions and hopefully create a better holistic advising experience for students' success.

Two academic advisors mentioned their marital status in my research. Kentucky Advisor I expressed that they did not make enough money as a single person, and their perception could change if they were married. Ohio Advisor III expressed that they were grateful to have a spouse who makes up for the lack of compensation they received at their institution. Ahituv and Lerman

(2011) indicated that marriage has a significant role in wage rates among married men. Moreover, their research suggested that married men have a more significant wage rate than those men who are divorced or single. My research found that most of the academic advising units had little to no male academic advisors within their advising units. Therefore, does the lack of financial security prevent newly graduated single men from entering the field of academic advising?

Upper administrators have a significant role with academic advisors (Menke et al., 2020). However, my research has shown that an academic advisor's relationship with an upper administrator is not always positive. Some of the participants in this research felt that their upper administrators were aloof. Therefore, a more in-depth study should examine academic advisors' perceptions of administrators to review and gather a larger sample to identify issues impacting the relationships between deans, presidents, and academic advisors. A few academic advisors within this group mentioned that performance reviews did not net any positive results and changed the advising office dynamics. According to Menke et al. (2020), generally, advisors do not have to report to upper administration, which could lead to misunderstanding or misinterpretation of what is needed within the academic advising space. No advisor mentioned whether there were any meetings or focus groups that brought upper administrators together with full-time professional advisors to discuss advising and their occupation or professional status. One issue that could cause the separation between advisors and upper administrators is that, according to Menke et al. (2020), upper administrators need to consider academic advising a profession with a history or method of practice.

Conclusion

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenology study was to utilize Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory to understand the lived experience of full-time academic advisors at midsize colleges and universities. Herzberg's theory examines and gains an understanding of the satisfaction that employees experience within their jobs; moreover, Herzberg's theory conveys that employees can experience satisfaction and dissatisfaction at the same time (Alrawahi et al., 2020). This study examined the lived experience of advisors as they navigated motivational factors: achievement, recognition, advancement, responsibility and the work itself or value, and hygiene factors related to academic advising policies, relationship with upper administrators and supervision, salary, interpersonal relationships with faculty advisors and other full-time professional advisors, and work conditions. By utilizing Herzberg's two-factor theory, this research presents a glimpse of what advisors within this research suggested is needed to prevent dissatisfaction (hygiene factors) and what caused academic advisors to experience satisfaction (motivators; Koncar et al., 2022) within midsized institutions.

The only time turnover or potential leaving a university was mentioned due to pursuing promotional opportunities regarding advancement (motivator) and higher salary (hygiene) factors. The participants mentioned that salary, the cost of inflation, lack of advancement, and leaving the advising sector or university for better advancement opportunities caused the participants to evaluate whether to stay within their universities or the advising field. Chait and Panatik (2019) suggested that a lack of motivational and hygiene factors can cause employees to leave or give up their jobs. Motivator factors that led to turnover were a lack of career advancement, which was also found in Welch and Brantmeier's (2021) research. Research from Clayton (2018) suggested that having a benefits package or competitive salary tempered employee turnover. Results from my study indicated that advisors sometimes avoided speaking with upper administration regarding their environment or lived experience with salaries or promotional opportunities, which could limit these issues from being resolved.

While not directly looking to understand the professionalism behind academic advisors, other results indicated inconsistencies between academic advisors, not only between institutions but sometimes between different advising units within the same institution. Himes (2014) mentioned that advisors often provide various answers to advice. However, the definition that describes advising is often vague, especially as it relates to the differences in advising caseload, responsibility, and training. While NACADA has excellent service in professionalizing academic advising, some advisors still need to push for more transparent and distinctive roles (McGill, 2019).

The academic advisor’s experience is complex and ambiguous and can cause burnout and job dissatisfaction (Peach, 2013). Providing a clear distinction of advising roles could lessen the ambiguity, give advisors review standards, and make brackets for advancement. Hopefully, these conversations regarding roles and advancement could lead to less attrition within the academic advising occupation. With the complexity of academic advising and the plethora of academic advising roles (e.g., professional advisors, faculty advisors, and preprofessional advisors), advisors should continue to review their roles, responsibilities, and environmental issues that impact academic advising to improve those environments. The conversations that often stay between advisors should be addressed by upper administration. Harmful interactions will occur between supervisors, advisors, and their colleagues (Herzberg, 1974). One bad interaction can cause dissatisfaction, and upper administrators must mitigate those actions. Herzberg (1974) mentioned that it was not one lousy reaction that caused issues; it was the frequency for which those negative actions occur that the supervisor must investigate and lessen or eliminate. Advisors should start advocating for themselves and be firmer with speaking with upper administrators to resolve issues that cause them to go from satisfied to nonsatisfied and ultimately cause dissatisfaction within their advising workspace and advising field altogether.

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Appendix: IRB Approval

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
328 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29145, Abilene, Texas 79699-9145
325-674-2885

June 29, 2022

Keith Douglas
Department of Graduate and Professional Studies
Abilene Christian University

Dear Keith,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled "Live experience of professional academic advisors: Understanding what impacts turnover intention in their occupation",

(IRB# 22-075) is exempt from review under Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects. If at any time the details of this project change, please advise our office of the change(s) by email, so that the committee can determine whether or not the exempt status is still applicable.

I wish you well with your work!

Sincerely,

Russell P Kruzelock

ACU Vice President of Research

Additional Approvals/Instructions:

The following are all responsibilities of the Primary Investigator (PI). Violation of these responsibilities may result in suspension or termination of research by the Institutional Review Board. If the Primary Investigator is a student and fails to fulfil any of these responsibilities, the Faculty Advisor then becomes responsible for completing or upholding any and all of the following:

- If there are any changes in the research (including but not limited to change in location, members of the research team, research procedures, number of participants, target population of participants, compensation, or risk), these changes must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.
- Report any protocol deviations or unanticipated problems to the IRB promptly according to IRB policy.
- Should the research continue past the expiration date, submit a Continuing Review Form, along with a copy of the current consent form and a new Signature Assurance Form approximately 30 days before the expiration date.
- When the research is completed, inform the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. If your study is Expedited or Full Board, submit an Inactivation Request Form and a new Signature Assurance Form. If your study is Exempt, Non-Research, or Non-Human Research, email orsp@acu.edu to indicate that the research has finished.
- According to ACU policy, research data must be stored on ACU campus (or electronically) for 3 years from inactivation of the study, in a manner that is secure but accessible should the IRB request access.
- It is the Investigator's responsibility to maintain a general environment of safety for all research participants and all members of the research team. All risks to physical, mental, and emotional well-being as well as any risks to confidentiality should be minimized.

For additional information on the policies and procedures above, please visit the IRB website
https://cdn01.acu.edu/community/offices/academic/orsp/human-research/overview.html
or email orsp@acu.edu with your questions.

Our Promise: ACU is a vibrant, innovative, Christ-centered community that engages students in authentic spiritual and intellectual growth, equipping them to make a real difference in the world.