

**Life Satisfaction among Midlife Career Changers:
A Study of Military Members Transitioning to Teaching**

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Abstract

The study explored factors related to life satisfaction for military members transitioning to teaching. Schlossberg's (1981) model of human adaptation to transition was used to articulate the career transition factors of *readiness*, *confidence*, *control*, *perceived support*, and *decision independence*. The Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1992), Satisfaction with Life Scale (Deiner, 1985), demographic variables, and open-ended questions were used to examine relationships.

The data were collected using a secure online survey with a total of 136 usable responses from the Troops to Teachers database. Participants were overwhelmingly male (86%), married (86%), white (79%), and not of Hispanic origin (87%), which were reflective of an earlier Troops to Teachers study (Feistrizer, 2005). A weak correlation was found with life satisfaction and the variables of *confidence* and *control*. Stepwise regression revealed that combined *control* and *readiness* accounted for approximately 16% of the variance in life satisfaction. Additional relationships were noted between time in transition and income, as well as time in transition and support.

Generally, participants were satisfied with life, which may indicate successful adaptation post-military transition. Results supported earlier studies demonstrating that internal/psychological factors (i.e., confidence, readiness, control) are positively linked to successful career transition. However, results did not mirror research on external factors (i.e., support) being related to successful career transition. Participants' insights indicated that preparing for, investing in, and having a positive attitude might benefit others pursuing a mid-life career transition. Further, helping and serving others, recognizing their accomplishments, and finding work/life balance reflected satisfaction in both military and teaching careers. Limitations of the study included low response rates, lack of diversity among the respondents, and findings not generalizable to other populations. Implications for counseling individuals in mid-life military career transitions are to (a) incorporate confidence and control as counseling foci, (b) address social/family and financial supports during transitions, and (c) draw from previous meaningful experiences (i.e., military) to deal with transition. Future research with populations that fully encapsulate stages of transition and are representative of more diversity can further contribute to our understanding of mid-life career transition.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The current economic crisis created the highest unemployment rate in more than 25 years (BLS, 2009). Due to these economic conditions and the natural tendency of individuals to re-evaluate their goals and values at midlife (Levinson, 1978), career counselors were likely to experience an influx of clients desiring to make a career change. Career counselors have a compelling rationale for educating individuals about the integral relationship between career transition and life satisfaction.

Statement of the Problem

Economic Conditions

A release by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS, 2009) reported that the unemployment rate in the United States had reached a level of 9.7% in August of 2009, the highest unemployment rate in our country since 1982. Further, the unemployment rate rose 3.5% in one year from August 2008 at 6.2% to August 2009 at 9.7%. President Obama and the American government responded to this crisis with the establishment of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Department of Labor, 2009). Specifically,

The Act is an extraordinary response to a crisis unlike any since the Great Depression, and includes measures to modernize our nation's infrastructure, enhance energy independence, expand educational opportunities, preserve and improve affordable health care, provide tax relief, and protect those in greatest need. (DOL, 2009)

Details of the Recovery Act included investment projects in a variety of industries including education, energy, health care, and national security. In conjunction with the Workforce Reinvestment Act, the Recovery Act empowered the Department of Labor to implement Adult Employment and Training Activities, Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities, and Worker Training and Placement in High Growth and Emerging Industry Sectors (DOL, 2009).

The current state of unemployment in the U.S. combined with the emerging opportunities for training via the Recovery Act presented a perplexing situation for the American worker considering career change. On one hand, the state of the economy and the unemployment rate suggested that job security for most Americans is tenuous at best. Individuals who hold a job might consider themselves fortunate simply to have one. On the other hand, the instability of current employment conditions coupled with possible job training opportunities created new

possibilities for those who may have been considering career change either by choice or by force. These individuals may be concerned about the security of their job or industry and may have looked towards career change (or “re-careering”) as preparation for the future. These conditions lead many American workers to consider making a career change, which may be achieved through a career transition process.

Personal Choice and Preference

Researchers have studied transition not only in relation to one’s career but including other life roles and events. Research demonstrated that life roles are altered in midlife as individuals seek to maintain balance and find meaning in all areas of life not exclusively their career (Levinson, 1978; Schlossberg, 1997; Super, 1980). In their research on role congruence and role conflict, Perrone, Webb, and Blalock (2005) stated, “In today’s society, individuals are trying to do it all – to find life satisfaction through a combination of multiple roles (e.g., career, marriage, parenting, community)” (p. 225). They went on to state, “Satisfaction in life is related to role congruence, which is the amount of congruence between the level or participation in each life role and the level of commitment to and valuing of that role” (p. 226).

Fewer employers utilize retirement systems and workers are less committed to remaining with an individual employer throughout their lifetime. Employees seek opportunities to learn new skills, update their current skills, and remain flexible (Engles & Harris, 2002). The concept of career adaptability encompassed midlife career changers in that workers were able to adapt to any career change that may develop (Savickas, 1997). Career transitions are no longer seen as advancement opportunities but enrichment opportunities for individuals to expand their skills and experiences in a new and challenging arena (Louis, 1980). Thus, based on the economy, individuals’ natural tendency to seek balance in their life, and a changing vision career commitment, more clients may be considering a career change than previously experienced.

Historical Context

Career transition is not a new phenomenon in the American workforce. Career transition was studied by various career development practitioners as early as the 1950s (Super, Crites, Moses, Overstreet, & Warnath, 1957). With the 1960s and 1970s focus on self-fulfillment and individuality (Louis, 1980) as well as an economic downturn in the 1980s (Heppner, 1991; Heppner, Fuller, & Multon, 1998), researchers paid closer attention to the concept of midlife career transition. Individuals considering midlife career transition seek greater balance or

fulfillment in their lives (Murphy & Burck, 1976). Certain factors contributed to a successful transition, particularly family support and financial resources (Eby & Buch, 1995). Specific types of treatment are helpful, such as grief counseling because individuals experience a type of grieving and loss for their former career, as well as a newness and uncertainty of their new career (Aquilanti & Leroux, 1999).

Nancy Schlossberg's (1981) research is best known for its focus on the transition process. Her model for analyzing human adaptation to transition can be used in any transitional setting such as "graduation, job entry, marriage, birth of one's first child, and bereavement" (Goodman, Schlossberg, & Anderson, 2006, p. 33). Schlossberg also suggested that this transitional framework was useful for subtle transitions, such as being passed over for a promotion or waiting to find a partner. Schlossberg explained that while each transition is different for each individual, the model can be applied equally by the individual or the helper. Four main areas compose the adaptation to transition model, namely (a) transition as a process, (b) characteristics of transition environment and individual, (c) examining resources and deficits, and (d) successful adaptation to transition (Schlossberg, 1981).

Schlossberg's model examined transition as a process, as opposed to an event, by examining pre-transition and post-transition influences as well as duration of the transition (Schlossberg, 1981). Career transition whether planned or unplanned is a process, which may occur over several weeks, months, or years depending on the individual. For example, retiring military members who are returning to the civilian sector may have years to plan their transition, as opposed to an employee in the financial sector who was laid off without warning.

Schlossberg's model also recognized both internal factors (e.g., characteristics of the individual), and external factors (e.g., characteristics of the environment) that may impact one's career transition. As discussed, individuals may be considering career change for internal reasons, such as life balance or uncertainty, or external reasons, such as layoffs or job elimination. These factors were also present in literature specific to career transition, including internal factors (i.e. uncertainty, Aquilanti & Leroux, 1999) and external factors (i.e. financial resources, Eby & Buch, 1995). Reiterating Schlossberg's model, individuals invest and expend a multitude of internal and external influences during their transition (Schlossberg, 1981). For example, family support is viewed as an external influence. If family support is high during the transition process, the transitioning individual is likely to be more successful. However a lack of

family support may hinder the success of their transition. Similar comparisons could be made for internal resources, such as fear or uncertainty. Also, Schlossberg's model as applied in the counseling process required individuals to examine their resources and deficits pertaining to the transition. Individuals in career transition must examine what ultimately contributed to or hindered their success in making the career transition, whether they be internal or external influences. Thus internal and external influences may either support or hinder the transition process.

Finally, Schlossberg's model focused on the client goal of adaptation to the transition (Schlossberg, 1981). Schlossberg (1981) asked poignant questions while developing her model for adaptation to transition. Specifically, Schlossberg states, "What determines whether a person grows or deteriorates as the result of the transition? Why do some people adapt with relative ease, while others suffer severe strain?" (p. 3). She questioned, "Since people react and adapt so different to transitions and since the same person can react and adapt so different at different points in life, how can we understand and help adults as they face the inevitable but non-predictable transitions of life?" (p. 3).

These factors (i.e., transition as a process, internal and external influences, examining resources and deficits, and adaptation) provided the framework for which midlife career changers was studied. While researchers recognize why individuals consider midlife career transition and also understand what factors contribute to a successful transition, researchers rarely ask what a successful career transition may look like. Scholssberg (1981) refers to successful transition as adaptation. Researchers failed to ask if career changers are satisfied with their life since they have made the transition or while they underwent the process. Life satisfaction appeared to be the missing link in understanding midlife career change. As Crow, Levine, and Nager (1990) stated, researchers needed to know if the transition experience is a "homecoming" (p. 204) or is "disenchanted" (p. 212) and "disappointing" (p. 216). Schlossberg's transition model provided a strong foundation upon which to examine life satisfaction among midlife career changers. Therefore, previous research did not address how career transition may be affiliated with one's life satisfaction.

Military Members as Career Changers

Military members provided an opportunity to examine midlife career transition. Many military members separated from the military with 10, 20, or 30 years of service. These

separations were either planned (e.g., retirement, end of service) or unplanned (e.g., dishonorable discharge, disability). Military retirees often did so after a 20-year career and may have entered their second career by the age of 42 or even younger (Wolpert, 2000). At least 83% of retiring military members planned to enter the civilian work force either immediately after their separation or shortly thereafter (Dunning & Biderman, 1973). Military Transition Assistance programs (TAP) focus on post-separation planning and primarily emphasize job search and financial planning with little attention devoted to life satisfaction (Wolpert, 2000).

Military members who have transitioned to teaching presented a unique population from which to look at life satisfaction pertaining to midlife career transition. This population provided access to a group of individuals who demonstrated commitment to their first career (military) and made a conscious decision to transition to their second career (teaching) via teacher education programs (Feistrizer, 2005). Their military commitment indicated some degree of choice or planning in their first career, meaning that they committed to serve in the armed services and upheld that commitment for a designated timeframe and perhaps beyond. The choice of a second career made this population unique in that there is no equivalent K-12 teaching as a military occupational specialty (MOS). While training adults is a component of many MOS positions, the job of educating children under the age of 18 does not encompass any one military specialty. In addition, the training required to enter the classroom as a teacher in most public and private K-12 schools is regulated by state departments of education. Most former military members who transitioned to teaching required some type of certification, training, or expertise in order to teach in the classroom. It is possible that a military member secured such skills prior to his or her military service, yet it is unlikely that those skills and certifications were current post-military service without some level of retraining or recertification. Thus, the population appeared to have consciously selected both their first career and their second career, as opposed to selecting either via chance. The contrast between military service and K-12 teaching provided the setting for a true career change as opposed to simply a task change or job change. This population avoided confounding issues that result from overlapping duties and roles that occur with task changes or position changes (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994) or that may occur by studying individuals who transitioned in and out a variety of careers beyond the military and teaching.

Purpose of the Study

Current economic conditions coupled with human nature create an increasing number of individuals considering career transition either by choice or by necessity (BLS, 2009; Murphy & Burck, 1976). While previous research was conducted on midlife career transition, researchers failed to evaluate how one's life satisfaction may be related to career transition. Using Schlossberg's (1981) model, the issue of life satisfaction among midlife career changers was examined based on four factors, namely (a) viewing transition as a process, (b) identifying the internal and external influences that impact the career transition, (c) examining the deficits and resources pertaining to the transition, and (d) adapting in order to attain a satisfying outcome (Schlossberg, 1981). Exploratory questions were posed to develop the research questions, for example: *Why is one individual satisfied with his or her life post-transition and another distraught? What impact does support from spouses, children, and administration play in life satisfaction pre-transition, mid-transition, and post transition? How does the length of the transition and the amount of time to plan for the transition impact one's life satisfaction throughout the process?*

Given the foci of (a) life satisfaction among midlife career changers and (b) military members transitioning to teaching, the research questions that guided the study were:

1. To what extent is the life satisfaction of military members transitioning to teaching explained by five career transition factors (*readiness, confidence, control, perceived support, and decision independence*)?
2. To what extent did other demographic variables, such as age, gender, marital status, and number of dependents, relate to military personnel's life satisfaction and career transition factors?

Following Schlossberg's (1997) themes of *moving-in, moving-through, and moving-out*, additional research questions pertaining to ***stage of transition*** were discussed. Specifically, data collected identified whether the military member is preparing to leave the military (pre-transition or *moving-in*), currently transitioning from the military to teaching (mid-transition or *moving-through*), or has already begun teaching (post-transition or *moving-out*). Initially, the intention was to study a group of individuals at the pre-, mid-, and post-transition stages, however limitations within the data set preventing this from occurring. Outcomes from data collected will be discussed in the Chapter 4.

Definition of Terms

Specific terms related to this research study were defined and described below.

Adaptation. Schlossberg's (1981) definition of adaptation was used, which stated "Adaptation to transition is a process during which an individual moves from being totally preoccupied with the transition to integrating the transition to his or her life" (p. 7).

Career. Louis' (1980) definition of career was utilized in our research, which stated "In sum then, we will consider a career to be a sequence of role-related experiences accumulated over time. The term career may refer to a work or non work role" (p. 330). While this research study was primarily focused on careers in military service and teaching, other careers could have surfaced throughout the research which meet the above definition and criteria.

Career change. "Career change was operationally defined as expressing an intention, as well as taking preliminary action, that is directed toward leaving an enterprising occupation for any of the other five types of occupations, according to Holland's (1973) classification system" (Weiner & Vaitenas, 1977, p. 707). This same event was used to define career change in this study. Although efforts of this research focused on the careers of military service and teaching, other career fields could have arisen from the research. Thus, any career change intended to leave one of Holland's occupational fields for another was considered a career change for the purpose of this research.

Career transition. Many researchers combined the definition of career transition and career change. For example, Heppner, Multon, and Johnston (1994) stated:

Career transition was operationally defined as any of the following three situations in which these types of career changes were being considered as a possibility: (a) Task change: a shift from one set of tasks to another within the same job and the same location (e.g., a dairy farmer who switches to growing grain), (b) Position change: a shift in jobs, with the same employer or to a different employer or location, but with only a slight shift in job duties (e.g., a secretary moving to a different department within the same company), and (c) Occupation change: a transition from one set of duties to a different set which may include a new work setting (e.g., a farmer becoming a factory worker). (p. 57)

For the purposes of this research, the final definition, occupation change, was considered as defined by Heppner et al. (1994). As defined by Louis (1980), "A career transition is defined as the period during which an individual is either changing roles (taking on different role) or changing an orientation to a role already held. The duration of the period of transition depends in large part upon the extent of difference the changer experiences between new and old roles or

new and old role orientations” (p. 202). Louis’ definition was unique in that it incorporated the element of time into the definition, as opposed to viewing career transition as a single event. This perspective was also shared by Schlossberg (1997) in her theory of adult career development as a transition process. Schlossberg discussed the need for individuals to experience *moving-in*, *moving-through*, and *moving-out* of any transition, including career transitions.

For the purposes of this study, career transition was defined as *an experience occurring over a period of time in which one considers, pursues, adjusts, and ultimately succeeds in making an occupational change*. This definition assumed that the individual will ultimately succeed in making an occupational change but did not exclude those in the process of considering, pursuing, or adjusting to the new career. In addition, the career transition experience did not end with one securing a position in a new career field. Nor did it continue until they consider themselves successful in their new career field. The experience ended when the individual perceives the transition to have been a success, meaning that they functioned well, both in their new position and their life beyond.

Employed. The state of having a job.

Job. Similar to Heppner et al. (1994) definition of “position” given above, *job* referred to an individual’s present employment made up of a variety of tasks which were completed for either for an outside party or themselves. A job need not pay a salary or hourly rate (e.g., homemaker, volunteer) although, for the purpose of this research, job referred to paid employment. Someone who was employed possesses a job, while one who was unemployed did not.

Life role. As noted by Brott (2005), the concept of life roles was generally attributed to Donald Super in his career rainbow model, which included the life roles of child, student, leisurite, citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, and pensioner. Yet Brott pointed out constructivist approaches that emphasized personal meaning of the individual on the experience, as well as one’s role during that experience. While Super’s defined life roles provided a foundational definition for this research, the experience of the individual determined the significance of these roles throughout his/her career transition.

Life role congruence. According to Perrone, Webb, and Blalock (2005), life role congruence was defined as “the level or participation in each life role and the level of commitment to and valuing of that role” (p. 226).

Life satisfaction. Perrone and Civiletto (2004) defined life satisfaction as “a global feeling of contentment, fulfillment, or happiness with life in general” (p. 107).

Midlife. Super, Crites, Moser, Overstreet, and Warnath (1957) discussed the “Establishment” stage as occurring between the ages of 25 and 44. Within that establishment stage, an individual encountered the trial stage (age 25-30) and the stabilization stage (age 31-44). Super discussed the maintenance stage as occurring between ages 45 and 64. Murphy and Burck (1976) suggested that a career renewal stage be inserted in Super’s developmental stages between the ages of 35 and 45. A specific age range did not define midlife in this research; however, stages, similar to Super’s stages of Establishment and Maintenance, were used to determine midlife.

Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). A military occupational specialty, otherwise known as an MOS, was the military career field that one occupied during his or her time of service. Some MOS positions had nearly direct equivalent civilian occupations, such as pilot, auto mechanic, or speech writer. Other MOS positions had minimal to no civilian equivalent occupations, such as artillery rifleman or weapons specialist (Engles & Harris, 2002).

Military personnel. Military personnel included any individual who completed (or was in the process of completing) his or her commitment to the United States military. Our definition would include individuals who retired from service, completed their service, or been released from their service. It included both military officers and enlisted personnel but excluded spouses and children of military personnel, as well as civilians who were employed by military establishments or organizations. Branches of service included Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard.

No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The Department of Education defined the act as “an act to close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility and choice, such that no child is left behind” (Department of Education, 2008). Also known as Public Law 107-110, the act “was signed into law by President Bush on January 8, 2002. Title II, Part C, Chapter A, authorizes the continuation of the Troops-to-Teachers Program for an additional five years. It also modifies the program’s focus by placing emphasis upon the need to make quality teachers available for high-need schools and high-need school districts throughout America” (Troops to Teachers, 2006).

Stage of transition. Stage of transition referred to those who had not yet transitioned to their new career (pre-transition), those in the process of transitioning to their new career (mid-

transition), and those who had already transitioned to their new career (post-transition). Schlossberg discussed the pre-transition and post-transition influences in her adaptation model (1981).

Transition. “A transition can be said to occur if an event or non-event results in a change in assumptions about oneself and the world and thus requires a corresponding change in one’s behavior and relationships” (Schlossberg, 1981, p. 5).

Transition Assistance Programs (TAP). Transition Assistance Programs (TAP) were established in the 1990s with the intention of helping transitioning service members obtain skills to obtain a job in the civilian sector (Wolpert, 2000). The Department of Defense, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Veterans Affairs developed three day workshops to address basic job search skills including “resume writing, interviewing, and dressing in civilian clothes” (Wolpert, 2000, p. 115). TAP programs expanded to include services such as counseling, referral, “relocation assistance, financial planning, spouse employment, and family life education” (Wolpert, 2000, p. 115). Completion of TAP seminars is mandatory for transitioning service members.

Troops to Teachers (TTT). “Reflecting the focus of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the primary objective of TTT is to help recruit quality teachers for schools that serve students from low-income families throughout America. TTT helps relieve teacher shortages, especially in math, science, special education and other critical subject areas, and assists military personnel in making successful transitions to second careers in teaching” (Troops to Teachers, 2006).

Tuition Assistance (TA). Tuition Assistance is a benefit offered to most military members on active duty. Traditionally, the branch of service covered 75% of a member’s education benefits while he or she was on active duty (Vincent, 2001). In 2002, TA coverage increased to 100%. Service members can use TA towards one associate’s degree, one bachelor’s degree, one master’s degree, or one certificate program, including teacher certification.

Veterans Assistance (VA). Veterans Assistance (VA) is an education benefit in which many military members opt to participate. There are several different types of VA programs, with the Montgomery GI Bill being perhaps the most common in recent years. Those who enrolled in the Montgomery GI Bill have their salary decreased by \$100 per month for the first 12 months of their employment with the military. Upon separation, veterans can enroll in

education programs up to 36 months in length and use their GI benefits to cover their expenses. The amount of coverage varies with different circumstances. Prior to the GI Bill, the most common VA program was the Veterans Education Assistance Program (VEAP; Vincent, 2001).

Summary

Individuals experiencing or considering midlife career transition seek life satisfaction and life role balance (Murphy & Burck, 1976). The economic conditions (DOL, 2009) presented an uncertain and unstable time for the American worker, which could have resulted in more individuals experiencing career transition. Career counselors have an obligation to research and understand these transition experiences in order to assist individuals in achieving their goals.

Military members transitioning to the field of teaching presented an ideal population from which to examine midlife career transition and life satisfaction. Their commitment to both first and second careers demonstrated conscientious decisions and efforts in their career transition process, as opposed to selecting either career via chance, circumstance, or convenience. Following Schlossberg's model of human adaptation to transition (Schlossberg, 1981), examining career transition as a process, as opposed to an event, allowed us to look at factors that may be associated with life satisfaction, including internal and external influences, as well as personal resources and deficits. The research intended to examine those approaching the career transition, those in the midst of the career transition, and those who have adapted to the career transition, which is similar to Schlossberg's (1997) *moving-in*, *moving-through*, and *moving-out* mode of transition.

Career transition was defined as *an experience occurring over a period of time in which one considers, pursues, adjusts, and ultimately succeeds in making an occupational change*. Life satisfaction was defined as "a global feeling of contentment, fulfillment, or happiness with life in general" (Perrone & Civiletto, 2004, p. 107). By examining the relationship among a number of variables, the research provided counselors and individuals with a greater understanding of midlife career transition and life satisfaction for midlife military members transitioning to teaching.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The work world has significantly changed over the past 50 years with modern workers experiencing 10 employers throughout their lifetime and re-evaluating their career options nearly as often (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994). The decrease in companies offering pension plans, as well as the increase in transferable 401K plans, demonstrated our developing fluid workforce (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994). Economic conditions indicated that our nation was experiencing the highest unemployment rate in 25 years (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009). In light of recent national tragedies, such as Columbine High School or September 11, 2001, Americans at all ages were re-evaluating their work goals and considering career changes (personal communication with Pat Schwallie-Giddis, October, 2003). This was demonstrated through the increase in military enlistments that the U.S. saw after September 11, 2001 (Defense Finance and Accounting Service, 2007). Adult development theory demonstrated that as individuals approach middle age, they reflect on their accomplishments, re-evaluate their goals and values, and adjust their life towards the future (Levinson, 1978). The conditions of the environment, such as a changing workforce or an economic crisis, coupled with changes in the individual, such as re-evaluation of goals and values, provided increased opportunities for career counselors to assist clients considering midlife career transition and/or seeking life satisfaction. The literature review discussed these constructs as they applied to theory, practice, and this research.

Understanding Career Transition

Understanding career transition was achieved by recognizing how theories of adult development and career development combined to establish career transition theories. Thorough exploration of all adult and career development theories was not required, however understanding key theories in each field provided the foundation upon which career transition was best understood.

Adult Development

Two national best-sellers, Levinson's *Seasons of a Man's Life* (1978) and Sheehy's *Passages* (1976), were credited for drawing attention to the developmental stages and changes of adulthood. Levinson (1978) created one of the first models of adult development, helping to define the midlife years from approximately one's early 20s to late 40s. Specifically, Levinson discussed the "Mid-Life Transition" (p.191) stage which he feels occurs between the ages of 38

and 43. During this phase, Levinson discussed the importance of reappraising the past, where individuals evaluate their life and their values thus far. According to Levinson, the person would then modify his or her life roles, which involve changing one's position in life to better suit what the individual wanted in life or what he or she hoped to achieve. While Levinson's study was credited as being one of the first comprehensive models of adult development, it was also criticized for being limited in scope, as the subjects of his longitudinal study consisted of only 40 white males (Schlossberg, 1985).

Sheehy (1976), originally inspired by one of Levinson's lectures, conducted a series of interviews with men and women, both married and single. Sheehy described the challenges of the "passage into the thirties" (p. 197) addressing issues such as marriage, child rearing, and career advancement for both men and women. She introduced concepts such as a deferred-nurturer or a deferred-achiever to describe the women who postponed their childrearing to have a career and vice versa. She also discussed the aging process and how, despite our career and personal achievements, there comes a time when one knows he or she is getting older (Sheehy, 1976). Although some considered Sheehy's study partially outdated based on the timing of her research (early 1970s when women were recently coming into more equal access to the job market and other benefits), each of the issues discussed has direct implications for midlife career change in current society. Both Sheehy (1976) and Levinson (1978) were among the first researchers to examine developmental issues in adulthood and their theories of adult development impacted those considering midlife career change.

Career Development

The earliest career and vocational development theories provided little guidance for midlife career changers. Parsons was often credited as the father of guidance for his contributions to the development of school guidance programs in the United States (Davis, 1969). Parsons made the first efforts at classifying the vocations, which were later used to match students and careers by matching the traits and factors of the job to the traits and factors of the individual. Despite the focus of his theory on school-aged boys and career classification, Parsons created the Vocation Bureau of Boston in 1908, which provided vocational counseling for "those at school and those at work" (Davis, p. 115), as well as "consultation to people of all ages" (Davis, p. 115). While perhaps secondary to his original mission, Parsons did recognize the importance of satisfaction with one's work and the need for career counseling at later life stages.

Early trait and factor models, as well as early developmental models, assumed that the majority of career development and career decision making was determined early in one's life. Super, Crites, Moser, Overstreet, and Warnath (1957) originally defined the midlife years as a static and stable time. Super's Life Stages model identified the Establishment Stage as occurring between the ages of 25 and 44, with two sub-stages known as Trial (ages 25-30) and Stabilization (ages 31-44). Describing the Establishment Stage, Super stated "Having found an appropriate field, effort is put forth to make a permanent place in it" (Super et al., p. 41). Super is equally concrete in his description of the Maintenance Stage, which occurs between the ages of 45-64. Of the Maintenance Stage, Super stated, "Having made a place in the world of work, the concern is now to hold on to it" (Super et al., p. 41). The early career development models, such as Parsons and Super, were not sufficient to address the needs of the adult client in need of career counseling. This deficit gave rise to theories of career transition, which were designed to incorporate the concepts of career development with the developmental needs of adult populations.

Career Transition

Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma (1950) published their theory of occupational choice based on their collaborative findings in the fields of psychiatry and economics, and later adding psychology and sociology. The population used for their research has been criticized for being limited in scope (Schlossberg, 1985). Ginzberg et al. (1950) intentionally selected students who "had a high, if not optimum, degree of freedom both in range of [occupational] opportunities and in the manner of choice" (p. 175). Specifically, the authors selected males from the "best private schools in New York City; and at the higher levels, they were students of Columbia University whose families were able to support them" (p. 174). They selected students with an IQ of over 130 and "eliminated from our sample all those who showed physical handicaps, came from a broken home, or evidenced overt psychological disturbance" (p. 175). Despite this very narrow and selective population, their research resulted in one of the first theories of occupational choice to recognize length of time in the occupational decision making process (Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, & Herma, 1951). Their theory essentially included a fantasy stage, a tentative stage, and a realistic stage. Ginzberg et al. contend that the process may take more than 15 years to complete. While their research focused on adolescents and young

adults, it was considered one of the first comprehensive models of the career transition process prior to Donald Super.

Holland (1973) was able to take Parson's trait and factor model to a new level by integrating personality, preferences, and the environment into his vocational evaluation. Holland's discussion of personality types (Realistic, Artistic, Investigative, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional) and how they interact with working environments provided the foundation of the well-known assessment, the Self-Directed Search (Holland, 1972). However, Holland made implicit efforts to include midlife individuals and adults in his discussion of career development theory. In the first paragraph of his first chapter, Holland mentioned midlife transition, job dissatisfaction, termination, vocational longings, and retirement – all concepts aimed at the midlife to older worker (Holland, 1973). In addition, Holland began to offer some explanation to midlife workers as to why they may be experiencing these phenomena by introducing concepts such as congruence and consistency in relation to one's individual personality and work environment.

Murphy and Burck (1976) suggested adaptations to better encompass the needs of midlife males, while also avoiding midlife crisis. Murphy and Burck discuss the trend among midlife individuals to question one's life meaning, including work, family, and life decisions. The authors propose that a "renewal stage" (Murphy and Burck, 1976, p. 341) be included between Super's stages of Establishment and Maintenance. Their argument proposed that individuals go through a period of renewing their commitment to life, although not necessarily to their job, at midlife. Thus, they might argue that Super's Maintenance Stage should reflect maintaining balance among all life roles, as opposed to strictly within one's work (Murphy & Burck, 1976).

Super recognized that the Life Stages model did not fully incorporate all stages of career development. His introduction of the Career Rainbow, as well as the Life-Span Life-Space approach, attempted to incorporate life roles, along with arenas, decision making, and career patterns (Super, 1980). Super's Life Space model discussed the nine roles that an individual may occupy during their lifetime including, child, student, leisurite, citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, and pensioner (Super, 1980). Super pointed out that not all individuals play all roles, and discussed how an individual may occupy a number of roles simultaneously. According to Super, these life roles are played out in four arenas including the home, the community, the school, and the workplace. Super explained again that not all people experience

all theatres, as well as the fact that additional theatres, such as the Church or Retirement Home, may be added for some people. Super discussed how each role may occupy more of our time at different stages of life. For example, a 16 year-old may spend more time in the student role than someone who is over 30. He continued to state that the combination of these roles comprise an individual's "life style" and "life-space" (p. 288). He also discussed how the total structure makes up one's career pattern (Super, 1980).

It is unclear what prompted theorists such as Super (1980), Murphy and Burck (1976), Holland (1973), and others to expand their theories to include midlife career change; however, indicators point to the changing face of the American worker between the 1960s and the 1980s. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS, 2004) recently reported that individuals born in the 1950s and 1960s held an average of 10.2 jobs between the years of 1979–1994, challenging the assumptions of Super's Establishment and Maintenance Stages. While some of these statistics implied voluntary job changes among workers, many workers may have been forced to change jobs due to unemployment or the inability to find work. A BLS study from 1978-2002 found that 23.6% of individuals without a high school diploma had ten or more periods of unemployment, compared to only 3.6% of those with a bachelor's degree (BLS, 2004).

Further refinements in career transition theories evolved during the 1980s and 1990s. Schlossberg (1985) discussed cultural, developmental, transitional, and life-span perspectives for both men and women in transition. In discussing cultural implications, she explained how the culture of an occupation, such as farmers, may impact other areas of one's life (i.e., family, marriage, or community relations). She also explained how our society's values may impact adult career development, including the inclination to promote those with bachelor's degrees beyond those without. Developmental models discussed by Schlossberg included Levinson's (1978) work, but also Gilligan's female perspective of career development, including an appreciation for moral development, caring, and interdependence (Gilligan, 1982). The transitional perspective introduced us to the "social clock" (Schlossberg, 1985, p. 5) that is imposed upon us by society, dictating milestones, such as graduation, marriage, careers, and children. Schlossberg's Life-Space perspective examined career development over time and embraced change throughout one's life. In addition to discussing these theories, Schlossberg (1985) provided techniques to implement them. Schlossberg was best known for her research on the transition process. Other items that provoked career change include the importance of self-

respect and the need to feel meaningful. Her transition model provided the framework for this research and is described further in the Models of Career Transition section.

Edwin Herr (1997) also suggested refinements to Super's theory, including the need for incorporating economic, geographic, cultural, and gender differences, as well as the need for improved assessment tools. Herr (2002) addressed technology along with the future implications of adult career development. Herr's discussion emphasized that, prior to 1995, there was no regular access to the internet in the work force. Individuals were generally attached to their place of employment in one way or another. As new technologies emerge, our society finds more virtual and distance employment opportunities. This has impacted the way that individuals find work and experience work (Herr, 2002). Other implications for the midlife career changer included the fact that the career ladder has become less of a ladder and more of a gradual slope. As opposed to seeking careers that provide more growth and advancement opportunities, the average individual is entering and exiting jobs in efforts to expand one's skills, interests, and experiences (Herr, 2002). This practice of rapid lateral job changing altered the landscape of the midlife career changer where job changes may become more common and expected by employers.

Counseling Techniques for Midlife Career Changers

The foundational theories of career transition lead to the mortar of counseling practices and implications. As researchers discovered the unique needs that adults bring to the career development process, practitioners began implementing corresponding techniques during their counseling sessions with midlife career changers. Traditional approaches such as trait and factor theories were not sufficient to address the complex needs of this population. An emergence of contemporary approaches that included limiting assessment, gender issues, values formation, grief counseling, and constructivist approaches sprung up which allowed the midlife career changer multiple options for successful career counseling outcomes. The following literature addresses these concepts.

Traditional Counseling Techniques

Super discussed the application of the Life Career-Rainbow with clients (Super, 1980). Specifically, Super discussed using the model to help students and adults understand the impact of life roles on their career decisions. He also recommended helping clients to see how self-actualization can be achieved through a variety of roles, not simply career. He recommended

using the Life-Career Rainbow to help clients analyze their own careers thus far, but also project into the future such that clients may visualize their life roles and career goals in years to come (Super, 1980).

Contemporary Counseling Techniques

Brown (1995) advocated for a values-based approach that emphasized value formation, prioritization, and role relationships. This emulated Levinson's earlier discussion on midlife transition, including reappraising the past and modifying life roles (1978). Brown stated, "For a job to be satisfying, it must allow the individual to engage in activities they believe are worthwhile, which in turn allows them to compare themselves favorably with others" (Brown, 1995, p. 4). Brown suggested counselors can help clients formulate values that are well defined. He suggested a variety of mechanisms, such as projection and sentence finishing, that help clients formulate values. Once values are defined, Brown recommended helping clients place priority on their values, considering the impact in their work life, home life, family life, and social life. Utilizing Super's approach to life-roles, Brown encouraged clients to examine their life roles and to determine which values are paramount in each circumstance. Brown takes his approach a step further by discussing both planned career transition and unplanned career transition (Brown, 1995). Values-based counseling is a holistic approach that has begun to impact the realm of career work. Its comprehensive nature is well-suited to the midlife career changer who may be facing competing demands and roles, along with changing values.

Constructivist approaches also have an implication for midlife career changers. Brott (2004) discussed a constructivist assessment approach that incorporates adult development. Outlining the "Storied Approach" to constructivist assessment, Brott provided an approach which helps the client "shift from finding a job to finding one's self" (Brott, 2004, p. 190). Brott's Storied Approach presented the counseling process in three phases as (a) co-construction, (b) de-construction, and (c) construction. During the first and second phases, the client shares past and present experiences or "stories" while also diving in to discover connections among them. During the third phase, the client is invited to envision and craft the future, including personal goals and development. Brott provided examples of qualitative assessments from the Storied Approach perspectives including Life Lines, Card Sorts, Life Role Circles, and Goal Maps (Brott, 2004). Brott (2005) explained a variety of constructivist techniques to help clients examine their life roles in relation to career aspirations. For example, utilizing a life line

technique, a counselor can encourage the client to talk about his/her life experiences from birth to the present day. For the midlife client, that time frame could incorporate a variety of roles, including student, child, worker, parent, and citizen. By asking the client to discuss the ups and downs at various chapters of his/her life, the counselor has an opportunity to evaluate the joys and sorrows as well as the accompanying events that contribute to the client's life satisfaction.

Concepts of understanding and perception shaped Savickas' (1997) functional approach to Super's theory of career adaptability. Savickas argued that career adaptability should replace career maturity as a central component of career development theory (Savickas, 1997); essentially stating that adaptability allows an individual to move through multiple career transitions with minimal difficulty. Savickas argued that factors such as planning and decision making, which were always foundations of career maturity, should continue to be paramount in measuring career adaptability. Since career maturity was originally intended as a young adult measurement, career adaptability has more utility throughout the life span. In addition, techniques such as planning and decision making allowed counselors and clients to view career planning from a life planning perspective, fully incorporating all of one's life roles in society (Savickas, 1997).

Mitchell, Levin, and Krumboltz (1999) discussed the concept of "Planned Happenstance" in relation to unexpected career opportunities. Specifically, the authors encouraged clients (and counselors) to embrace chance and risk in their career development. Planned happenstance calls for counselors to assist clients in developing curiosity, persistence, flexibility, optimism, and risk-taking in relation to their career development (Mitchell, Levin, & Krumboltz, 1999). Planned happenstance encourages the undecided client to be undecided, yet to create opportunities for risk and chance that may open doors to learning and self-discovery (or career prospects). Based on the current economic conditions in the United States, American workers should be prepared for the unexpected, and perhaps embrace the change as suggested by the concept of planned happenstance.

Grief and loss counseling have become a central focus for many practitioners working with displaced or downsized workers or those dealing with unexpected job loss. In truth, individuals experiencing both planned and unplanned career change have benefited from understanding the grief process as described by Kubler-Ross (1969). In her study of terminally-ill patients, Kubler-Ross identified five stages of the grieving process which include denial,

anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. According to Kubler-Ross, patients pass through all of these stages at one point or another, even simultaneously, while confronting their death. Aquilanti and Leroux (1999) incorporated Kubler-Ross' stages of grief into the Aquilanti Integrated Model (AIM), stating that individuals who are experiencing job loss will often go through the grief process, much like those who are grieving the death of a loved one. Specifically, individuals will grieve not only the job they had previously but the identity associated with that job, particularly if there is no chance of returning to the same career, such as those who are physically unable to continue in their previous career (e.g., athletes, firefighters).

Brammer and Abrego (1981) proposed a coping-model for all transitions, not those specifically related to career change. The authors presented a table of Basic Coping Skills for Managing Transitions, which is divided into two levels. Level I included "psychological survival skills" (p. 26) and level II included skills that "enrich the person's existence and lead to potentially higher levels of satisfaction and effectiveness" (p. 26). The detailed coping processes and action items (i.e., "5.32 Identify negative self-statements which interfere with implementing plans," p. 27) aid the practitioner in assessing the client's ability to cope with the transition (Brammer & Abrego, 1981). The authors closed with a variety of self-help organizations, such as Widowed Lifeline, Rape Relief, and Alcoholics Anonymous that provide support to individuals in transition. While Brammer and Abrego (1981) did not specifically examine midlife career transition, their staged-evaluation of coping mechanisms assisted both clients and counselors in measuring success.

McAuliffe (1993) explained how an individual's ability to understand self, interpersonally and institutionally, can impact one's decision making and career transition. Utilizing a cognitive-constructivist framework, McAuliffe looked at how individuals make sense out of the changes they are experiencing. More specifically, McAuliffe addressed the role of the counselor during career transition, encouraging counselors to confront and challenge client assumptions regarding career choices and career changes. According to McAuliffe, counselors can best serve clients by allowing them to understand the external and internal perspectives that are shaping their career decisions. McAuliffe's focus on interpersonal and institutional understanding was similar to Schlossberg's (1985) concepts of internal and external resources, as well as one's perception of the transition.

Scott (2002) argued holding off on traditional career models, such as assessment, before addressing personal concerns of the client. He felt this was important due to their limited ability to address career-related fears (e.g., self-confidence or barriers to employment), as well issues relating to their other roles (e.g., parent or caregiver). Scott discussed adults returning to school in order to advance or change careers. He stated, “A career is more than just an occupation. It is the story of one’s life. It encompasses one’s hopes and dreams and it is interwoven with all aspects of their life” (Scott, 2002, p. 215). Scott’s approach included first talking to clients to get a better understanding of their life circumstances, including personal or family issues. Yet Scott also recognized that all clients may not be interested in discussing personal issues, only those related to career development. Thus, Scott ascertained that foundational knowledge in career development practices is essential. This practical knowledge of career techniques, such as networking, interviewing, or conducting a job search, gave counselors credibility with clients and allowed clients to feel comfortable with the information they may be receiving. While Scott suggested holding off on assessments, he did recognize the need for assessments based on when the client is ready, as opposed to on the counselor’s agenda (Scott, 2002). Finally, he cautioned counselors that, despite most counselors’ best efforts, “assessment” will almost always equate to “test” for the client. For the adult client who has been out of the classroom for several years, the concept of measuring skills and abilities may appear daunting.

Models of Career Transition

Career transition theory and techniques have been discussed as a solid foundation to this study on midlife career transition and life satisfaction. The following models of career transition provided the framework that was used to envision the theoretical and practical applications. By outlining these models, themes were identified the framework for understanding career transition and life satisfaction and were ultimately be included in the research design.

Schlossberg

Schlossberg openly acknowledged that there are many facets to transition (Schlossberg, 1981). She attempted to organize the many facets of transition into her model of Analyzing Human Adaptation to Transition. Schlossberg acknowledged the transition itself as having tremendous breadth and depth. Transition was introduced in a variety of forms including an “event or nonevent resulting in change or assumption” (p. 5) as well as a “Change in social networks resulting in growth or deterioration” (p. 5). According to Schlossberg, the manner in

which an individual adapt to transition involved several factors, which she classified into three areas: (a) perception of the transition, (b) characteristics of the environment, and (c) characteristics of the individual. Within each area, several sub-factors exist. For example, perception of the transition may include areas such as the timing, on-set, or duration of the transition, as well as the degree of stress that the individual perceives the transition to have. Characteristics of the environment included support from family, support from the institution, or the physical setting. Characteristics of the individual included areas such as psychological competence, age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, values or experience. All three areas impact adaptation to transition. Adaptation depended on the ability to “balance individual resources and deficits” as well as the perception of “pre and post transition environments” (p. 5).

Schlossberg’s 1984 model of individual transition was originally introduced in her book, *Counseling Adults in Transition*. Now in its third edition, Goodman, Schlossberg, and Anderson (2006) adapted the model as shown in Figure 2.1, and termed the model the “4 S’s of Individual Transition.” A consistent theme in the model viewed transition as a process that occurs over time. This was indicated by the individual’s approach to the transition, as well as his or her movement through the transition. The model includes a focus on resources including the individual/self, the transition/situation, and support. In this model, Schlossberg emphasized the importance of one’s approach to the transition (including events and non-events as stated earlier), as well as the type of transition, context of the transition, and impact of the transition. The model uniquely presented the concepts from the model of Analyzing Human Adaptation to Transition, while also outlining the resources that an individual needed to persevere through the transition. Like other models to be discussed, Schlossberg’s models alluded to a goal of successful or satisfying client transition, but failed to provide insight or information on how the client or counselor should recognize that satisfaction or success once it occurs.

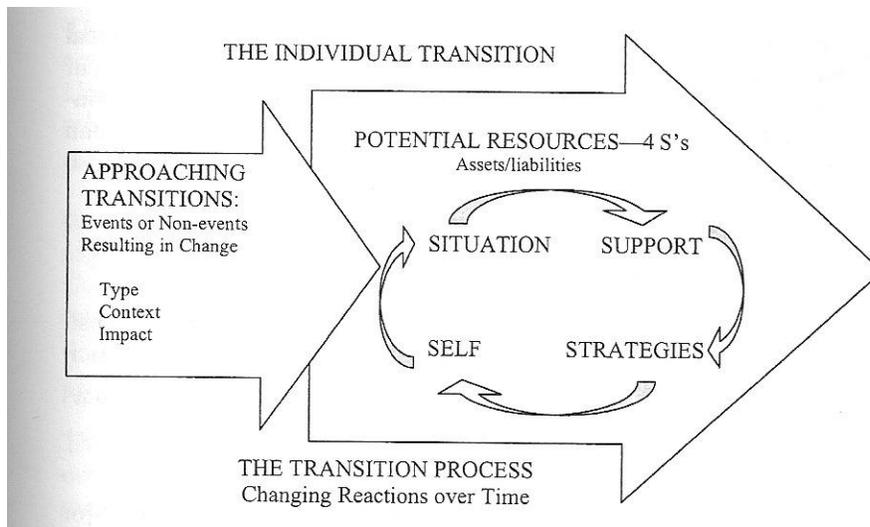


Figure 2.1: Schlossberg's Model of Individual Transition (2006)

Source: From "Counseling Adults in Transition" by J. Goodman, N.K. Schlossberg & M. L. Anderson. Copyright © 2006 Springer Publishing Company. Reproduced with the permission of Springer Publishing Company, LLC, New York, NY 10036

An important dimension in both of Schlossberg's models was the inclusion of non-events, which include situations that are expected to occur, however, do not materialize (Schlossberg, 1981). This concept was particularly relevant when considering those in career transition since the job search or a career transition may not be as fruitful as expected. In this case, individuals experienced a sense of loss, for something they never actually held, as symbolized in the AIM (Aquilanti & Leroux, 1999). Permission to reproduce Figures 2.1 and 2.2 is contained in Appendix G.

Aquilanti Integrated Model (AIM)

Many businesses and private corporations have moved toward an outplacement model of counseling to serve the career development needs of their downsized employees. Aquilanti and Leroux (1999) introduced the Aquilanti Integrated Model (AIM). Unlike traditional outplacement models, AIM addressed the personal tragedy of job loss (i.e., grief and loss) before addressing personal development or job search needs. Specifically, Aquilanti and Leroux incorporated outplacement models, developmental career theory, transition theory, and grief counseling. The circular "bulls-eye" (p. 185) representation of the model placed the client at the center of attention, while surrounding the client with a myriad of services, including grief counseling, transition issues, personal development, job search skills, and ongoing counseling,

Latack

Latack, Kinicki, and Prussia (1995) examined coping methods for dealing with the stress of job loss in a related study. Specifically, they propose that individuals view job loss from four perspectives: economic, psychological, physiological, and social. For each of these four perspectives, an individual facing job loss should possess both a goal and feedback. The individual can compare one's goal with the feedback to determine if the job loss poses harm or threat. This decision was impacted by the manner in which the person possessed coping skills, utilized resources, and were efficient throughout their transition. These characteristics or their development supplemented coping strategies, which in turn influenced one's goals and feedback on the four perspectives mentioned (Latack, Kinicki, & Prussia, 1995).

Latack (1984) developed an earlier model of career transition as a stress-coping process. Identifying items such as "taking action on the stressor" (p. 299) or "cognitive reappraisal of the situation" (p. 299), Latack examined that manner in which those in transition adapt to job stress and job performance. Measuring a variety of variables, such as the magnitude of the career transition (i.e., change in job, position, occupational field, function, level or any combination of the above), coping strategies, job performance, and job related stress, Latack found that those experiencing transition in their personal life often adjusted better to career transition. While more significant career transitions correlated positively with more job stress, there was no correlation between job stress and job performance. Latack found that those making a greater career transition had less role overload than those making smaller career transitions (Latack, 1984). This was perhaps due to the fact that a larger transition may indicate a greater disparity among previous and present job duties. In contrast, smaller transitions, perhaps within an organization or even a single department, may have perpetuated overlap among previous and present roles.

Consistent themes are present in a variety of the career transition models presented. *Transition as a process* is present in Schlossberg's 1981, 1984, and 2005 models, as well as Latack's 1984 model and Latack, Kinicki, and Prussia's 1997 model. *Internal and/or psychological resources* are visible in all models, although perhaps termed differently by each researcher. Aquilanti discussed this during an individual's personal development, while Schlossberg's discussed psychological resources, and Latack discussed coping skills. *External or environmental influences* consistently appear, particularly when discussing social supports or the transition environment. While all models have an underlying implication of successful transition,

only Schlossberg's (1981) model of Human Adaptation to Transition specifically outlines the goal of *successful adaptation to the transition*, as well as reflecting on the transition both before and after it occurs. These consistent themes are the concepts which encapsulate the career transition models previously discussed. The following section reviews additional literature to support these themes, while building a solid structure for our research on midlife career transition and life satisfaction.

Supporting Themes in Career Transition

The following themes emerged when examining the literature on career transition models: (a) *transition as a process*, (b) *internal and psychological factors*, (c) *external and environmental factors*, and (d) *successful adaptation to the transition* (Aquilanti & Leroux, 1999; Latack, 1984; Latack, Kinicki & Prussia, 1995; Schlossberg, 1981.). Each of these themes was supported by research that pertains to career transition and life satisfaction.

Transition as a Process

Schlossberg (1997) discussed the importance of *moving in*, *moving through*, and *moving out* to describe the transition process. Specifically, the *moving in* process incorporated the learning and adaptation of one to a new role. While the *moving in* had particular applications for career transitions, such as learning the job, office etiquette, and industry norms, it also applied to other life roles, such as parent, spouse, student, or neighbor. During the *moving through* phase, Schlossberg discussed the traps of burning out, competing demands, and experiencing boredom. Again, this phase could be described in relation to the job (i.e., excessive hours/duties with no recognition or appreciation) or in life (i.e., caring for children and parents, as well as on-the-job customers). The *moving out* phase was described as a loss of identity or a loss of lifestyle. As with all of Schlossberg's stages, this phase applied to both one's career and one's personal life. While individuals who have retired or changed jobs often describe a grieving process for their former job, individuals who leave other life roles may also grieve in a similar way. For example, the couple with a new baby may find that friends without children come around less often once the baby arrives, or the recently divorced woman finds that visits with her married friends are awkward and uncomfortable (Sheehy, 1976). Schlossberg suggested interventions for all of the transition processes described, including the unemployed or those who have "fallen through the cracks" (p. 99). Figure 2.2 demonstrates the concept of moving-in, moving through, and moving

out as outlined by Goodman, Schlossberg, and Anderson's (2006) the integrative model of the transition process.

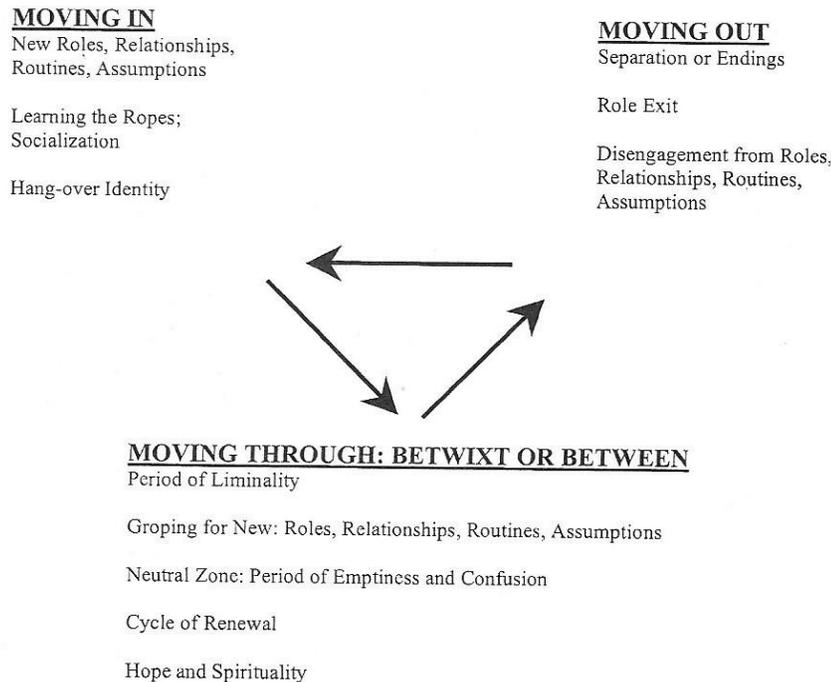


Figure 2.2 Integrative model of the transition process

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Few longitudinal studies have examined midlife career issues. The exception was Jepsen and Choudhuri's (2001) 25-year study of 170 rural high school graduates regarding occupational career patterns (OCPs). The researchers captured data in 1973, 1980, 1986, 1992, and 1998 (Jepsen & Choudhuri), receiving an almost 75% response rate. They found that nearly two-thirds of the participants had "changing occupational career patterns (OCP)" (p. 5), meaning that these individuals had changed careers in a manner which would classify a change of Holland's vocational code (i.e., Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Entrepreneurial, and Conventional), as opposed to those with stable OCP's. The researchers noted that those who changed careers often did so after the age of 25, when an individual may be removed from the career guidance support provided by academic institutions. Thus, with little "formal" support, many individuals are forced to manage this transition on their own. Of those with changing OCPs, individuals reported changing for both advancement and exploratory reasons. In addition, individuals with changing OCPs were generally more satisfied with their job and expressed greater satisfaction with their 25-year post high school career (Jepsen & Choudhuri, 2001).

While the Jepsen and Choudhuri's (2001) study offered little diversity in relation to race and geographic region, two variables that Jepsen and Choudhuri did examine were gender and socioeconomic status. They found that women had more changing career patterns than men and that they also had greater midlife career satisfaction than men. Yet socioeconomic status had no impact on midlife career satisfaction. Beginning their study in the mid-1970s, the researchers had an opportunity to document the immense changes and opportunities that were being newly afforded to women in the U.S. Thus, changing occupational patterns for women may be due to the mere ability to change and the feeling of choice and flexibility that the transition provides. No relationship was found between socioeconomic status and midlife career transition (Jepsen & Choudhuri, 2001).

Internal and Psychological Factors

Internal and psychological factors were present in a multitude of terms throughout our career transition models. Latack (1984) and Latack, Kinicki, and Prussia (1995) discussed coping methods as a primary psychological resource. Coping may include action, cognitive reappraisal, and symptom management (Latack, 1984), as well as control, escape or seeking social support (Latack, Kinicki, and Prussia, 1995). Aquilanti and Leroux viewed internal factors as "personal development" and "job seeking skills" (Aquilanti & Leroux, 1999. p. 185), which implied that these factors may be learned or developed. Schlossberg included internal factors throughout her models, such as "personal growth, deterioration, psychological competence, values, movement, and resources/deficits" (Schlossberg, 1981. p. 5).

Other researchers have discussed a variety of internal/psychological factors including stress, depression, confidence, and control (Heppner, Cook, Stozier, and Heppner, 1991); frustration and stagnation (Perosa & Perosa, 1983); goal instability, self-esteem, interest patterns, and career indecision (Robbins, 1987); personality traits (Heppner, Fuller, and Multon, 1998); and personal characteristics (Latack & Dozier, 1986) in relation to how this factors impact transition. An individual's mental health in relation to career transition is another area that appeared in the literature.

Mental health issues and resources. Heppner, Cook, Stozier, and Heppner (1991) examined the relationship between coping styles and occupational barriers. Utilizing farmers experiencing involuntary career transition, the researchers used counseling instruments, such as the Problem Solving Inventory (Heppner, 1988), Ways of Coping Scale (Aldwin, Folkman,

Schaefer, Coyne, & Lazarus, 1980), My Vocational Situation (Holland, Daiger, & Power, 1980), and Beck Depression Inventory (Beck, 1967) to explore how displaced farmers were coping with career transition. Their research looked at levels of stress and depression, as well as feelings of progress and control. Heppner et al. (1991) found significant differences in the coping styles of men and women. According to the researchers, men reported greater feelings of progress, confidence, and control when compared to women. In addition, women experienced greater levels of stress, which earlier studies indicated could be related to role overload (Heppner, Cook, Strozier, & Heppner, 1991). The impact of unemployment and education on domestic farmers prompted Heppner, Multon, and Johnston (1994) to define career transition for the purpose of their research. Working with displaced farm workers in Missouri, Heppner et al. developed the *Career Transition Inventory* to help identify transition barriers to employment for displaced workers. The *Career Transition Inventory* is an instrument to assess an individual's perceived psychological resources and barriers in relation to career transition (Heppner, 1991). These factors, where high scores indicate resources and low scores indicate barriers, are recorded on the following scales: confidence, readiness, support, control, and independence (Heppner, 1991). The factors of confidence and readiness would be clearly classified as internal or psychological factors, however other factors, including support, control and independence would be classified as external factors.

Perosa and Perosa (1983) conducted research on voluntary career changers and the psychological impact of the change. Their subject groups included those who had voluntarily changed careers, those who were in the process of changing by enhancing their credentials, and those who had a desire to change but were still in their present position. To qualify for their study, individuals in each group had to have voluntarily sought a career change, been in their previous career at least five years, and possess a bachelor's degree (Perosa & Perosa, 1983). Due to the voluntary nature of their career change, none of their subjects reported feelings of numbness or shock. Their results did include experiences of frustration, stagnation, and depression. For the males who had already changed careers, "They tended to give up careers in business, sales or engineering for careers in teaching, psychology, and social work" (p. 76). "Females tended to seek Ph.D.'s or look to careers in engineering, law or business" (p. 76). Each individual who was interviewed participated in a process of self-evaluation. Those who had not yet changed careers anticipated some type of serious risk, such as less money or lack of job

security, if they did indeed make the change (Perosa & Perosa, 1983). These external risks as described by Perosa and Perosa reflect external factors, much like Heppner's (1991) factors of control and independence.

Robbins (1987) examined the goal instability, self-esteem, interest patterns, and career indecision of individuals in order to predict a change in career indecision. While he utilized college students in his study as opposed to midlife career changers, his research indicated that age was not a significant predictor in relation to career indecision. Utilizing 107 college students in a career and life planning classes, subjects completed the Goal Instability Scale (GIS) (Robbins and Patton, 1985), Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1979), Strong-Campbell Interest Inventory (Campbell and Hansen, 1981), and the Career Decision Scale (CDS) (Osipow, 1980). Specifically, Robbins stated "people with high goal instability and low self-esteem may be better served in personal counseling before referral for career focused counseling is made" (p. 295). Unfortunately, these outcomes may help to perpetuate the myth that personal concerns should be separate from career concerns.

Utilizing the NEO Five Factor Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1989) and the Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991), Heppner, Fuller, and Multon (1998) examined relationships between psychological factors and career domains for individuals undergoing involuntary career transition. The Career Transitions Inventory examines an individual's perceived barriers to re-employment, such as readiness, confidence, control, perceived support, and decision independence. Heppner et al. found that an individual's personality may be a factor during the career transition process. Specifically, "openness to experience" (p. 335) proved to be positively correlated to an individual's readiness, confidence, control, perceived support, and decision independence. Other positive correlations included extraversion and confidence as well as conscientiousness and readiness. Conversely, neuroticism was negatively correlated with factors of readiness, confidence, control, and perceived support. In addition, agreeableness was negatively correlated with confidence. Thus, individuals who exhibit disagreeable, neurotic, or introverted behaviors may have more difficulty successfully managing the career transition process.

Human resources professionals within the business industry have also examined the impact of midlife career change on its employees. Discussing the impact of job loss, whether due to downsizing or termination, Latack and Dozier (1986) examined the relationship between job

loss and career growth. Specifically, the authors included characteristics of the individual, the environment, and the transition in their model for career growth. Latack and Dozier defined career growth as the ability to make a transition and a gain from the experience, for example “Are you better off now?” (Latack & Dozier, p. 380). In examining individual characteristics, those who maintained a high activity level and resolved their grief and anger were more likely to grow from the job loss experience. In addition, those who were dissatisfied or disconnected with their previous jobs are less likely to experience “the stress, depression, low self-esteem” (Latack & Dozier, 1986, p. 381) and other factors normally associated with job loss.

Physical health issues and resources. Latack (1984) also examined career transitions within an organization and began to draw the link between the stress of changing jobs and physical ailments, including coronary disease. Despite the fact that increased stress often accompanies a major career transition, Latack (1984) did not find a correlation between stress and job performance. This could indicate that individuals were operating at a higher stress-level on a daily basis, yet managed to cope with their job duties. The situation begs the question as to what other areas of the individual’s life (e.g., health, marriage) were being impacted by the rising stress level, if not job performance?

Lerner, Levine, Malspeis, and D’Agostino (1994) noted that the relationship between job stress and physical health may be related to an individual’s control over his/her job. In their analysis, individuals who were in jobs that had high demands and limited control over their environment were deemed to be in “high strain” (p. 1580) jobs. Individuals in these positions were more prone to cardiovascular disease, risk factors for cardiovascular disease (such as increased blood pressure, smoking, and obesity), sleep problems, depression, and psychosomatic problems (p. 1580). Individuals who rated themselves higher on job strain tended to rate themselves lower on physical functioning, vitality, social functioning, and mental health. In contrast, those in the low strain or passive groups were 60-80% more likely to rate themselves higher in these health areas. Those who experienced job insecurity or physically demanding work were likely to have poorer health in several areas. Their study was limited, however, by the fact that participants self-reported health concerns, as opposed to medical practitioner reports (Lerner, Levine, Malspeis, & D’Agostino, 1994).

Strazdins, D’Souza, Lim, Broom, and Rodgers (2004) examined the impact of job stress when combined with employee impressions of job insecurity. Their research yielded similar

results in that those individuals who expressed the highest job stress and perceived insecurity reported dramatically higher proportions of physical and mental health problems than those with lower stress or lower perceptions of job insecurity. For example, of those in the low job pressure group, 4% reported depression or anxiety and 11% reported physical health problems. For those in the high pressure area (meaning either high job stress or high job insecurity), 18% were depressed, 14% were anxious, and 22% reported problems with physical health. When individuals reported both high job stress and high job insecurity, the numbers increased dramatically with 50% reporting depression or anxiety and 41% reporting physical health problems. The authors were able to control for some environmental influences. For example, since lower socioeconomic status has also been shown to increase job stress and job instability, the researchers limited their subjects to those with high SES. They also surveyed participants for major life events which could have contributed to self-reports such as termination, bereavement, and significant life changes. The addition of job insecurity presented unique challenges when considering the issues of job stress and health because an employee's perception of insecurity is shaped by factors beyond the employer such as the global economy (Strazdins, D'Souza, Lim, Broom, & Rodgers, 2004).

Barnett and Marshall (1993) examined physical health in relation to men only. However, in addition to looking at their job role pressures, they also examined their family role pressures, including roles as spouse/partner and father. The researchers point out that previous research on job stress for men has essentially ignored any other relationship than that with their job, yet research on women's job stress generally includes their relationships with spouses or children. Similar to other research on job stress, the researchers found that positive perceptions of one's job role and one's family role generated positive perceptions of one's health. In contrast, negative perceptions of one's job or family role often correlated with lower perceptions of one's health (Barnett & Marshall, 1993).

External and Environmental Factors

External and environmental factors, much like internal and personal factors, were evidenced in several career transition models. Schlossberg included external factors in the areas of "support systems, family, physical setting, and factors of the transition" (Schlossberg, 1981, p. 5). Latack characterized external factors as feedback from other sources (Latack, Kincki, & Prussia, 1995) and the magnitude of the transition (Latack, 1986). Aquilanti and Leroux (1999)

viewed almost all interventions as being external to the client, including “personal development/job search, ongoing counseling and support” (p. 185).

Researchers have discussed *external/environmental factors* in a variety of studies dealing with family (Chusid & Cochran, 1989; Eby & Buch, 1995; Latack & Dozier, 1986; Simmilink, 2004.), financial support and timing (Latack & Dozier, 1986), and organizational response to job loss (Cameron, Freeman, & Mishra, 1991). Historical and societal events have been discussed by Brown (1995), while others have discussed the concepts of ageism (Newman, 1995) and gender issues (Chae, 2002).

External issues and resources. Often individuals will report problems at home, with family and with their partners in relation to their career change. Chusid and Cochran (1989) found that family dramas can be reenacted in the work setting. They stated “the relationship with one’s family of origin is ongoing and often seems to shift as one changes occupations” (p. 39). Utilizing interviews and Q sorts with career changers, the authors found that career changers were seeking to perform in a new family role but that desire was often interrupted by family values, dramas, or expectations (Chusid & Cochran, 1989). As family units or partnerships develop over time, the career change of one member may significantly alter the cohesion of the relationship. In addition, the transitioning member may have a different, or isolated, vision of the change that is occurring. The ability of the client to view change, both within himself and his relationships, was the subject of additional research.

Simmelink (2004) discussed the issue of “lifestyle loss” among those in career transition. She defined lifestyle loss as “an involuntary change in one’s personal standard of living due to diminished income and the removal of perceived status” (Simmelink, 2004, p. 1). Simmelink cautioned practitioners working with those who have been displaced to be aware of stress, embarrassment, and frustration regarding their life circumstances. Often times, reduction of physical resources or amenities may be overwhelming for the individual, as well as one’s family. Simmelink encouraged counselors to recognize the grieving process as identified by Kubler-Ross (1969), including the impact on the family. Individuals and their families may mourn not only their previous comfortable lifestyle but also the loss of identity that is associated with it. Simmelink (2004) recommended a variety of counselor interventions including working with clients on self-validation, voluntary simplicity, and financial planning.

Eby and Buch (1995) found certain conditions to be predictive of career growth as a result of job loss. One of these conditions was family flexibility. Utilizing Latack and Dozier's 1986 model of career growth after job loss, Eby and Buch found that family flexibility was the most likely to produce career growth in women. For men, avoiding long term financial impact was the most likely to produce career growth. Other factors, such as increased activity level, acceptance of job loss, and low-satisfaction with previous job, all contributed to job growth (Eby & Buch, 1995).

The timing of the job loss in relation to one's professional career may also impact the ability to grow from the experience. Those later in their careers may be less likely to find employment or may not advance once they are reemployed. Those early in their careers may be intimidated and embarrassed by the experience at such a new phase in their lives. Environmental factors, such as sufficient financial means and family support, also enhanced growth opportunities for those experiencing job losses. More importantly, if the termination was handled appropriately by an organization and that individual avoids excessive periods of unemployment, career growth was likely (Latack & Dozier, 1986).

Cameron, Freeman, and Mishra (1991) studied the impact of downsizing in the automobile industry, and specifically how perceptions of downsizing both within an organization and externally can impact production outcomes. Implementation of downsizing was best when initiated by management with input from employees, meaning that management controlled the downsizing but employees were consulted as to nonessential jobs and combined tasks. Downsizing that occurred quickly (after announcement) and across the organization was also better received than downsizing where the criteria for downsizing was not clear or took too long. Successful companies worked not only with the employees who were downsized but also with those who were not. As noted by Cameron et al., the downsizing and reorganization of many Fortune 1000 companies will leave many white-collar executives out of work. The authors also noted that outplacement services can help to alleviate "survivor guilt" (p. 63). Companies who successfully manage downsizing by eliminated costs both within and outside of the organization, including relationships with vendors and external customers, demonstrated how corporate downsizing within one organization may have a ripple effect on other industries (Cameron, Freeman, & Mishra, 1991). Aquilanti and Leroux (1999) also examined outplacement models,

yet brought the outplacement practice full-circle, back to the individual, by implementing services that incorporated on-going counseling.

Environmental issues and resources. Brown (1981) pointed out a variety of historical factors in our environment or our society, such as the women's battle for equal rights as well as the need to facilitate transitions from homemaker to worker, have helped initiate the interest in models that address midlife needs. Most recently, national news found its way into the offices of career counselors. Concepts of downsizing and outplacement gained national attention. No longer limited to industrial or "blue color" labor, the increase of "white color" jobs, such as accounting or computer programming, and the move to overseas markets impacted our workforce perhaps more than any other (Pink, 2005). In addition, the increased use of "just in time" services launched the explosion of temporary employment agencies that provide everything from word processors to project managers on a contract basis.

Older workers, as discussed by Newman (1995), often must overcome a variety of stereotypes when seeking employment. According to Quigley and Kaufman (2004), individuals facing the retirement age often choose to return to work. The authors note, however, that rather than remain in their current position, field, or company, many older workers will opt for a career change. According to the authors, 80% of baby-boomers plan to work during retirement. As Americans live longer, older workers are interested in staying connected to the working world, and many are willing to take a pay-cut and a career change along with that connection (Quigley & Kaufman, 2004). Older workers must learn to transition back into the workforce or into their new role (Newman, 1995). Newman discussed strategies and success factors for older workers, specifically those over the age of 40. Specifically, Newman discussed the challenges of finding work in a country that adores youth. A variety of misconceptions exist about older workers, including that they have more illnesses and absences than younger workers. According to Newman, a client's ability to assess and market his/her skills will assist with the career transition. Older workers' ability to market the positive aspects of their age, such as maturity, life experience, and minimal family commitments, were indicators that they were working to successfully manage their transition and overcome barriers (Newman, 1995).

Women face a variety of midlife challenges, not entirely different from their male counterparts, yet unique to the physical characteristics and societal images of women. Saucier (2004) outlined midlife issues for aging women, including body-image and its relation to self-

esteem and depression. Midlife women may be cursed with the double-minority status as they face both sexism and ageism in the workplace. Coupled with unrealistic concepts of beauty and a barrage of media images, many midlife women suffer from low self esteem and depression, which will impact their ability to change or maintain employment. Quoting a term used by Tolkoﬀ, Saucier described the “silver ceiling” (Saucier, 2004. p. 421) as the inability of older actresses to obtain employment in the media industry. While perhaps not as cleverly coined, older workers are likely to face similar obstacles in all industries during their later life career transitions.

Chae (2002) discussed the challenges of re-entry women to the workforce, including both those who have not worked previously as well as those whom have voluntarily stepped away from the workforce. These challenges included gender stereotyping and lack of knowledge about the current job market (e.g., unrealistic salary expectations). Chae explained that counselors can assist these clients by providing them with knowledge of the work force, realistic expectations, and connections to mentors and networks, including those developed through community or volunteer opportunities (Chae, 2002). Bradley (1985) discussed the importance of career exploration with ex-offenders. According to Bradley, individuals who have been incarcerated will need to utilize multiple measures, including those that explore emotions, attitudes, reactions, and feelings. Ex-offenders were less likely to have information about the world of work and may not possess the necessary career maturity. Most importantly, career counseling should be required for all individuals transitioning from incarceration to employment (Bradley, 1985).

Adaptation to the Transition and Life Satisfaction

The themes discussed above demonstrate how both *internal* [i.e. psychological] and *external* [i.e. environmental] factors, as well as the *transition process*, influence an individual’s career transition. However, as Chusid and Cochran (1989) discussed, the career transition of an individual may also influence the environment and other life roles within their environment. Thus, a successful career transition may not always equate to a satisfying life situation. *Successful adaptation to the transition*, or persevering through the transition as Schlossberg (1981) describes it, required one to be comfortable with the transition, including other areas beyond career. As defined by Perrone and Civiletto (2004), the career changer may be seeking “a global feeling of contentment, fulfillment, or happiness with life in general” (p. 107), also known as life satisfaction. Therefore, life satisfaction can be viewed through the lens of *successful*

adaptation to the transition. Studies have shown (Jepsen & Choudhuri, 2001) that those with changing career patterns experienced more satisfaction in their present career than those with stable patterns, which may indicate greater life satisfaction post-transition.

Ironically, both those who are employed and those who are unemployed may struggle with life satisfaction. Wanberg (1995) conducted a longitudinal study on the physical and psychological well-being of the unemployed, as well as formerly unemployed individuals who had returned to the workforce. Not surprisingly, those who were reemployed reported higher levels of overall job satisfaction in their current job when compared to their previous job. Reemployed individuals were more satisfied with their supervision in their new position when compared to their previous supervision, possibly due to previous terminations or lay-offs (Wanberg). However, individuals who were reemployed did not experience greater life satisfaction or optimism after finding employment when compared to their period of unemployment (Wanberg). Thus, counselors are cautioned against assumptions that employment will eliminate all mental health concerns of an individual. The counselor should be aware that clients may assume less satisfactory jobs in an effort to be reemployed (Wanberg).

Perone and Civiletto (2004) examined the relationships among life role salience, role strain, coping, and life satisfaction in their research of 125 individuals who were balancing life roles (e.g., worker, student, parent). The researchers determined that role strain increased along with role salience (i.e., the importance that one places on his/her role). Thus, the individual who possesses multiple roles, many of which are highly valued, is likely to increase his/her role strain. Role strain has the ability to impact one's life satisfaction. However, Perone and Civiletto found that an individual's coping skills can help to minimize role strain and increase life satisfaction under these conditions (2004).

Jepsen and Choudhuri (2001) found that individuals who had more stable occupational career patterns (OCPs) often experienced lower job satisfaction than those who changed career patterns. Regarding mental health implications, individuals with stable careers did not appear to have any more regret than those who changed, indicating that they did not see a need to change careers. However, those with stable career patterns did express less satisfaction in their present position than those who had changed patterns more frequently (Jepsen & Choudhuri, 2001).

The theories, techniques, models and concepts of career transition discussed provided a structure from which midlife career transition can be studied. The concepts, including *transition*

as a process, internal/psychological factors, external/environmental factors and adaptation to the transitions, may influence the transition process, as well as one's life satisfaction. Yet as discussed Chapter 1, understanding these career transition theories, techniques, models and concepts did not sufficiently explain the life satisfaction of midlife career changers. More information was needed to determine how the client views the transition, as well as their satisfaction throughout the process.

Linking Successful Career Transition to Life Satisfaction

What indicators do professionals have that a client has successfully transitioned through a midlife career change? What does success look like and is it identical for every client? These are the questions that researchers asked in order to determine if clients are truly being helped. Practitioners must gauge client's growth; yet traditional baseline research may not be an option. What other options exist to measure clients' well-being? This research will examine life satisfaction, which could be considered one determinant of a successful transition or overall well-being. A discussion linking successful career transition to life satisfaction via measurement and specific populations provided the final layer to the literature review.

Informal Measures of a Satisfying Transition

Young's (1985) qualitative analysis of individuals' responses to five questions included questions such as "How would you recognize when you are making progress?" or "What would have to happen to make counseling useful to you?" (p. 52). These questions provided excellent informal assessments for counselors to use with clients. In response to these questions, Young's clients mentioned changes in themselves, such as improved feelings about themselves, their job, their performance, or their interpersonal relationships; these changes can be indicators of success in counseling. In addition, clients also stated that gaining more information about themselves or setting goals, which would indicate forward movement. Other responses which may indicate success included a new job, promotion, or life-style change (Young, 1985). In this approach, the client was the indicator of counseling success based on his/her own self-evaluation.

Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, and Hart-Johnson (2003) also advocated a client-centered approach to determining success. In their research on possible selves, school-aged students who were struggling academically completed the sentence "Next year, I expect to be..." (p. 130) or "Next year I want to avoid..." (p.131). Students who were able to articulate a goal and obstacle had more success towards achieving success. Similarly, a client who indicated career goals and

obstacles may be more likely to achieve those goals and overcome. Oyserman et al. (2003) raised several additional points relevant to the midlife career changer. First, researchers stressed the importance of short term goals due to the fact that youths have a hard time imagining themselves as adults. Secondly, researchers emphasized the need for feedback from adults regarding the youths' goals (Oyserman et al., 2003). Midlife career changers may also benefit from short-term goals and receiving feedback from others, primarily counselors. Specifically, with realistic goal-setting and appropriate feedback, short-term goals allow the midlife career changer to celebrate successes sooner, possibly avoiding the pitfalls of prolonged unemployment, decreasing self-esteem, and depression.

Ebberwein, Krieshok, Ulven, and Prosser (2004) exemplified the value of direct questioning in their qualitative evaluation of adults experiencing involuntary career transition. In attempting to answer the question, "What does adaptability look like in the face of involuntary career transition?" (p.295), the researchers developed the themes of adaptive responses, contextual challenges, and insights into the transition. Examples of adaptive responses included "approaching job loss with a healthy sense of urgency" (p. 297) or "picturing details of the next career move" (p. 298). Detailed examples provided the counselor and client with practical means of evaluating the progress. Examples of contextual challenges included "financial resources, or the lack of them, strongly influence how one copes with job transition" (p. 301) or "family life significantly interacts with work life" (p. 302). Awareness of these challenges prior to transition can help the client better prepare for them during the transition. For the client currently experiencing these challenges, the awareness of such challenges may help to normalize the experience, as well as a warning of the deleterious outcomes (e.g., mistrust, animosity). Finally, of the 21 individuals interviewed, their insights into the transition process proved to be the most valuable, for example "needs and responsibilities sometimes conflict with the ideal occupation" (p. 303). When clients can develop and express insights that promote a healthy understanding of themselves and their surroundings, evidence of successfully managing the transition should soon follow.

Measuring Career Transition

Formal research instruments exist to assist the individual successfully navigate through midlife career transition. Although not intentionally created for this audience, instruments such as the Career Decision Scale, Career Beliefs Inventory, and the Career Thoughts Inventory have

helped counselors and clients draw useful information regarding the transition process. Researchers used these instruments, as well as others, to identify the important relationships among motivation, outlook, and midlife career transition.

The Career Decision Scale (CDS; Osipow, 1980) was developed to address educational-vocational indecision and has been adapted for graduate students (Hartman & Fuqua, 1982). Although originally designed for undergraduate students, not the midlife career changer, the CDS may be used with this population to identify negative thoughts or challenges that hinder the transition process. In validating the CDS for graduate students, Hartman and Fuqua included variables that were directly linked to midlife career transition, including locus of control and identity (Hartman & Fuqua). However, the results of their study indicated that the CDS failed to identify vocational-educational indecision for graduate students. This was unfortunate since many midlife career changers are more akin to students in graduate-level study than those in undergraduate study.

The Career Beliefs Inventory (CBI) developed by Krumboltz (1991) examines career beliefs and helps to identify blocks or shortcomings that may be limiting an individual's career goals (Hall & Rayman, 2002). One of its strengths lies in its reporting of both low and high scores on multiple scales. According to Hall and Rayman, this allows the counselor to recognize strengths as well as deficits within the client. However, the CBI has limited reliability and validity and has not been thoroughly tested in a research setting. While the instrument provides an excellent starting tool for client and counselor conversations (Hall & Rayman, 2002), the instrument was considered unreliable in a research environment without further validation.

The Career Thoughts Inventory developed by Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, and Saunders (1996) also examined negative career thoughts that may be intruding on the career development process, specifically mentioning adults considering career change as a tertiary audience (Feller & Daly, 2002). Its primary audience includes high school students selecting postsecondary employment or education, followed by college students selecting a major or seeking employment (Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders, 1996). The Career Thoughts Inventory has been used in a variety of research studies having been developed, standardized, and validated by a group of university researchers who have reshaped traditional career counseling at the college level (Feller & Daly, 2002). Like Krumboltz's Career Beliefs

Inventory, the Career Thoughts Inventory examined issues that are directly correlated to midlife career issues including commitment, anxiety, and external conflict.

Designed specifically for those experiencing career transitions, the Career Transitions Inventory (Heppner, 1991) was designed to assess a person's psychological resources and deficits when making career transition. During its development and validation, five factors were revealed: readiness, confidence, perceived support, control, and decision independence (Heppner, Multon, & Johnson, 1994). These five factors became the scales that the Career Transitions Inventory examines. Lower scores indicate barriers to successful transitions while higher scores indicate resources (Heppner, 1991).

Measuring Life Satisfaction

The counseling profession experienced increased attention in the areas of holistic counseling, spiritual counseling, and other practices that embody the entire client as opposed to a segment of their lives. As such, career counselors need to examine clients' collective-self, not only their career-self. As discussed, an individual's work identity is often closely related to his/her personal identity. Thus, it is logical to assume that one's satisfaction with his/her role at work may be directly related to one's satisfaction with his/her role in life.

Measuring life satisfaction is a challenging task. Few instruments exist to examine an individual's quality of life; most are related to health or physical wellness and biopsychosocial issues (Pearson Assessments, 2005). Many of these instruments are directly developed for cardiac or oncology providers in order to assess chronic pain or symptoms warranting medical intervention. One instrument that has a more general application is the Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI) which provides a report of strengths and weaknesses relating to a variety of life events, such as "love, work and play" (Pearson Assessments, p. 82). The 16 areas addressed by the QOLI include: health, self-esteem, goals and values, money, work, play, learning, creativity, helping, love, friends, children, relatives, home, neighborhood, and community. Many of these constructs corresponded to adult developmental stages discussed by Sheehy (1976) and Levinson (1978) as middle aged individuals may reject putting all of their energy into careers and begin to pour energy into other satisfying areas of their life.

The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) took a broad yet direct approach to assessing overall satisfaction with life. Utilizing five items, individuals respond to statements by indicating on a scale of one (low satisfaction) to seven (high satisfaction) (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, &

Griffin, 1985). Specifically, the items included in the SWLS are “(a) In most ways, my life is close to ideal, (b) The conditions of my life are excellent, (c) I am satisfied with my life, (d) So far I have gotten the important things I want in life, and (e) If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing” (Diener et al., 1985, p. 72). The SWLS has been shown to have high psychometric value and has also been tested for validity. The SWLS is widely distributed and free of charge. A website (<http://www.psych.illinois.edu/~ediener/SWLS.html>) outlines the conditions under which researchers can utilize the instrument for personal research.

Satisfaction with one’s life, as well as one’s career, continues to be a primary influence of the midlife career changer. Transitioning from one career (e.g. military) to another career (e.g. teaching) provides a balance between life satisfaction and work satisfaction. Yet second career teachers (including military members) faced challenges in their new role unique to their position as a midlife career changer. The following research studies examined these issues.

Military Members Transitioning to a Second Career

Early studies on career issues for military members focused on the benefits of military retirement, the ability of a service member to maintain a living on retirement, and the need to prepare retiring members for second careers (Bellino, 1970). Specifically, Bellino pointed out that, while the average American may retire at 65, the military retiree may be 42 years of age after a 20-year career in the military. Regardless of any financial implications of his/her retirement, the former military member experienced interpersonal and social problems, including social and geographical disturbances, loss of identity, and an inability to manage his time (Bellino). Bellino argued for a comprehensive career transition model for transitioning military members (1970).

Dunning and Biderman (1973) also outlined their argument towards more comprehensive retirement preparation. Dunning and Biderman stated, “It is doubtful that most [military] retirees indulge in intensive, rational economic analysis before deciding to retire” (p.24). Beyond geographic selection, the authors state that little preparation for retirement is considered. Yet they also contend that 83% of retiring military members planned to enter the civilian work force immediately upon retirement while another 13% plan to enter after a short period of time (Dunning & Biderman, p. 24). Fuller and Redfering’s (1976) study of officer versus enlisted personnel advocated for better pre-retirement planning based on post-retirement adjustment. They found that regardless of rank or time in service, individuals who planned better often fared

better post-retirement. They also advocated for including the military family, such as spouse and children, in the pre-retirement planning process (Fuller & Redfering, 1976).

It is likely that these research studies, as well as others, led to the development of the “Transition Assistance Programs” or TAP seminars that the military developed in the 1990s (Wolpert, 2000). However, despite the implementation of military transition programs, Wolpert (2000) discussed a variety of challenges that the former military member makes when transitioning to the civilian sector, including role transition, work role socialization, and a lack of understanding of civilian work rules. Wolpert also discussed the impact on the family of retiring military personnel. He states, “If the family was heavily involved and reliant on the military community, they too took on the status of the military member, and they too may feel loss when the move into a community where that status has little or no meaning” (p. 109).

Engles and Harris (2002) also emphasized that these difficulties often impact the family dynamics, generating a need to service family members as well. According to Engles and Harris, 88% of military jobs have equivalent occupations in the civilian sector. High wages often attract military personnel. There are 1.3 million military members in the country and 85% of them are enlisted. Of those 1.1 million enlisted military members, 50%, over half a million, are lower-level enlisted, earning approximately \$15,700 – 23,300/annually (22K – 25K if they have dependents) (Defense Financing and Accounting Service, 2007). Transitioning military members may not understand the lack of employer loyalty or the fluctuation of the job market. Counselors can best help transitioning military members and their families by helping them to recognize their ownership in their post-military career, helping them plan for short and long term career development, and making the connection between their military roles and civilian positions (Engles & Harris, 2002).

Many military members join the military with thoughts of another career after their service (Carnevale, 2006). According to a recent article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, education benefits are the most common inquiry among prospective recruits (Carnevale, 2006). And recruiters have good answers for them. The military currently spends more on education benefits than ever before. In 2001, the Department of Defense raised tuition assistance for active military members to 100%, meaning that service members receive 100% coverage for up to 16 credits per year (at up to \$250/credit) or up to \$4,000 per year towards a first certificate, associate’s, bachelor’s or master’s degree (Blumenstyk, 2006). Active duty education benefits

coupled with retirement education benefits, such as Veteran's Assistance of the GI Bill, provided opportunities for many military members to receive training in additional areas, which can then be utilized post-separation in the civilian sector (Blumenstyk, 2006).

The Department of Defense (DOD) is not the only government agency that is encouraging service members to pursue education and post-service careers. The DOD partnered with the Department of Education to create Troops to Teachers (TTT) in 1994. According to the TTT website, "Reflecting the focus of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the primary objective of TTT is to help recruit quality teachers for schools that serve students from low-income families throughout America. TTT helps relieve teacher shortages, especially in math, science, special education and other critical subject areas, and assists military personnel in making successful transitions to second careers in teaching" (Troops to Teachers, 2006. ¶ 2).

The concept took hold. Since its inception, nearly 8,000 teachers entered the profession through the TTT program, which offers placement assistance to qualified individuals (Feistritzer, 2005). In a comparison of TTT teachers to traditional teachers, Feistritzer found TTT teachers to be more confident in their ability to teach and their attitudes towards teaching-related problems tend to be less serious when compared to their peers from traditional programs. Feistritzer also found TTT teachers to be more diverse in terms of ethnicity, gender, and willingness to teach in high need areas. For example, 82% of TTT teachers are male, as compared to only 18% of all teachers nationwide (Feistritzer, 2005).

Second Career Teachers

A good deal of research existed on the challenges of second career teachers entering the classroom. While this research was not specific to military members, the results can be applied to this population who transitioned to the classroom from their previous career in the military. In defining the second career teacher, many individuals referred to the work of Crow, Levine, and Nager (1990). Their qualitative interviews with 13 individuals who had transitioned to teaching developed three profiles of career change: the homecomers, the converted, and the unconverted. Specifically, the homecomers saw their career in education as the place that they had always belonged. While personal circumstances and individual or societal opinions had kept them from originally pursuing teaching as a career, they were individuals who felt as if they were meant to be an educator. Individuals who were classified as converters were not originally drawn to education but were changed by a personal life circumstance or situation. Whether they were

passed over for a promotion in their previous career or had a new baby, these individuals had something happen in their lives which made them consider teaching as a new career. Finally, those classified as unconverted were disheartened with their decision to transition to teaching and felt as if they would not pursue the career decision long term (Crow, Levine, & Nager, 1990).

Powell's (1997) study examined two first-year teachers in the classroom, one from a traditional teacher preparation program for whom teaching was her first career and another from an alternative certification program for whom teaching was his second career. Interestingly, Powell's study showed that both first career and second career teachers had many of the same desires for their classrooms. Both hoped to deliver hands-on instruction to their students, as opposed to merely delivering curriculum content. In addition, they experienced many of the same frustrations, such as limited lab facilities (both were secondary science teachers) and the need to rely on the textbook more than they would like (Powell, 1997). However Haggard, Slostad, and Winterton (2006) pointed out that, while first-career and second-career teachers have similar professional challenges in the classroom such as time management, classroom management, or developing lesson plans, the two groups have quite different personal challenges outside the classroom. Specifically, second career teachers cite more difficulties with balancing work time with family time, as well as replacing lost income (Haggard, Slostad, & Winterton, 2006).

Support for second career teachers is another area of focus, primarily concerning a teacher mentor. Most teacher preparation programs provide some type of mentor to new teachers. Many school districts have begun mentoring programs, which pair a first-year teacher with an experienced teacher, due to research indicating that many new teachers will turnover within or shortly after their first year (Salyer, 2003). As early as 1991, Kennedy was pointing out the necessity for good mentoring for second career teachers. According to Kennedy, good mentoring programs allow the mentor to be released from teaching duties while they mentor, in addition to training the mentors in proper techniques. Mayoette (2003) recommended pairing second-career teachers or career switchers with other second-career teachers or at least with individuals who can relate to their life circumstances pertaining to balancing life roles. In Mayoette's study, mid-life career teachers discussed how their age was often a double-edged

sword – it provided the credibility they needed with parents and students but also caused other professionals to think of them as experienced teachers instead of novices (Mayoette, 2003).

The value of a second career teacher was well researched and documented. Second career teachers tend to have a values-driven, altruistic and personal benefit motivation for pursuing teaching (Chambers, 2002; Saylor, 2003.). They have effective interpersonal skills and feel that their previous career experiences will benefit students in the classroom (Saylor, 2003). They bring maturity, good work habits, and life experiences to enhance a student’s real-world understanding of curriculum content (Resta, Huling, & Rainwater, 2001). In addition to lower attrition rates, second career teachers tend to be assertive and speak about discrepancies or inequities that they may observe in the school system (Resta, Huling, & Rainwater, 2001). Second career teachers tend to balance some inequities among new teachers, including gender, race, and age (McNay, 2001).

Summary

A review of the literature demonstrated that early models of career development have been insufficient to meet the needs of contemporary adult career changers, specifically military members transitioning to teaching. Concepts of adult development and career development theory led to theories, techniques, and models of career transition, which led to additional research on midlife career changers. Individuals often re-evaluate their life and their values as they approach middle age. They re-adjust their roles in midlife to better align with their plans for the future, which may lead to career transition. The midlife career changer often pursued career transition in order to obtain life satisfaction; however, they were likely to experience more pressure from issues outside of their job, based on their multiple life roles.

Consistent themes emerged from career transition models. The first pertained to the concept of *career transition process*, as opposed to a single event. Research demonstrated that *internal and personal factors*, such as confidence, resiliency, and motivation, were some factors of successful transition. But *external or environmental influences*, also contributed to the success of one’s career transition. Financial flexibility, family support, and the environment of their old and new work environments impacted success. Another consistent theme was *adaptation*, or successfully managing the transition. Research showed that individuals with changing career patterns tend to be more satisfied with their lives. However, not all individuals experiencing midlife career transition were satisfied.

An opportunity existed to examine the life satisfaction of the midlife career changer, specifically military member transitioning to teaching. Research showed that they have strong command of their teaching content and good classroom management skills (Feistritz, 2005). They represented a more diverse teacher pool than traditional teacher pools (Feistritz, 2005). From the administration's perspective, second career teachers appeared to have positive outcomes (Resta, Huling, & Rainwater, 2001). The questions at this point pertained not to the administration but to the individual and the outcome of his or her transition. An opportunity existed to learn how these individuals experience career transition and to understand what factors enhance or inhibit their transition. Most importantly, there was an opportunity to explore former military mid-life career changers' satisfaction, not just relating to their career, but their life. There is a life that encompasses not only their individual selves, but their families, their values, and all that they deemed important at this stage called midlife.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of this research study was to examine factors that related to life satisfaction during a midlife career transition process. Schlossberg's (1981) Model for Analyzing Human Adaptation to Transition provided a framework from which to examine the issue of life satisfaction among midlife career changers based on the foci as transition as a process, internal/external influences, individual deficits and resources, and adaptation. This model was best supported by Heppner, Multon, and Johnston's (1994) research on psychological resources and barriers of career transition. She developed an instrument to explore career transition factors of *readiness, confidence, support, control, and independence*.

Military members transitioning to teaching were the ideal population to study midlife career transition due to their transition being a true career change and their commitment to both the military and teaching (Feistrizer, 2005). Additionally, they were a population moving from one common environment (the military) to one career (teaching) after having fulfilled their first career requirements. Studying this population helped eliminate from the study potential confounds due to different reasons for leaving one's career, different status levels for the new career, or other variables that could mask the relationships being considered. Therefore, the specific research questions guiding this study were:

1. To what extent is the life satisfaction of military members transitioning to teaching explained by five career transition factors (*readiness, confidence, control, perceived support, and decision independence*)?
2. To what extent did other demographic variables, such as age, gender, marital status, and number of dependents, relate to military personnel's life satisfaction and career transition factors?

Additionally, data were collected on *stage of transition* in order to identify whether the military member were preparing to leave the military (pre-transition), currently transitioning from the military to teaching (mid-transition), or had already begun teaching (post-transition). Examining data in this manner was based Schlossberg's research on career transition as a process, including the concepts of moving-in, moving-through, and moving-out (Schlossberg, 1997). It was hoped that there will be enough respondents in each of these three transition stages so that valid comparisons can be made.

Based on the literature, it was hypothesized that all five career transition factors (*readiness, confidence, support, control, and decision independence*) would be positively related to life satisfaction. Additionally the following supporting hypotheses about transition factors and demographic variables were posited:

- a. Older adults would report lower readiness and lower self-confidence.
- b. Those who have been in transition longer would report less control and less life satisfaction.
- c. Those with higher income would report greater support and greater life satisfaction.
- d. Those with a greater number of dependents, as well as those who are married, would report lower decision independence.

The remainder of this chapter will be used to discuss the research design, population and sampling process, instruments, data collections, and data analysis.

Research Design

A survey research design was used to address the research questions and hypotheses posed above. Data were collected using a secure online survey. Due to the geographic distribution of midlife career changers, other data collection procedures, such as direct measurement and observations, were difficult to accomplish. According to Rea and Parker (1997), utilizing survey research allowed “descriptive, behavioral, and preferential” (p. 6) information to be gathered from the respondents, while also allowing for generalizations about the larger population of career changers based on a smaller number of participants (p. 7).

Rea and Parker (1997) discussed multiple benefits of the mail-out survey, including cost savings, convenience to participant, anonymity, and reduced interviewer induced bias. Yet they also pointed out drawbacks of mail-out surveys including a lower response rate, participants may self-select in or out, and it may take longer to gather data (p. 6). The benefits and drawbacks discussed by Rea and Parker were intended for mail-out postal service surveys, not electronic mail. Haag-Granello and Wheaton (2004) discussed multiple benefits of on-line surveys sent via email in counseling research, including reduced cost, reduced turnaround time, ease of data entry, ease of use for participants, and accessing members who are outside of the mental health system. Downsides discussed by the researchers included a reduced response rate, as well as limited diversity of respondents. The Graphics, Visualization, and Usability Center surveyed over 5,000 internet users via web surveys linked to subject-neutral, internet search engines (i.e.

Yahoo®, etc.) and found that Internet users are more likely to be white, male, married, under 35, and have at least some college education (GVU Center, 1999). The population for this research (Troops to Teachers) embodied some of these same characteristics but not all. Specifically, 99% of Troops to Teachers have bachelors or master's degrees and 82% are male (Feistritzer, 2005), similar to those discussed by Haag-Granello and Wheaton (2004). However, more than one third of those in Troops to Teachers are from minority groups (Feistritzer, 2005). Based on the mobility of military populations, email surveys appeared to be a more effective mechanism to reach this population.

The study was approved by Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure the research protocols were ethical. The completed survey and application was submitted to Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board (IRB) on October 27, 2009. Approval from Virginia Tech's IRB was received October 29, 2009. Human Subjects Protection Tutorial was completed prior to conducting this research and has obtained a valid certificate of completion from the IRB. A copy of the approval letter is available.

Participants

Members of the Troops to Teachers (TTT) database were the participants solicited for this research. Troops to Teachers (TTT) was established in 1994 and is managed by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES). The exact number of members that exist in the database was not available. A report by the National Center for Education Information indicates that between 2001-2004 TTT had approximately 3,500 registrations per year (Feistritzer, 2005). No data were available on the number of members that were in the data base prior to 2001, nor were there data to suggest if that rate of registration has grown, maintained or declined.

A 2005 survey of Troops to Teachers members who had secured teaching jobs was conducted by the National Center for Education Information (Feistritzer, 2005). According to Feistritzer, nearly 8,000 former military personnel have become K-12 teachers through the TTT program (p. 39). A random sample of 3,000 teaching TTT members yielded responses from 1,434 of those members. Of those surveyed, 82% of the respondents were male and 18% were female (p. 15). Thirty-seven percent of the respondents were minorities from the following groups: black (23%), Hispanic (9%), multiracial (3%), American Indian/Alaskan (1%), and Asian/Pacific Islander (1%) (p. 16). Ninety percent of those surveyed were over age 40 while

only 0.3% of TTT teachers were under 30 (p. 16). Of those surveyed, 62% held a master's degree or higher, while 37% held a bachelor's degree as their highest degree (p. 9). Those surveyed were currently teaching at the following levels: elementary (20%), middle/junior high (33%), and high school (47%). Those surveyed were teaching in the following locations: large city/250K+ (31%), medium city/50-250K (24%), small city/20-49K (12%), small town/10-20K (9%), suburban/outside central city (8%), and rural/<10K (16%). Although only a random sample, these demographic characteristics represent the best estimate of characteristics of the TTT database, as well as the demographics that will be used for comparison for our sample during this research. Respondents to this research were similarly stratified to Feistritzer and the demographics of the respondents will be discussed in Chapter 4. Overall, a 2005 report of active-duty members indicated that approximately 80% of military members are male, 67% are white, and 58% are married (DOD, 2005).

Instruments

Instruments that effectively measure areas relevant to life satisfaction and midlife career transition were identified. In addition, demographic questions were used to describe the sample. The questionnaire contained 58 total items: the *Career Transitions Inventory* (40 items), the *Satisfaction with Life Survey* (five items), demographic questions (13 items), and open-ended questions (two items). These three portions of the questionnaire are described separately in the following sections.

Career Transitions Inventory (CTI)

The *Career Transitions Inventory* (CTI; Heppner, 1991) is “a 40-item multidimensional measure” (Heppner, 1994, p. 55) designed to assess “psychological strengths, or conversely barriers, that adults may experience during a career transition (Heppner, 1998, p. 135). Specifically, the *CTI* is an instrument used by counselors to help clients identify factors that may be relevant to their career transition (Heppner, 1998, 137). In an earlier article, the CTI was described as being “designed to measure perceptions of psychological resources operating when adults pursue a career transition” (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994). According to the instructions on the CTI, “This instrument is designed to assess the strengths and barriers you experience in making a career transition” (Heppner, 1991, no page number). Already discussed in Chapter 2, the development of the CTI is summarized below.

The goal of the instrument was to understand the resources and barriers that individuals face, such that they may be able to develop strategies to overcome these barriers (Heppner, 1991). Specifically, the CTI was based on five career transition factors: *readiness*, *confidence*, *control*, *support*, and *decision independence*. Heppner (1998) described the CTI factors in depth in her publications but provides the following brief descriptors for clients on the results page of the assessment (Heppner, 1991, no page number):

Readiness: This scale helps identify how willing you are at this time to actually do the things you need to do to achieve your career goal. Sample question: (15) “The risks of this career transition are high but I am willing to take the chance.”

Confidence: This scale refers to your belief in your ability to successfully perform career planning activities. Sample question: (16) “I don’t feel that I have the talent to make a career transition that I will feel good about.”

Control: This scale measures the extent to which you feel you have personal control over this career planning process rather than feeling that external forces will determine the outcome of your career transition. Sample question: (39) “Luck and chance play a major role in this career transition process.”

Support: This scale relates to how much support you are feeling from people in your life as you contemplate a career transition. Sample question: (20) “Significant people in my life are actively supporting me in this career transition.”

Independence: This scale indicates the level at which you view a career choice as being an independent decision as opposed to a choice that is made as a part of a large relational context. This relational context may be family, friends, partners, or other “significant others” that may enter into your career planning process. Sample question: (14) “I am concerned about giving up the security of what I am presently doing to make a career transition.”

Career transition results are reported on each factor with a high, medium, or low score. Table 3.1 outlines the range for each factor as well as the average score obtained on the items in order to score within that range. For each score level (high, medium, or low) within each subscale, Heppner provides guidelines and feedback regarding the resources and barriers that

may contribute to the career transition. High scores are considered positive and suggest that the client perceives himself/herself as doing well in that area. Low scores indicate barriers, with the exception of the Independence factor, which does not have a “positive-negative continuum, but a relational focus often does lead to more barriers than the self-focus” (Heppner & Hendricks, 1995). Essentially the authors were stating that respondents who indicate a high degree of decision independence (self-focus) may experience fewer barriers than those with lower decision independence (relational focus), although either result may produce barriers for the individual.

One of the challenges in utilizing the CTI involved the fact that high, medium and low scores were not consistent throughout the scales. For example, an average score of 4.7 indicates a high level of *confidence*, but only a medium level of *readiness* or *support*. It was unclear from the literature why the CTI was designed in this manner however it is worth noting this anomaly prior to discussion of the results. For ease of understanding, the terms “high”, “medium”, and “low” were used when reporting CTI results, as opposed to numeric values.

Table 3.1

Factors, Number of Items, and Ranges of the *Career Transitions Inventory* (CTI; Heppner, 1991)

Factor	# of items scored on a scale of 1-6	High Range (average score on # of items)	Medium Range (average score on # of items)	Low Range (average score on # of items)
<i>Readiness</i>	13	66-78 (5.5)	57-65 (4.7)	13-56 (2.7)
<i>Confidence</i>	11	48-66 (4.7)	39-47 (3.9)	11-38 (2.2)
<i>Control</i>	6	24-36 (5.0)	19-23 (3.5)	6-18 (2.0)
<i>Support</i>	5	26-30 (5.6)	22-25 (4.7)	5-21 (2.6)
<i>Decision Independence</i>	5	20-30 (5.0)	16-19 (3.5)	5-15 (2.0)

The *Career Transitions Inventory* was tested for reliability and validity during its development (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994) using three samples (Sample 1, individuals in career transition, n = 300; Sample 2, master’s level students in counseling, n = 43, and Sample 3, laid off manufacturing workers, n = 104). A factor analysis determined the five factors of the

CTI, including *readiness, confidence, support, control* and *independence*. Using two samples (Sample 1, n =300; Sample 3, n = 104), reliability was determined on each of the individual subscales using a Chronbach's alpha with scores ranging from .66 to .87 (median .69). Subscales results are outlined in Table 3.2. Test-retest conducted on Sample 2 from the above study containing 43 individuals over a three-week period resulted in a reliability coefficient of .84 for the overall CTI, with individual factors ranging from .55 to .83. Psychometric properties of the CTI are outlined in Table 3.2, including the instrument items associated with each factor.

Table 3.2
Psychometric Properties of the *Career Transitions Inventory* (CTI; Heppner, 1991)

Subscale	Alphas (N=404)	Test-Retest (3-weeks; n=43)	Item #
<i>Readiness</i>	.87	.74	1, 3, 8, 10, 15, 17, 22, 24, 29, 31, 36, 38, 40
<i>Confidence</i>	.83	.79	2, 4, 9, 11, 16, 18, 23, 25, 30, 32, 37
<i>Control</i>	.69	.55	5, 12, 19, 26, 33, 39
<i>Perceived Support</i>	.66	.77	6, 13, 20, 27, 34
<i>Decision Independence</i>	.67	.83	7, 14, 21, 28, 35
TOTAL	.90	.84	

Construct validity was determined using Sample 1, which consisted of 300 individuals who completed a demographic survey, as well as the original 72-item CTI (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994. p.57). Hypotheses for this group were determined based on existing literature regarding career transition. Specifically, the following hypotheses were used to measure initial construct validity evidence:

- a. CTI score would be negatively correlated with self-reported stress.
- b. CTI score would be positively correlated with coping variables and length of time in the transition process.
- c. Older adults and those married would have lower CTI scores than younger adults.
- d. Sex and educational level were not expected to be statistically significant.

In addition, construct validity was determined by giving Sample 3 ($n = 104$) the CTI in addition to two other instruments, *My Vocational Situation* (Holland, 1980) and the *Hope Scale* (Synder, 1991). All of the predicted relationships between the CTI and the demographic variables were supported. The CTI and self-reported stress had a negative correlation that was statistically significant ($r = -.30$). In addition, as predicted, the correlation between the CTI and length of time in transition as well as level of coping skills had statistical significance ($r = .39$). The subscales of the CTI were positively and often highly correlated with the scales from the *My Vocational Situation* and the *Hope Scale* assessments (Heppner, Multon, & Johnston, 1994). Using two rounds of “principal component analysis with varimax rotations” (p. 61), researchers reduced the original 72 item questionnaire to the current 40 item version.

The CTI has been used to analyze the relationships between personality and career domains in adults (Heppner, Fuller, & Multon, 1998), indecision and indecisiveness with college students (Heppner & Hendricks, 1995), and coping styles and gender differences with farmers experiencing career transition (Heppner, Cook, Strozier, & Heppner, 1991). The *Career Transitions Inventory* was developed to be used with individuals prior to their transition. In this research, the instrument was used with individuals the pre-, mid-, or post-transition. Thus, the instructions were altered to address those in the post transition phase by adding additional instructions and past-tense wording, in addition to the current text in the instrument. The author granted permission to utilize the CTI on the condition that the results of the research are shared with the instrument’s author.

Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS)

The *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS) was developed by Diener in 1985 to be a multi-item measure of “life satisfaction as a cognitive-judgmental process” (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985, p. 71) and consists of a five-item global assessment of life satisfaction. The SWLS focuses on subjective well-being (SWB). According to Pavot and Diener (1993), the SWLS allows respondents to evaluate their overall satisfaction based on the measures that they deem to be of value, as opposed to the measures that the researcher deems of value. The SWLS consists of five statements and responses are given on a seven-point Likert scale with “1” indicating *strongly disagree* and “7” indicating *strongly agree*. These statements include: (a) In most ways my life is close to my ideal, (b) The conditions of my life are excellent, (c) I am satisfied with my life, (d) So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life, and (e) If I

could live my life over, I would change almost nothing (Diener, 2009). SWLS results are reported as an overall score as shown in Table 3.3, along with average scores.

Table 3.3
Ranges for the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS)

Life Satisfaction (five items)	Range	Mean
Highly Satisfied	30-35	6.5
Satisfied	25-29	5.4
Average	20-24	4.4
Below Average	15-19	3.4
Dissatisfied	10-14	2.4
Extremely Dissatisfied	5-9	1.4

The SWLS was translated into 23 different languages (Deiner, 2009, ¶ 4) and has been used with multiple populations ranging from college age students to older adults. As of 1993, the SWLS had been used in 12 different research studies with college students ranging from those in the U.S. to students in Moscow, China, and Korea, as well as special populations, such as students with disabilities. It also has been used in 13 research studies with adult populations ranging from nurses/health workers, older adults, military spouses, doctoral students, and in clinical settings (Pavot & Diener, 1993).

The SWLS was tested for internal reliability and stability (Pavot & Diener, 1993). According to Pavot and Diener, “the SWLS has shown strong internal reliability and moderate temporal stability.” (p. 165) This was indicated by a coefficient alpha of .87 for the scale, as well as a .82 stability coefficient in a two-month test-retest (Diener, Emmons, Laresen, & Griffin, 1985) when the test was administered to 176 undergraduates at the University of Illinois. Pavot and Diener (1993) pointed out additional studies that have indicated test-retest reliability for the SWLS will decrease over time, with one example measuring test-retest reliability as low as .54 after four years. Yet the authors also pointed to other research which indicates that changing life conditions over time may also indicate a change in life satisfaction.

Diener, Emmons, Laresen, and Griffin (1985) compared the SWLS to other instruments to determine evidence of validity. Specifically, they used two samples (Sample 1, $n = 176$; Sample 2, $n = 167$) and administered 13 external measures in addition to the SWLS. Outcomes indicated moderately strong correlations between the SWLS and the other instruments (excluding AIM), with outcomes ranging from .50 to .75 for the various measures and samples. The AIM, a measure of intensity of emotional experience, produced no correlation to the SWLS (.09). Correlation scores of .02 with the Marlowe-Crowne indicated that social desirability response was not occurring (Diener et al., 1985). Pavot and Diener (1993) also indicated that lower scores for certain groups on the SWLS support its internal validity. Specifically, psychiatric patients, prisoners, and abused women often report low scales on the SWLS. According to Pavot and Diener, because life satisfaction indicates a comparison of standards, those with better or worse life circumstances would be inclined to rate their life satisfaction better or worse. Using a more clinical approach, Diener's 1985 study, as discussed above, found that SWLS scores were positively correlated with items such as self-esteem and negatively correlated with items such as neuroticism.

Demographic and Open-Ended Questions

Table 3.4 outlines the 13 demographic questions and categories that were utilized. These 13 items were used to provide a demographic summary of the sample, determine how the sample reflects the total TTT population, and to determine if the research supports prior research pertaining to demographic variables.

Table 3.4
Demographic Questions and Categories

#	Variables	Question	Drop Down Categories
1	Gender	What is your gender?	Male, Female, Transgender
2	Age	What is your age?	[open numeric]
3	Annual household income	What is your combined annual household income to the nearest 10K (i.e., 60000)?	[open numeric]
4	Relationship status	What is your relationship status?	Single/never married, Married, Living with Significant Other, Divorced, Widow/Widower
5	Number of dependents	How many children do you claim as dependents?	[open numeric field]
6	Ethnicity	Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?	Yes, No
7	Race	What is your race?	American Indian or Alaska Native; Asian; Black or African American; Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; and White
8	Stage of transition	What is your stage of transition?	1 - Pre Transition (I have not yet left the military, nor am I actively seeking a teaching job); 2 - Mid Transition (I have left the military and I am actively seeking a teaching job); 3- Post Transition (I have already begun working in teaching)
9	Military rank at discharge	What was/will be your rank at discharge	Enlisted (1-9 drop down), or Warrant Officer (1-5 drop down), or Officer (1-9)
10	Years in military	How many years have you served in the military?	Years (1-30 drop down)
11	Branch of service	Under what branch of service did you most recently serve?	Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard, National Guard
12	Month/Year of military separation, if applicable	What date did you separate from the military, if applicable?	Date entry (MM/YYYY format)
13	Year began teaching, if applicable	What date did you begin teaching, if applicable?	Date entry (MM/YYYY format)

Questions (12) “Month/Year of Military Separation, if applicable” and (13) “Month/Year Began Teaching, if applicable” were used to determine how long an individual has been in transition. The complete questionnaire used in the research can be found in Appendix A.

Two open-ended questions were also added to the survey. Specifically, these questions included:

- *What insights have you gained from your career transition that might benefit others as they pursue a mid-life career transition?*
- *Given your stage of transition (i.e., moving-in to the transition, moving-through the transition, moving-on from the transition), what additional thoughts come to mind about the relationship you see between your mid-life career transition and your life satisfaction?*

These open-ended questions were added to capture additional experiences of the transition experience that either supported or added to the information received through the CTI, SWLS, and demographic questions.

Data Collection Procedures

Invitations to participate in a secure online survey were sent to members of the TTT database via email. In October of 2008, Troops to Teachers was contacted to gauge their interest in allowing their members to be surveyed. The organization has a core group of approximately 100 “mentors” who have volunteered to participate in requests for research. In addition, outreach to state offices and state coordinators was discussed during this contact. TTT mentors were listed on the national Troops to Teachers database (Troops to Teachers, 2009) including the mentor’s state, branch of service, name, rank, date and status (i.e. currently teaching, retired, etc.), teaching locations, teaching levels, biographical information, and email address. There were 178 mentors listed on the database and emails were sent to each mentor on November 2, 2009. A sample of the November 2 email is attached in Appendix B. On November 16, 2009, a second email was sent to all mentors thanking them for their participation and reminding them to complete the survey if they had not already done so. A sample of the November 16 email is included in Appendix C.

Emails were sent on November 3, 2009 to the directors of all of the 33 Troops to Teachers (TTT) state and regional offices requesting participation. A follow-up email was sent to

these offices on December 6, 2009. A copy of these emails can be found in Appendix D and Appendix E. These emails explained the research, the risks and benefits, and requested that directors distribute the survey link in three ways:

1. Distribute the link and the introductory letter to TTT database members in their state via email, either via separate email or in their newsletter.
2. Post the link/letter on state TTT websites.
3. Distribute the link to program directors who administer education programs to large TTT members, in turn requesting that they share the information with their students.

Follow-up contacts were made via phone to state directors, as well as distance learning programs that offer teacher education programs. A copy of the email sent to distance learning teacher education programs can be found in Appendix F.

A secure online survey was created utilizing Survey Monkey[®]. Data were gathered at a single point in time. Participation in this research was voluntary. Participants must have agreed to the terms of the study by checking an on-line box before they are able to participate in the research. In addition to full disclosure of any risks, benefits, and time associated with participation, participants was provided with full contact information of the researcher, as well as the researcher's approval from Virginia Tech's IRB. Participants were informed of the voluntary nature of the research and their right to withdraw from the research at any time without adverse consequences. Incentives for participation were not offered. Anonymity of subjects was maintained. Anonymity was achieved by not collecting personal information, such as names, addresses, or telephone numbers of the participants and by having a secure website for data collection that does not collect computer IDs. The three portions of the questionnaire were described previously in the instruments section.

Data Cleaning Process

Data were downloaded from the two Survey Monkey[®] surveys (i.e. mentor and member surveys) on February 1, 2010 into two separate Excel files for data cleaning, saved as *TTT Members* and *TTT Mentors*. The Career Transitions Inventory (CTI) scale had been converted from its original format (6 = strongly disagree and 1 = strongly agree) to correspond with the scale on the Satisfaction with Life Scale (1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree). In order to properly analyze the data and determine the subscales of *readiness*, *confidence*, *control*, *support* and *independence*, the CTI data had to be converted back to its original scale. Once the

data were returned to the original format, the subscales were totaled and coded as a new variable Readiness (R), Confidence (CF), Control (CT), Support (S), and Independence (I). This process was repeated for both the member and the mentor file. Both files were combined and a new variable was added indicating “member” or “mentor.”

A cursory review of the data indicated that seven entries were incomplete. Responses were removed prior to the SPSS data upload. In addition, one mentor did not complete the demographic questionnaire or any data beyond the two instruments. The data from this entry remained in the analysis. Some respondents skipped questions in the CTI thus impacting their overall subscale. In order to correct for these omissions, a mean score was calculated for each respondent on each of the five subscales of the CTI. The final data from respondents was uploaded to SPSS once the data from the two surveys was cleaned, combined and incomplete entries removed. Data were uploaded to PASW Statistics 18, an updated version of SPSS.

Data Analysis

The data analysis addressed the two research questions, as well as the one main hypothesis and four supporting hypotheses. In addition, it determined if separate sub-samples of pre-transition, mid-transition, and post-transition members were large enough to allow for valid comparisons. Descriptive statistics, Pearson’s correlation matrix, and multiple regression were used to analyze the data.

Descriptive statistics. The first analysis was examining the descriptive statistics of the respondents. Review of the descriptive data determined if three transition groups (pre-transition, mid-transition, and post-transition) existed in the sample. Unfortunately, there was insufficient data to examine three distinct groups at the pre-, mid-, and post-transition stage. These results are discussed further in Chapter 4. The descriptive statistics were used to describe the data that was collected. This described the participants in our sample demographically, as well as on other measures. Demographic measures also indicated extent to which our sample was reflective of the larger TTT population sampled by Feistritz in 2005.

Pearson correlation matrix. Secondly, a Pearson correlation matrix of life satisfaction and five transition factors was processed to address our main hypothesis, which stated that all transition factors were positively related to life satisfaction. A *Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient* was able to demonstrate both the direction and strength of the relationship between measured variables (e.g. *readiness, confidence, control, support, decision*

independence, and *life satisfaction*). Correlation was also used to analyze hypotheses a, b, c, and d. Correlation tables identified relationships between the career transition factors and life satisfaction via Pearson Correlation, the strength of those relationships, and well as if the relationship was statistically significant at $\alpha = .05$.

Multiple regression. Step-wise multiple regression analysis with five predictors was used to address our first research question, which asks how life satisfaction is explained by the career transition factors. The R square of model summary represented the percentage of life satisfaction explained by the five predictor variables. The ANOVA table was be used to report if the overall model (i.e., life satisfaction explained by the five predictor variables) is statistically significant, which determined if there is any value to the research model. T-tests were run to examine the second research question, to what extent do other demographic variables (such as age, race, marital status, etc.) relate to life satisfaction and career transition variables, however small sample sizes limited the effectiveness of these analyses.

Limitations and Delimitation

One limitation of this research was the lack of control of the number of participants who respond in each category, including transitional stage or demographic variables. Thus there was an imbalance of responses for particular groups, which will be discussed further in Chapter 4. Also, the Career Transitions Inventory was not designed for those post-transition, although for the purpose of this research, members who are post-transition were included.

Delimitations included the fact that respondents for this research would not be randomly generated but instead would be volunteer participants. In addition, participants were self-reporting, as opposed to external observation or objective reporting.

Summary

Life satisfaction differs among individuals experiencing midlife career change. Examining variables that relate to life satisfaction may help counselors understand the dynamics of transition, as well as how our clients' own career strengths and barriers contribute to their overall satisfaction. The above research design examined respondents' overall life satisfaction via the *Satisfaction with Life Survey*, as well as their career transition resources and barriers, such as readiness, confidence, control, support, and decision independence, via the *Career Transitions Inventory*. These instruments were tested for reliability and validity. By providing these instruments to voluntary members of the Troops to Teachers database in a secure online survey,

relationships that exist among life satisfaction and resources/barriers were revealed. Career transition factors, as well as demographic variables, were used to explain the variance in life satisfaction that may exist for those who participated in a career transition from the military to teaching.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Military members transitioning to teaching were surveyed to examine how life satisfaction differs among individuals experiencing midlife career change, and specifically relationships that exist among one's life satisfaction and career resources/barriers. The following chapter describes research outcomes pertaining to respondents' overall life satisfaction via the *Satisfaction with Life Survey*, as well as their career transition resources and barriers (i.e., *readiness, confidence, control, support, decision independence*) via the *Career Transitions Inventory*. In order to address the research questions and hypotheses, two equivalent questionnaires were created in Survey Monkey©. One questionnaire entitled *TTT Mentors' Life Satisfaction among Midlife Career Changers* was sent to the Troops to Teachers Mentor (TTT Mentor) population, and the other questionnaire entitled *Life Satisfaction among Midlife Career Changers* was sent to the Troops to Teachers Members (TTT Members). The questionnaires were identical with the exception of the title. The participants' profile, relationships among life satisfaction and transition variables, as well as their personal experiences are discussed below in relation to the research questions and hypotheses proposed.

Participants

Attempts were made to gather data from two specific populations, namely TTT Mentors and TTT Members. Overall, 143 responses were received, 90 from mentors and 53 from members. When incomplete responses were removed, data from 136 respondents were used for analysis (90 mentors, 46 members).

There was a total of 178 TTT mentors in the Troops to Teachers database (Troops to Teachers, 2009), but 24 emails were returned as undeliverable. Of the 154 TTT mentors emailed, 90 responded for a response rate of 58%.

Gathering data from TTT members proved to be more difficult and less fruitful. Specifically, contact information for TTT members is not released publically, as it is for mentors. TTT member information, including name and contact information, is held by both the state/regional offices and by the national office. Early communication with the national office indicated that contact information would not be given directly to outside sources; however, state/regional directors could be asked to send out the survey to their members. Emails were sent on November 3, 2009 to 49 contact persons listed on the Troops to Teachers website that

represent 33 different states/regional offices. Of the 49 emails sent, three were returned as undeliverable. In addition, all 33 offices were called on November 16th. Of the 49 people emailed or called, only 17 individuals were communicated with via phone or email regarding participation. Representatives from Wisconsin, Maryland, and Southern California specifically stated that they would not participate. The Virginia director included the survey link in a December quarterly newsletter emailed to its members; in Montana, the link was posted on its website; for Northern California, the survey was sent directly to 64 alumni who were recently honored in a regional ceremony. Respective directors Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee, and West Virginia engaged in a dialogue; however, it did not result in survey distribution. Some contacts (Maine, North Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia) indicated that they would send the survey out via email to their members and copy the researcher; however, no confirmation was ever received and follow up contacts were not acknowledged. The following state/regional offices never responded to any phone or email inquiry: Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Washington.

Other avenues were explored to gather TTT member responses due to the low response rate from state directors. Specifically, the Troops to Teachers website provided Distance Learning Education programs that may be of interest to students. Thirty-five (35) institutions were listed on the website, and contact information was provided for 33 institutions. Email was sent to the programs or program directors on November 16th; however, seven of the emails were returned as undeliverable, resulting in 26 viable contacts. Of the 26 viable contacts, five institutions responded. Specifically, Virginia Tech sent the survey to its Teacher Education students on November 17th. University of Arkansas said that it would be sent to students that were military; however, no correspondence was received. Wayland Baptist University and Winston Salem State University did not have any military students in their programs. The program director at the University of West Florida said she would need to consider it further, but no additional correspondence ever occurred. Finally, assistance was requested from Old Dominion University's Military Career Transition Program (MCTP) in Norfolk, Virginia. The MCTP office sent the survey to its students on November 18th.

These three efforts to gather data from TTT members (i.e., State Directors, Distance Learning programs, personal contacts) resulted in only 53 responses to the TTT member survey.

As mentioned earlier, survey data from seven respondents was incomplete, resulting in 46 useable TTT member responses.

Profile of Participants

Characteristics of the mentor and member groups were examined separately using cross-tabs and graphs to determine if the two samples were comparable. The two samples (mentor, member) were similar in that both samples were primarily male (mentor 87%, member 85%), married (mentor 86%, member 87%), non-Hispanic (mentor 90%, member 80%), white (mentor 80%, member 76%), and, on average, served the same number of years (mentor 21, member 20). The groups differed slightly in terms of average age (mentor 53, member 57), combined income (mentor 98.1K, member 114.2K), and months in transition (mentor 26, member 40). Despite the large gap between mentors' and members' time in transition, a t-test failed to reveal a statistically significant difference between the time in transition for members and mentors, $t(28) = -.965$, $p = .343$; $r = -.12$ (mentors: $M = 26.22$, $SD = 33.3$; members: $M = 39.60$, $SD = 66.8$). Based on the similarities between the two groups and the small number of respondents in the member group, the profile is reported as one group (combined member and mentor), although data for members and mentors are included as well (see Table 4.1 and Table 4.2).

Eighty-six percent of the combined respondents were male, 10% were female, and approximately 3.6% were transgender or the item was left blank. Eighty-six percent of respondents were married, 4.4% were divorced, 3.7% single/never married, and the remaining 6% either left the item blank or indicated living with significant other or widow/widower. Respondents who identified themselves as non-Hispanic made up 87% of the respondents, and respondents who identified themselves as white accounted for 79% of respondents. The mean age of respondents was 51, with a range of 21-69 years. The mean number of dependents was one, with a range of 0-7. Respondents reported a mean combined household annual income of \$102,224, with a range from \$0 to \$250,000. Table 4.1 outlines these characteristics of the participants.

Table 4.1
Demographic Profile of Participants

	Total N = 136	%	Mentor n = 90	Member n = 46
Sex				
Male	117	86.0%	78 (87%)	39 (85%)
Female	14	10.3%	8 (9%)	6 (13%)
Transgender	1	0.7%	1 (<1%)	0 (0%)
Missing	4	2.9%	3 (3%)	1 (2%)
Marital Status				
Single	5	3.7%	2 (2%)	3 (7%)
Married	117	86.0%	77 (86%)	40 (87%)
Divorced	6	4.4%	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Widow(ed)	3	2.2%	3 (3%)	0 (0%)
Living w/Significant Other	1	0.7%	1 (<1%)	0 (0%)
Missing	4	2.9%	3 (3%)	1 (2%)
Hispanic Origin				
Yes	12	8.8%	5 (6%)	7 (15%)
No	118	86.8%	81(90%)	37 (80%)
Missing	6	4.4%	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Race				
Black or African American	13	9.6%	9 (10%)	4 (9%)
White	107	78.7%	72 (80%)	35 (76%)
Multiracial	4	2.9%	2 (2%)	2 (4%)
American Indian/Alaskan Native	6	4.4%	2 (2%)	4 (9%)
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific	2	1.5%	2 (2%)	0 (0%)
Islander	4	2.9%	3 (3%)	1 (2%)
Missing				
	M	SD	M	M
Age	51.46	8.48	53	57
Dependents	1.07	1.32		
Income	102,224	43,031	98,101	114,240

Stage of transition. An overwhelming 80% of the respondents were in the post-transition stage, meaning that they had already started their new teaching career. Only 12.5% were in either the pre- or mid-transition stage, and 7.4% of the respondents did not provide this information. Given these results, intended comparisons across the three transition stages were not possible. Even considering the post-transition group versus the other two combined would be comparing

109 to 17 respondents and would not be a valid comparison. Therefore, no formal comparisons were made across transition stages. Nevertheless, it should be noted that almost all the mentors (93%) but only about half of the members (54%) had already begun teaching. This is due to the fact that one condition of being a TTT mentor is to have already begun teaching. Those in the TTT mentor role volunteer to help others achieve certification in their state; they may not volunteer for that role until they have successfully begun teaching and can help others navigate the process based on their own experience. Table 4.2 outlines the respondents' stage of transition.

Military and teaching profile. Respondents were spread among branches of service: Air Force (32%), Navy (28%), Army (21%), and Marine Corps (13%). According to the Defense Technical Information Systems (2009), breakdown of active duty service members in 2008 included Army (38%), Air Force (24%), Navy (24%), and Marine Corps (14%). Thus, the sample was similar in size for the Navy and Marine Corp but smaller for the Army and larger for Air Force when compared to the total population of service members. Officers and enlisted personnel were almost equally represented, with 47% being officers and 44% enlisted. The largest group in both cases was advanced military personnel, with 22% of the enlisted group being E7 and 19% of the officers being O5. Only three respondents were warrant officers, and 6.6% omitted this information.

Respondents served an average of 20.5 years in the military with a range of zero to 36 years. They spent an average of 29.4 months in transition between leaving the military and beginning teaching with a range of zero to 260 months.

Half of the respondents (50%) indicated that they are or will be teaching in a high school setting; 29% indicated interest in middle school followed by 13% for elementary school. The largest percentage of respondents (26%) stated that they are or will be teaching in a large city/over 250K; 23% teaching in a medium city/50-249K and 18% in a rural setting. Table 4.2 presents the data related to the respondents' military background, as well as their intended teaching assignments and locations.

Table 4.2***Stage of Transition, Military Profile, and Teaching Profile***

	Total N = 136	%	Mentor n = 90	Member n = 46
Stage of Transition				
Pre (not left military)	11	8.1%	2 (2%)	9 (20%)
Mid (left military, not teaching)	6	4.4%	0 (0%)	6 (13%)
Post (began teaching)	109	80.1%	84 (93%)	25 (54%)
Missing	10	7.4%	4 (4%)	6 (13%)
Branch of Service				
Army	28	20.6%	24 (27%)	4 (9%)
Navy	38	27.9%	25 (28%)	13 (28%)
Air Force	43	31.6%	26 (29%)	17 (37%)
Marines	17	12.5%	10 (11%)	7 (15%)
Coast Guard	2	1.5%	1 (<1%)	1 (2%)
Missing	8	5.9%	4 (4%)	4 (9%)
Rank at Discharge				
E6	8	5.9%	5 (6%)	3 (7%)
E7	30	22.1%	27 (30%)	3 (7%)
E8	11	8.1%	7 (8%)	4 (9%)
E9	7	5.1%	5 (6%)	2 (4%)
O3	14	10.3%	8 (9%)	6 (13%)
O4	18	13.2%	11 (12%)	7 (15%)
O5	26	19.1%	16 (18%)	10 (22%)
O6	4	2.9%	4 (4%)	0 (0%)
Other (including WO, E1-E5 & O1-O2)	9	6.5%	5 (6%)	4 (9%)
Missing	9	6.6%	2 (2%)	7 (15%)
Grade Interested in Teaching				
Any	2	1.5%	2 (2%)	0 (0%)
Elementary	18	13.2%	11 (12%)	7 (15%)
Middle	39	28.7%	30 (33%)	9 (20%)
High School	68	50.0%	44 (49%)	24 (52%)
Missing	9	6.6%	3 (3%)	6 (13%)
Area Interested in Teaching				
Large City	35	25.7%	24 (26%)	11 (24%)
Medium City	31	22.8%	17 (19%)	14 (30%)
Small City	12	8.8%	9 (10%)	3 (7%)
Rural	24	17.6%	22 (24%)	2 (4%)
Suburban	22	16.2%	12 (13%)	10 (22%)
Small Town	6	4.4%	4 (4%)	2 (4%)
Missing	6	4.4%	2 (2%)	4 (9%)
	M	SD	M	M
Years Served in Military	20.48	6.41	21	20
Months in Transition	29.38	43.51	26	40

Life Satisfaction and Career Transition Variables

The *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS; Diener, 1985) was used to measure respondents' life satisfaction. The SWLS consists of five items on a seven-point Likert-type scale with "1" indicating *strongly disagree* and "7" indicating *strongly agree*. Respondents generally receive a total score ranging from extremely dissatisfied (5-9) to highly satisfied (30-35). For this study, an average score was used ranging from zero to seven. Life satisfaction was used as an indicator of successful adaptation to the transition since Schlossberg (1984) stated that adaptation to the transition was a desired outcome and an indicator of successful transition.

The *Career Transitions Inventory* (CTI; Heppner, 1991) was the instrument used to operationalize Scholssberg's (1984) model of human adaptation to transition. The CTI is based on five career transition factors: *readiness*, *confidence*, *control*, *support*, and *decision independence*. The CTI consists of 40 items on a six-point Likert-scale. The following are brief descriptors written for clients to describe the factors (Heppner, 1991, no page number):

Readiness: willingness to do what you need to do to achieve your goal.

Confidence: belief in your ability to successfully perform career planning activities.

Personal Control: the extent to which you feel your personal control, rather than external forces, will determine the outcome.

Support: how much support you feel from people in your life regarding the transition.

Decision Independence: level at which you view a career choice as being an independent decision as opposed to a choice that is made as a part of a large relational context.

To address the missing items within the CTI subscales, mean scores were computed for each subscale based on the number of valid items and used to analyze the results. Heppner (1998) stressed the importance of "normalizing scores and avoiding blame" (p. 140); thus, general ranges of low, medium, and high were used to describe the respondents' assessment outcomes on the CTI. Generally, high scores on the career transition factors indicate the client's strengths, while low scores on the career transition factors indicate barriers or areas needing improvement. The exception is the decision independence factor for which both high and low scores may indicate a barrier to successful transition.

Overview of Member and Mentor Group Responses

Respondents reported being satisfied with their life. On average, respondents scored approximately 5.6 on the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS), which indicates that they are

satisfied with life. Respondents scored highest on the subscale of *control* on the *Career Transitions Inventory*, which indicated that their high feeling of control may have been a resource during the transition process. Respondents scored low in the areas of *readiness* (i.e., willingness to do what is needed to achieve your goal) and *support* (i.e., from others regarding your transition), which may indicate potential barriers during the transition process. Table 4.3 outlines the respondents' mean scores in the areas of life satisfaction and the five career transition variables of *readiness*, *confidence*, *control*, *support*, and *decision independence*. The table contains data for the TTT mentors, TTT members, and the two groups combined. Mean scores and ranges for the CTI subscales were reported previously in Table 3.1 and mean scores and ranges for the SWLS were reported previously in Table 3.3.

T-tests were conducted to compare the means of the mentor and member groups with life satisfaction, as well as with the subscales of *readiness*, *confidence*, *control*, *support*, and *decision independence*. T-tests did not demonstrate statistically significant differences between mentors and members in relation to life satisfaction or the five career transition variables. Specifically, t-tests revealed the following: *readiness*, $t(134) = -.485, p = .626, r = .05$ (mentors: $M = 2.89, SD = .57$; members: $M = 2.93, SD = .62$); *confidence*, $t(134) = -.806, p = .422, r = -.07$ (mentors: $M = 4.09, SD = .57$; members: $M = 4.17, SD = .58$); *control*, $t(134) = -.022, p = .983, r = .05$ (mentors: $M = 4.3, SD = .87$; members: $M = 4.3, SD = .91$); *support*, $t(134) = -1.681, p = .095, r = -.14$ (mentors: $M = 3.67, SD = .51$; members: $M = 3.83, SD = .57$); *decision independence*, $t(134) = -.540, p = .590, r = -.04$ (mentors: $M = 3.71, SD = .90$; members: $M = 3.79, SD = .75$); and life satisfaction, $t(134) = -.221, p = .826, r = -.20$ (mentors: $M = 5.57, SD = .12$; members: $M = 5.62, SD = .12$).

Table 4.3***Life Satisfaction and Career Transition Variables for Members, Mentors, and Combined***

<i>Life Satisfaction¹</i>	M	SD	Outcome Assessment
TTT Mentors (n=90)	5.57	1.22	
TTT Members (n=46)	5.62	1.19	
Combined (N=136)	5.59	1.21	<i>satisfied</i>
<i>Career Transition Variables²</i>	M	SD	Outcome Assessment
<i>Readiness</i>			
TTT Mentors (n=90)	2.88	.57	
TTT Members (n=46)	2.93	.62	
Combined (N=136)	2.90	.59	<i>low</i>
<i>Confidence</i>			
TTT Mentors (n=90)	4.09	.57	
TTT Members (n=46)	4.17	.58	
Combined (N=136)	4.11	.57	<i>medium</i>
<i>Control</i>			
TTT Mentors (n=90)	4.29	.87	
TTT Members (n=46)	4.30	.91	
Combined (N=136)	4.30	.88	<i>high</i>
<i>Support</i>			
TTT Mentors (n=90)	3.67	.51	
TTT Members (n=46)	3.83	.57	
Combined (N=136)	3.72	.53	<i>low/medium</i>
<i>Decision Independence</i>			
TTT Mentors (n=90)	3.71	.90	
TTT Members (n=46)	3.79	.75	
Combined (N=136)	3.73	.85	<i>low/medium</i>

¹Life Satisfaction reported using the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (SWLS) (Deiner, 1985) including five items on a 7-point Likert scale.

²*Readiness, confidence, control, support, & decision independence* are reported from the *Career Transitions Inventory* (CTI; Heppner, 1991) including 40 items on a 6-point Likert scale

Life Satisfaction and Career Transition

Bivariate correlation analysis was computed using Pearson's *r* to address the overall research hypothesis that all five career transition factors would be positively correlated to life satisfaction. Utilizing the *Satisfaction with Life Survey* (SWLS) average score, as well as the *Career Transitions Inventory* (CTI) mean score on each subscale (*readiness, confidence, control, support, decision independence*), a correlation matrix was computed in SPSS. Results are outlined in Table 4.4. Only two of the transition variables, *confidence* ($r = .232$) and *control* ($r = .313$), demonstrated positive, yet weak correlations to life satisfaction. This may indicate that

these factors may be resources used in the transition process which relate to life satisfaction. All five transition variables had positive and statistically significant correlations with one another. Thus, the overall hypothesis was not supported.

Table 4.4

Life Satisfaction and Career Transition: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations

	<i>Career Transitions Inventory</i>							
	M	SD	Life Satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
Life Satisfaction	5.59	1.21	(.87)					
1. Readiness	2.89	.58	-.090	(.87)				
2. Confidence	4.11	.57	.232**	.383**	(.83)			
3. Control	4.29	.88	.313**	.406**	.560**	(.69)		
4. Support	3.72	.53	.106	.249**	.500**	.389**	(.66)	
5. Decision Independence	3.73	.85	.102	.302**	.509**	.393**	.352**	(.67)

** Correlation significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Reliabilities are reported in parentheses for each subscale scale using Cronbach's alpha.

Life Satisfaction and Other Variables

In addition to the overall hypothesis that life satisfaction would be positively correlated to the five career transition variables, four additional hypotheses were proposed, two of which involved correlations with life satisfaction. Based on a review of the literature, these hypotheses stated:

b. Those in transition longer would report less control and less life satisfaction.

c. Those with higher income would report greater support and greater life satisfaction.

Neither of these hypotheses was supported. There was no statistically significant correlation between time in transition and *control* nor was there any statistically significant correlation between time in transition and life satisfaction. Likewise, there was no statistically significant correlation between income and life satisfaction. When examining all pair-wise correlations among these five variables (*control*, time in transition, *support*, income, life satisfaction), two relationships exist beyond those already discussed. *Support* had a small, positive correlation to

time in transition ($r = .31$), indicating that *support* may be a resource more heavily utilized by those who are in transition longer. Income had a small, negative correlation with time in transition ($r = -.28$). Table 4.5 includes the relationships among these variables.

Table 4.5
Means, Standard Deviations, and Relationships for Life Satisfaction and Other Variables

	M	SD	Life Satisfaction	Support	Income	Control
Life Satisfaction	5.59	1.21				
<i>Support</i>	3.72	5.33	.106			
Income	102224.14	43020.79	.140	-.024		
<i>Control</i>	4.29	.88	.313**	.389**	.169	
Time in Transition	29.38	43.59	.007	.313**	-.278**	.096

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The two remaining hypotheses were about the relationship of other career transition variables to specific demographic characteristics, specifically stated:

- a. *Older adults would report lower readiness and lower self confidence.*
- d. *Those with greater number of dependents, as well as those who are married will report lower decision independence.*

Neither of these two hypotheses was supported. There was no statistically significant correlation between age and *readiness* nor age and *confidence*. There was no statistically significant relationship between *decision independence* and number of dependents nor was there a significant relationship between *decision independence* and married/not married; however, the not married group was too small ($n = 15$) for any valid comparisons.

Life Satisfaction as Explained by Career Transition

Multiple regression was used to address the first research question, “*To what extent can life satisfaction be explained by five career transition factors (readiness, confidence, control, support, decision independence)?*” All independent variables were entered in a stepwise regression analysis.

Control was found to be the only transition variable that explained life satisfaction. *Control* was found to account for 10% of the variance in life satisfaction, $F(1, 134) = 14.603$, $R = .098$, $\beta = .313$, $p < .001$. *Readiness* added approximately 6%, $F(3, 133) = 8.868$, $R = .155$, $\beta = -.280$, $p < .01$. Combined, *control* and *readiness* explained approximately 16% of the variance in life satisfaction, which may indicate that control and readiness are resources utilized by those in transition to explain a small percentage of their overall life satisfaction. None of the other career transition variables (*confidence*, *support*, *decision independence*) added any statistically significant value to explain life satisfaction. Table 4.6 outlines the results of the analysis.

Table 4.6
Multiple Regression with Life Satisfaction and Career Transition Variables

	R² Change	R²	F Change
<i>Control</i>	.098	.098	14.603**
<i>Readiness</i>	.056	.155	8.868*

* $p < .01$

** $p < .001$

Personal Experience of Participants

Quantitative analyses may not have supported the hypotheses proposed; however, open-ended responses gathered from the participants may provide some insight into the career transition experience of military members transitioning to teaching. The personal experience of respondents was captured through the following two open-ended questions:

What insights have you gained from your career transition that might benefit others as they pursue a mid-life career transition?

Given your stage of transition (i.e., moving-in to the transition, moving-through the transition, moving-on from the transition), what additional thoughts come to mind about the relationship you see between your mid-life career transition and your life satisfaction?

Results were analyzed by reviewing of all open-ended responses for each question and classifying these responses into thematic categories using content analysis.

Personal Insights Gained from Transition

Respondents were asked: *What insights have you gained from your career transition that might benefit others as they pursue a mid-life career transition?* Responses tended to fall into the following five general categories: (1) preparation, (2) investment/sacrifice, (3) attitude, (4) rewards of teaching, and (5) military to civilian transition.

Preparation. The greatest number of comments by far to this question involved preparing accordingly for the transition. Comments such as “do your research,” “have a plan,” “set a goal,” “start early,” and “don’t wait” appeared multiple times in the responses. The comments included preparing for all aspects of the transition: academic requirements, licensure requirements, relocation, job hunting, and financial planning. Many respondents indicated that solid preparation was the key to a successful transition or that lack, thereof, would cause difficulty in the process. One respondent discussed both the urgency of planning with the reality of caring for one’s family stating,

For a transitioning military member, you can not wait until the end of your career to decide what you want to do after you get out. You have to plan for it from day one and make progress towards putting things in place so the transition goes smooth. You want to be able to separate from military service and do what you want, vice have to do to put food on the table.

Investment/sacrifice. The concept of investing in the transition process was also evident. Several respondents indicated that you should expect to work hard and invest significant amounts of time and effort in your academic pursuits, job search, and transition to the civilian sector. One respondent said

I believe the biggest thing I could provide to others going through this transition is to make sure you are completely aware of exactly what will be expected from you in order to complete this transition. It seems that every time I turn around, there is another requirement that I have to fulfill.

Along with that investment of time and hard work, others discussed the sacrifices that must be made to accomplish the transition. Another respondent stated

There are always things you must give up to change careers, such as pay and supervision of employees. But as long as you know the trade-offs, you shouldn't feel like you are losing anything or missing out on what you “could have been.”

Attitude. The concept of missing out or “could have been” was also reflected in participant responses pertaining to attitudes. Most commonly cited suggestions and

encouragement included being flexible, being positive, taking risks, having fun, and not giving up. The term “don’t look back” was used by several participants. One participant stated

Don't look back - your military career is over. Stay focused on the future. Have fun!!! If you're not enjoying life, you are doing something wrong.

In addition to suggestions and encouragement, respondents exuded confidence in their ability to make the transition based on their military background and the skills they gained. Using an adage that was likely often heard during their military career, one respondent wrote, “Accomplish the mission - stick with it!”

Rewards of teaching. Respondents readily shared the benefits gained by accomplishing the mission, working hard, and sticking with their goal of becoming a teacher. Many comments indicated the degree of satisfaction and reward that they received from teaching, both in their professional life and their personal life. Respondents called their teaching careers wonderful, fulfilling, and considered themselves “blessed” to work with children. In addition to rewards on the job, respondents cited rewards at home such as spending more time with their spouse or children. One respondent said

Teaching is the most rewarding job that I have had the pleasure of doing. The young children have so much to give back to me in intrinsic rewards. I do not ever regret giving up a promising career move. This was much better than moving up to command positions.

Military to civilian transition. Respondents cited further insights gained as a condition of transitioning from the military to the civilian sector. These comments described mixed experiences. For example, a series of responses discussed the difficulty of transitioning to the civilian sector. They discussed how many in the civilian sector, both co-workers and students, have no experience and/or interest in one’s military background. They discussed how one’s confidence and professionalism may be seen as threatening by other employees. They also discussed the difficulty of relocating family during the transition. However, other respondents indicated the importance of support from their family during the transition.

Respondents had both positive and negative comments about how the military prepared them for the transition. In relation to the formal transition programs that are offered to military members, comments were not favorable. Comments included

Transition program offered by the military is close to worthless.

The military does NOT provide you with enough mental or emotional preparation for transition to civilian life.

The so called transition team, designed to help prepare military members for transition to the civilian world didn't have a clue!

However, when respondents discussed how their jobs in the military prepared them to teach or prepared them for the career transition, they were very satisfied. Many individuals cited that their constant transitions in the military helped them prepare for this transition as well, and others stated that they felt better prepared for a transition to a new career than someone who was not in the military. Respondents regularly cited the tasks and skills learned on the job and the manner in which they currently use those skills either in their transition or on the job. Skills such as communication, training, and leading others, and characteristics such as hard work, loyalty, and one's ability to manage uncertainty were all cited as benefits to their transition process that were gained in the military. One respondent said

Former military people are successful in career transitions because we are flexible, disciplined, mission oriented and self-motivated. In a school setting former military stand out and are looked at as leaders who know what needs to be done.

Some respondents saw their military career as simply a step to their true career and their satisfaction with that career, as indicated by this statement

My first career in the Navy was what I had to do. Teaching is what I am supposed to do.

Thoughts Pertaining to Career Transition and Life Satisfaction

Personal experiences pertaining to life satisfaction and the career transition were captured by asking the following open-ended question: *Given your stage of transition (i.e., moving-in to the transition, moving-through the transition, moving-on from the transition), what additional thoughts come to mind about the relationship you see between your mid-life career transition and your life satisfaction?* Responses varied greatly; however, the following themes were identified regarding their transition and life satisfaction: (1) helping and serving others, (2) accomplishments, (3) contentment vs. struggle, (4) disagreement, and (5) advice.

Helping and serving others. The greatest number of responses involved individuals' desire to help others or to serve others. Many respondents indicated the satisfaction that they received from teaching others and the satisfaction that they received from serving others in the military. Respondents discussed making a difference in the lives of others and giving back to

their community as contributing to their life satisfaction pertaining to career transition. One respondent stated

I have always thought that the most important aspect of my life satisfaction was that I do something important to the country, society and the planet. Military service did that. So does my teaching career.

Yet there was tremendous pride and occasionally longing for military service reflected in respondents' comments. Comments included, "I miss the military still to this day," "I miss the Marine Corps daily," and "I would mount up [recommit to the military] tomorrow if asked." One wrote

After 20 years in the Marines I spent another 7 years searching for a job that would give me as much personal satisfaction. I found that job in teaching. Granted, nothing will come close to the meaning and satisfaction derived from service in the Marines, and I will never establish friendships that were created while in the Corps, but teaching comes closest.

Accomplishments. Many respondents cited their accomplishments, both in the military and in teaching, as evidence of their life satisfaction. Respondents cited their length of time in the military, rank attained, length of time in teaching, promotions received, or awards received as evidence of their life satisfaction. They also discussed other accomplishments outside of their teaching or military career, such as furthering their education or spending time with their family, as accomplishments that have added to their life satisfaction. A respondent stated

I am very satisfied with the things I have accomplished in life up to this point. There are still a few more things I want to accomplish in the military, but I will not be distraught if they do not come to pass.

Contentment vs. struggle. Respondents cited contentment in life more often than they cited struggle; however, struggle was present often enough to warrant attention. Often both contentment and struggle were cited in the same entry. Responses pertaining to contentment generally indicated that they were satisfied with their life at this point, although several respondents clearly responded to career satisfaction as opposed to overall life satisfaction. Many respondents cited an overall work/life balance as a condition of their life satisfaction. Still others indicated their ability to make their own decisions and direction, which they were unable to do in the military, as rationale for their life satisfaction. Comments pertaining to individual struggle were more disturbing and focused around two themes: finances and relationships. Many individuals commented on the financial struggle of lower paying teaching jobs or going to

graduate school may have caused. Additionally, several comments addressed relationship issues, broken relationships, and the struggles that ensued with relationships during the transition. One individual wrote

At the time it was very taxing on my relationship with my spouse and in retrospect eventually cost me that relationship.

Other respondents indicated that they were married to another active duty member and their separation from the military was meant to improve their life satisfaction and time together with their spouse (in order to avoid separate deployments). Their own military separation had negative implications on their financial status and positive implications on their relationship status.

Disagreement. Some respondents simply disagreed that there was any relationship between career transition and life satisfaction. Some stated that their career transition was so smooth that it did not impact their life satisfaction. Others stated that career has always been separate from life satisfaction for them and, as such, there was no impact on their life satisfaction as a result of the transition. One called the relationship between life satisfaction and career transition “immaterial” and others did not see how their ability to transition may have impacted other areas of their relationship. One individual wrote

The tension between my mid-life career change and my life satisfaction have nothing to do with each other. I work because I want to. If I could do it, I would change my mate and get on with really living in this life.

This comment may indicate that some believe other areas, such as one’s relationship, have more of an impact on one’s satisfaction than one’s career change.

Advice. Another large segment of responses to this question included advice for those making the transition, as opposed to providing specific responses pertaining to life satisfaction and career transition. Similar to the themes addressed earlier, respondents provided advice in areas such as preparation, attitude, and the rewards of teaching, for example,

Ask you mid life career transition person how to go about enrolling in the appropriate educational institution, perhaps being stationed in a place to focus on a second career.

Summary

Data were gathered from 143 members and mentors from the Troops to Teachers (TTT) database using a web-based survey containing the *Career Transitions Inventory*, the *Satisfaction*

with Life Survey, demographic questions, and open-ended questions. As indicated earlier, incomplete responses caused data from seven respondents to be removed, and, as such, data were analyzed based on 136 respondents. The majority of respondents were TTT mentors, as well as being primarily male, white, non-Hispanic, and married. Most respondents indicated that they were in the post transition stage. Data were analyzed as a total group, as well as member and mentor groups, although those in specific transition stages of pre-, mid-, and post- were not compared.

It was hypothesized that all career transition variables (*readiness, confidence, control, support, decision independence*) would be positively correlated with life satisfaction. Bivariate correlations revealed that only *confidence* and *control* had weak statistically significant correlation with life satisfaction. Correlations were also conducted with certain demographic variables and life satisfaction to address earlier hypotheses that suggested weak relationships among time in transition, income, *control*, and *support*. Although a relationship did not exist between life satisfaction and these variables, small, statistically significant relationships were revealed between time in transition and *support* (positive correlation), as well as time in transition and income (negative correlation). Two career transition variables were found to account for a small percentage of life satisfaction. Together, *control* and *readiness* were found to explain approximately 16% of the variance in life satisfaction. These findings indicate that the resources of control, confidence and readiness were more frequently used as resources by this group to contribute to slightly to their life satisfaction, while other resources such as support and decision independence were not found to do so.

Open-ended questions revealed that respondents gained insight about their transition in relation to themes of preparation for transition, investment and sacrifice for the transition, attitude towards the transition, the rewards of teaching, and the positive and negative aspects of transitioning from the military to civilian sector. When asked what thoughts come to mind pertaining to their stage of transition (*moving in, moving through, moving out*) and life satisfaction, participants' comments centered around the themes of helping and serving others, personal accomplishments, contentment versus struggle, disagreement that there is a relationship between career transition and life satisfaction, and advice to others making the transition from the military to a teaching career.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Life satisfaction among midlife career changers was studied by examining the career barriers and resources of military members transitioning to teaching. In an effort to educate counselors and clients on how one's career transition may be linked to life satisfaction, Schlossberg's (1984) Model for Analyzing Human Adaptation to Transition provided a framework from which to examine the issue of life satisfaction among midlife career changers. Schlossberg's model provided the link from career transition to life satisfaction, when she named internal or psychological resources, such as readiness, confidence, and control, as a mechanism for adapting to the transition. Schlossberg also included external resources, including family support and the environment, as impacting a successful transition. Life satisfaction was used as an indicator of successful adaptation to transition for this study.

Members and mentors of the Troops to Teachers (TTT) database participated in an online survey including the *Career Transitions Inventory* (Heppner, 1991), the *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (Deiner, 1985), demographic and open-ended questions. A total of 136 usable questionnaires were returned to the principal researcher. Participants were overwhelmingly male (86%), married (86%), white (79%), and not of Hispanic origin (87%); mentors and members presented in similar profiles. Research questions and hypotheses suggested possible relationships between life satisfaction and career transition variables, as well as relationships between demographic variables and life satisfaction and/or career transition variables. Although there was insufficient data gathered to examine pre-, mid-, and post-transition groups (similar to Schlossberg's moving-in, moving-through, and moving-out stages), the results did provide some insight into the experiences of those in midlife career transition, primarily those in post-transition who had already begun their teaching career. Research questions included the following:

1. *To what extent is military personnel's life satisfaction explained by five career transition factors (readiness, confidence, control, perceived support, decision independence)?*
2. *To what extent do other demographic variables, such as age, gender, marital status, and number of dependents, relate to military personnel's life satisfaction and/or career transition factors?*

Based on the literature, it was hypothesized that all five career transition factors (*readiness, confidence, support, control, decision independence*) would be positively related to life satisfaction. Additionally, the following supporting hypotheses about transition factors and demographic variables were posed:

- a. *Older adults will report lower readiness and lower self-confidence.*
- b. *Those who have been in transition longer will report less control and less life satisfaction.*
- c. *Those with higher income will report greater support and greater life satisfaction.*
- d. *Those with a greater number of dependents, as well as those who are married, will report lower decision independence.*

A discussion of the results will link what was found in the current study to literature related to career transitions. Limitations of the study as well as the implications for Troops to Teachers, counselors, and research are presented in this chapter.

Discussion of the Results

In general, participants in this study were satisfied with life, which can be used as an indicator of successful adaptation to their post-military career transition. *Control* was found to both explain a small percentage and to be slightly correlated to life satisfaction; *readiness* and *confidence* were also present in the findings. Demographic variables did not support the stated hypotheses; however, this may be due to the sample that was small and non-diverse. Weak relationships were present between time in transition and both income and family support. These concepts are discussed as they are supported by the statistical analyses, open-ended responses, and previous literature. Open-ended responses consistently mirrored statistical analyses throughout the research and added rich content to the overall research discussion.

Control

Control (i.e., lack of frustration/stagnation) was the primary career transition variable used to explain a small percentage (10%) of life satisfaction. *Control* was also found to have a slight correlation to life satisfaction ($r = .313^{**}$, $p < .005$). Previous research has demonstrated that *control* has a positive influence on the career transition process (Heppner, Cook, Strozier, & Heppner, 1991; Latack & Dozier, 1986; Lerner, Levine, Malspeis, & D'Agostino, 1994; Perosa & Perosa, 1983). The concept of *control* was discussed in the open-ended responses as well. In response to the question *Given your stage of transition (i.e., moving-in to the transition, moving-through the transition, moving-on from the transition), what additional thoughts come to mind*

about the relationship you see between your mid-life career transition and your life satisfaction?, respondents gave multiple examples of *control* that the teaching profession provides them in comparison to their military career. One respondent stated

In your military career, there are many things that are out of your control, such as PCS [permanent change of station] moves, deployments, and even the specifics of your job. It is nice to start making choices based upon what you have learned that you like and dislike. I am excited about the possibilities as I move through the transition.

Control may be viewed as the primary career transition variable that may contribute slightly to one's life satisfaction. This is supported by the outcomes from the statistical analyses, the open-ended responses, and previous literature.

Readiness

Readiness (i.e., preparing for the transition) contributed slightly by adding 5.5% to the variance with *control* and *readiness* explaining approximately 16% of the variance in life satisfaction. *Readiness* has been cited in previous research as a successful coping mechanism for managing transition (Eggerweein, Krieschok, Ulven, & Prosser, 2004; Oyserman, Bybee, Terry, & Hart-Johnson, 2003). *Readiness* was also seen in the open-ended responses. In response to the question *Given your stage of transition (i.e., moving-in to the transition, moving-through the transition, moving-on from the transition), what additional thoughts come to mind about the relationship you see between your mid-life career transition and your life satisfaction?*", preparation (or *readiness*) was a common theme. Respondents discussed preparing for the transition educationally, vocationally, emotionally, and financially. One respondent demonstrated *readiness* by saying

I am in the preparation phase of the transition. I am starting early, partly because I have learned from others who wait until they don't have a lot of time to prepare (like after they put in their retirement letter!) By starting early, I think I am going to avoid a lot of stress. For example, I have entered a teaching program, but if I find I don't want to teach, I still have several years to choose a different second career.

Readiness may be viewed as a lesser contributing factor to life satisfaction and career transition based on statistical outcomes, open-ended responses, and previous literature.

Confidence

Confidence (i.e., belief in performing) was weakly related to life satisfaction. *Confidence* had a slight correlation to life satisfaction ($r = .232^{**}$, $p < .005$). This was not surprising because

several researchers cite *confidence* as an important resource to aid in career transition success (Heppner, Cook, Strozier, & Heppner, 1991; Latack & Dozier, 1986; Robins, 1987). *Confidence* was also present in the open-ended responses as a contributing factor to one's career transition. Many respondents exuded *confidence* either directly or indirectly in reference to their military experience with statements such as

Use the confidence that the military gave you in your abilities into the classroom. Be a teacher first, not a friend, and your students will learn to respect you as both.

A high performing nuclear trained, senior officer can do almost anything they want in the civilian sector. They are smarter, better trained, with better experience in life than most others.

Yet respondents often discussed how one's *confidence* might be shaken during the process and could possibly become a barrier in the transition process, with statements such as

Don't expect your self-esteem to carry over from one career to the other.

Thus *confidence* should also be considered as a slight contributing factor to life satisfaction and career transition.

Demographics

Group means for demographics were compared for all five career transition variables (*confidence, readiness, control, support, decision independence*) as well as life satisfaction. The following groups were examined: member/mentor, men/women, white/non-white, married/not married, and older/younger. Statistically significant differences did not exist between these groups on the five career transition variables. This outcome differed from previous research that has indicated men are likely to report greater *confidence* (Heppner, Cook, Strozier, & Heppner, 1991), women express greater life satisfaction (Jepsen & Choudhuri, 2001), and older adults report lower levels of *readiness* and *confidence* (Chae, 2002; Saucier, 2004). These findings also disputed the hypotheses that older adults would report lower *readiness* and lower *confidence* as well as that those with a greater number of dependents as well as those who are married would report lower *decision independence*. Although t-tests were conducted on these groups, the outcomes were not valid due to the skewed demographics of the sample.

Career transition variables were examined in relation to other demographic variables to test the remaining hypotheses, which stated that those who have been in transition longer would report less *control* and less life satisfaction and those with higher income would report greater

support and greater life satisfaction. Neither of these hypotheses was supported through the statistical analyses. Thus, although earlier research (Eby & Buch, 1995; Latack & Dozier, 1986) had indicated that financial security was helpful in making a career transition, the data from the current study do not indicate that those with higher income have greater life satisfaction. Income will be discussed further as an additional finding of the research.

A limited sample size may explain the lack of significant relationships between demographic variables and life satisfaction and/or career transition variables. Due to the small sample size ($n = 136$) and the lack of diversity among the respondents, comparisons to previous literature and normally distributed samples should not be made.

Additional Findings

There were two additional relationships pertaining to time in transition that were found. Specifically, a small, negative correlation existed between time in transition and income, supporting previous research that those who spend longer in transition may do so under significant financial pressure (Eby & Buch, 1995; Latack & Dozier, 1986). This link between income and time in transition was also supported by open-ended responses. Specifically, respondents made specific statements pertaining to their urgency to find employment that is based on financial need.

The student teaching was right after retiring, and was the most stressful time because of a decrease in salary. After working as a substitute teacher for pay and later working full time with a contract, I could relax and focus on working without financial worry.

A finding not seen earlier indicated a small, positive relationship between time in transition and family support. While family support is often cited as an important resource to aid in the success of one's transition (Chusid & Cochran, 1989; Eby & Buch, 1995; Latack & Dozier, 1986; Simmilink, 2004), respondents in this study tended to indicate slightly greater levels of *support* with longer time in transition, which was not noted in earlier studies. The importance of *support* from family and spouses was evident in several open-ended responses. Respondents made multiple statements that indicated *support* from their spouse or family improved their career transition process. Specific statements included

My spouse is very supportive of my decision and I am excited to try a new career.

Having family support is crucial. Having a working spouse helps reduce the stress and burden of the transition period without employment.

If your spouse is not in favor of the transition, you're making the wrong decision.

Thus, when examining life satisfaction and career transition, the concepts of time in transition as related to income and *support* should possibly be considered. It is worth repeating, however, that when correlations were conducted between (a) time in transition and *control*, (b) time in transition and life satisfaction, (c) income and life satisfaction, and (d) income and *support* statistically significant relationships did not exist despite previous research indicating that financial security and family support has aided a successful career transition (Eby & Buch, 1995).

Limitations of the Study

Limitations described in Chapter 3 indicated that the number of participants who respond in each category was not able to be controlled, including transition stage or demographic variables. This proved to be a significant limitation to the study with 80% of respondents identifying themselves as being at the post-transition stage. Thus, while the research was intended to examine midlife career changers in comparison groups of pre-, mid-, and post-transition, results were viewed for the collective group. In addition, results should not be generalized to those pre- or mid-transition, since the actual number of respondents in those stages was few.

Other problems arose based on the large number of mentors that responded to the survey. Individuals who volunteer their time to help others transition to teaching may have an overtly positive impression of the process as a means for encouraging others. Although data were examined for mentors and members and no significant differences were noted, it is important to recognize that 89 of the 136 respondents had previously volunteered to support TTT and those going through the transition process.

Respondents for this research were not randomly generated but instead were volunteer participants as was discussed in Chapter 3. The voluntary nature of respondents resulted in a skewed distribution of participants, and several majority groups were present in the data. Similar to the samples used to create Levinson's (1978) model of adult development and Ginzberg, Ginsburg, Axelrad, and Herma's (1951) career transition model, respondents were an overwhelming majority male, white, non-Hispanic, and married. As a result of these proportions, results should not be generalized to other populations such as females, ethnic minorities, and

those who are not-married. Finally, participants self-reported their outcomes, as opposed to external observation or objective reporting, which indicates that their responses may be influenced by personal factors.

Implications for Troops to Teachers (TTT)

Participants in this research study were similar in terms of majority group respondents when compared to the 1,400 members surveyed by Feistrizer in 2005. Specifically, a majority of Feistrizer's respondents were male (82%) as were the respondents in this study (86%). A smaller majority of Feistrizer's respondents were white (63%) when compared to respondents in this study (79%). In relation to age, 90% of Feistrizer's respondents were over age 40 when compared to 92% in this study. Participant interests in this study also mirrored majority responses from the 2005 survey. Specifically, the largest number of respondents in the 2005 study indicated an interest in working in a large city (31%) as was the largest number of respondents in this study (26%). In addition, the largest number of respondents in the 2005 study indicated an interest in working in high schools (47%) as was the largest number of respondents in this study (50%). Although it is unclear exactly how many members exist in the Troops to Teacher database, the survey results from the 2005 survey reflected similar trends to those found in this study. Thus, results of this study appear to have been reflective of the larger Troops to Teachers population. These outcomes are also stratified similarly to majority populations in the overall military population, which is composed of approximately 80% male, 67% white, and 58% married individuals (DOD, 2005).

Life Satisfaction, Confidence, and Control for TTT Members

Troops to Teachers members surveyed appear to be satisfied with their life. The mean life satisfaction score for all members surveyed was 5.6. The *Satisfaction with Life Scale* (Deiner, 1985) indicates that individuals with scores with an average score of 6.5 are "highly satisfied" with their lives, while those with an average score of 5.4 are "satisfied." Thus, it appears that the majority of members transitioning to teaching appear to be satisfied with their life. It is also important to note that the majority of respondents were in the post-transition stage, meaning that they expressed life satisfaction after beginning their new career.

Troops to Teachers members scored medium to high in both *confidence* and *control*. This may indicate that military members transitioning to teaching generally exhibit greater confidence throughout the process. However, it should be noted that 80% of respondents were in the post-

transition category meaning that they had already transitioned to their new career. Because these members had already experienced success in transition, it is likely that they would report greater confidence in the transition knowing that they had already managed it. This was one of the challenges that resulted from using the *Career Transitions Inventory*, which was intended for those pre-transition.

Control is a characteristic that was seen in both the statistical analysis and open-ended analyses. Respondents scored high on the *control* variable, which was also slightly correlated to life satisfaction and accounted for nearly 10% of variance in life satisfaction. These results may indicate that military members transitioning to teaching see themselves as having a great deal of control over the process when compared to their previous career. Open-ended responses support this outcome in that members regularly discussed the need to take control of their own future by planning for their separation as well as the ability of their new career to give them more control over their own lives (e.g., avoiding deployment). Military members considering transitioning to teaching may be encouraged to learn that those who have completed the process before them express high levels of life satisfaction as well as confidence and control when reflecting on the process.

Readiness, support and *decision independence* did not appear to be related to life satisfaction in this study for military members transitioning to teaching. Respondents, on average, scored low to medium-low in these three areas.

Implications for Counselors

Life satisfaction may indeed be an indicator successful adaptation to career transition, but it does not appear to be the sole factor. Counselors may note that the majority of respondents reported high levels of life satisfaction. This may be due to the fact that respondents were former military members (perhaps non-military life was more satisfying than military life) or that respondents were transitioning to teaching (perhaps teaching is more satisfying to one's life than non-teaching careers). It may also be due to the fact that many respondents were in the post-transition stage. Yet it is also quite possible that, as indicated by previous researchers (Levinson, 1978; Murphy & Burck, 1976), individuals are seeking an opportunity to find balance and renewal in midlife, and many of them achieved that balance through midlife career transition from the military to teaching.

Counselors may gain value from learning that both *confidence* and *control* played a small role in midlife career changers' perception of life satisfaction. As stated earlier, both *confidence* and *control* have previously been cited as contributing to successful career transition. The unique aspect of this study, however, is the fact that a successful career transition was measured as life satisfaction. Thus, while counselors may have recognized *confidence* as a helpful resource for successful career transition, a client's *confidence* may be slightly related to their life satisfaction. *Control* was found to explain a small percentage of life satisfaction and had a slight correlation with life satisfaction, and counselors may wish to explore *control* further with clients. As stated at the beginning of this research, unstable economic times and high unemployment rates may contribute to clients feeling a lack of control. However, recognizing the small influence that *control* may have on life satisfaction, counselors may focus their efforts on helping clients to identify aspects of the transition that they can *control*, such as their attitude towards the transition or their effort towards completing the transition.

Time in transition was not a primary focus of the research, however, this variable surfaced in the findings. Schlossberg (1981) specifically mentioned duration of the transition as well as the impact of "non-events" such as waiting for a job opportunity to materialize. This research identified a small, negative relationship between time in transition and income, essentially indicating that those who were in transition longer may experience lower income, while those who experience a shorter transition may experience higher income. Counselors should consider the possible impact that time in transition may have on a client's financial situation. Financial implications were mentioned regularly during the open-ended responses. Counselors should familiarize themselves with financial supports, such as public assistance and gap employment, in order to best assist those experiencing career transitions. Time in transition was found to be slightly correlated with *support*. Thus, those who were in transition longer may have indicated a greater reliance and greater support from friends and family. Again, while this relationship may appear obvious, counselors may also wish to help clients identify social/family supports and resources in addition to financial resources. Family support and relationship issues were also evident in the open-ended responses.

The proposed research questions and hypotheses did not address the struggle of the career transition process nor the grief associated with one's former career as was expressed in previous career transition research (Aquilanti & Leroux, 1999; Latack, Kinicki, & Prussia, 1995). Yet

both concepts, struggle towards a new career and longing for one's former career, were evident in the open-ended responses. Counselors working with clients in career transition should continue to practice grief counseling techniques as well as assist clients in developing coping skills to manage the transition.

One of the more unique aspects of the current research surrounds the outcomes gleaned from open-ended questions. Whether due to the majority of participants being in the post-transition stage, their former military status, or another reason, respondents had substantial, meaningful life experiences that were communicated through the open-ended outcomes, which either supported or contributed to the quantitative analyses. These findings support Scott's (2002) position that cautions against using traditional assessments in working with adults in transition as well as Brott's (2004) position advocating for constructivist assessments in career counseling. Counselors may choose to invoke more story-telling (i.e., narrative) approaches when working with those in career transition, particularly military members at the post-transition stage.

Generalizations can be made for military members transitioning to teaching, and specifically for those who are white, non-Hispanic, male, married and over 40. Generalizations should not be made to other populations including demographic groups, such as women, ethnic minorities and those who are single, nor should they be made to other occupational groups, such as those transitioning from non-military careers and those transitioning to non-teaching careers.

Implications for Research

There were several outcomes of the original research proposal that could not be tested due to the limited data set. Two primary themes were evident when considering implications for future research, namely conducting research on populations that: (a) fully encapsulate the stages of transition and (b) are representative of more diverse populations.

The limited number of respondents in the pre- and mid-transition phase limited the ability to study individuals experiencing midlife career transition during the moving in, moving through, and moving out phases as discussed by Schlossberg (1981). There exists an opportunity to conduct similar research on a larger population of career changers, which more fully encapsulate these transition stages. Execution of such research could be conducted via live survey at military installations during Transition Assistance Programs (TAP) or perhaps on site with teacher education programs enrolling large numbers of military students, such as Old

Dominion University's Military Career Transition Program (MCTP). In-person research studies may eliminate the low response rate received from members. Studies of larger populations, specifically of those in pre- and mid-transition phases, are needed in order to fully evaluate the relationships between life satisfaction and career transition at each stage of the process as well as potential differences among these groups. Another suggestion would be a longitudinal study that examines the same individuals at the pre-, mid-, and post-transition stages and measures their life satisfaction in relation to career transition variables throughout the process.

Efforts should be made to recreate the research with larger and more diverse populations. This would include not only those in various stages of transition, as discussed above, but those from various demographic backgrounds including women, people of color, and TTT members as opposed to TTT mentors. The ability to conduct a random sample survey would be ideal, which would require an accurate understanding of the overall TTT population and its demographic background. Including a larger and more diverse population would allow results to be confidently generalized to the larger TTT population. Opportunities also exist to diversify the population in terms of the careers to which, or from which, individuals are transitioning. For example, it may be worthwhile to examine military members transitioning to other careers or non-military members transitioning to teaching. Further, high scores that were obtained in life satisfaction, *confidence*, and *control* could be compared to other populations beyond military members transitioning to teaching. This may indicate whether the results from the current study were a condition of military experience or simply a natural condition of the career transition experience.

A few unintended relationships were identified in this research that may warrant further attention, specifically, the concept of time in transition and its tentative relationship to both *support* and income. These relationships warrant further attention not only based on their weak statistical relationship to one another but also on the manner in which they were supported by open-ended data. It may be appropriate to further examine the aspect of time in transition as it relates to career transition and overall life satisfaction. As stated earlier, open-ended research may yield rich results when working with adults in career transition, such as military members at the post-transition stage. The concept of income could be further investigated to decipher how various types of income, such as retirement income and spousal income, may influence the

results. Individuals drawing a retirement income may perhaps experience less financial worry than those who separate from the military pre-retirement.

Themes which were prevalent in the open-ended responses also warrant further examination. Specifically, utilizing a standardized measure to evaluate concepts such as attitude, preparation, and family support would be useful in determining if measurable differences exist among these traits, as well as how those traits correspond to one's career transition and life satisfaction. For example, some of the factors measured by the PF 16® (Pearsons, 2005) include concepts such as reasoning, emotional stability, perfectionism, self-reliance, and tension, which were alluded to in the open-ended responses. Another instrument which was considered for this research, the Quality of Life Inventory® (Pearsons, 2005) contains several scales, including Love, Friends, Children, Relatives, and Home, to address the issues of family support that surfaced in the open-ended responses. Measuring these constructs, as well as others such as coping and resiliency, may explain more significant relationships among midlife career changers and their life satisfaction.

Control as a resource for midlife career changers should be examined further, specifically as it pertains to military members. There appeared to be a military culture present in the open-ended responses that valued control, preparation, and service to others. There is a distinct military culture in this country and leaving that culture reflects a lifestyle loss (Simmelink, 2004) beyond simply moving from one civilian job to another civilian job. Whether a member spent their career on a domestic military base, or rotated through several international support and/or combat missions, they are likely to experience a culture shock in their post-military career (Wolpert, 2000). This concept of culture shock and control for transitioning military members warrants further attention in the research. As stated earlier, personal narratives and qualitative research is likely to add depth to the understanding of this population.

Summary

The results of this research provide counselors with insight into the manner in which life satisfaction may be related to career transition, particularly for military members transitioning to teaching careers. For the purpose of this research, successful adaptation to career transition was examined through life satisfaction. The research supported earlier studies that have demonstrated how internal/psychological factors, such as *confidence*, *readiness*, and *control*, may be positively linked to a successful adaptation to career transition. Yet other external factors, such as *support*,

were not found to be related to life satisfaction despite previous research linking them to successful transitions. Specific groups, such as men, older adults, and those who are married, were not found to have any significant differences in their life satisfaction or in their reports of *readiness, confidence, control, support, or decision independence*, although earlier studies indicated relationships among these groups and variables. Time in transition seems to indicate a slightly relationship to *support* and slight, negative relationship to income. Although these relationships were not noted previously in the research, they were supported by open-ended responses. Open-ended results supported statistical findings on *control, readiness, and confidence*, as well as family support and financial issues, when considered in relation to life satisfaction and career transition.

Primary limitations of the study involve the skewed distribution of the data, including a large majority of TTT mentors, males, whites, and those who were married. Results should not be generalized to other populations beyond those groups. In addition, the small sample size did not allow for sufficient groups to exist in the pre-, mid-, and post-transition stages.

Implications for counseling practice and future research were present for Troops to Teachers and counselors. TTT respondents of this study are similar to groups responding to a 2005 study, and TTT members tend to report higher levels of life satisfaction as well as *confidence* and *control*. Counselors may be interested to know that respondents, primarily in the post-transition stage, reported high levels of life satisfaction supporting earlier studies where findings indicate that individuals seek life balance through career transition. *Confidence* and *control* should also be examined as to how these variables may improve life satisfaction, as opposed to simply career transition. Counselors should note that time in transition impacts one's *support* and income. Although not measured formally through this research, issues of grief and struggle were present often enough in the open-ended data for counselors to take notice. There exists an opportunity to conduct further research with more diverse populations in terms of demographics, stage of transition, and career fields. Finally, relationships between time in transition, income, and family support should be further explored.

Research outcomes indicate that military members transitioning to teaching are generally satisfied with their lives. Why are they satisfied? The research indicates that military members transitioning to teaching exhibit *confidence* and *control* that was related to life satisfaction as well as *control* and *readiness* explaining a portion of their life satisfaction. It is possible that

these characteristics contribute to life satisfaction as well as career transition. However, several relationships that exist elsewhere in the literature were not present in this study. Contributing factors may include the small and non-representative sample, yet it is also possible that military members present unique experiences that are not well captured through traditional measures. Military members transitioning to teaching provided rich open-ended content and utilized opportunities to tell their story. Open-ended responses were submitted by 115 of the 136 (85%) respondents for question one and 113 of the respondents (83%) for question two; nearly all of the responses to the open-ended questions were able to be classified into a theme that supported or enhanced the statistical outcomes. Thus, while traditional analyses provided an answer to the research questions, the personal narratives of the participants have provided breadth and depth to their experience of the transition process and life satisfaction.

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APPENDIX A RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Explanation and Permission

I am conducting research on midlife career changers, specifically military members transitioning to the field of teaching. My desire to study individuals such as your self came while I was working for Old Dominion University's Military Career Transition Program. In this role, I traveled among Fort Myer, the Pentagon, Fort Belvoir, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Quantico MCB, and Fort Lee and spoke to service members who were making a midlife career transition. Around this same time, I also witnessed my own spouse transition from a fourteen-year career in the Marine Corps to a job in the civilian sector. As a counselor, I searched for a way to better understand factors that impacted one's ultimate satisfaction with their transition.

I have selected military members transitioning to teaching because your commitment to serve in the military along with your commitment to teach is both admirable and unique. There is no MOS in the military similar to educating a child in a K-12 setting. You have chosen to transition from one career to a completely different arena – and you have committed yourself to that goal by participation in Troops to Teachers or a teacher education program. I hope that you will consider sharing your valuable experiences with others who may be considering a similar career transition.

My research focuses on factors that contribute to life satisfaction for individuals experiencing career transition. Participation is voluntary and participants may withdraw from the research at any point. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers and all answers are anonymous, meaning that answers will be in no way be connected to the participant. There is no incentive or reward offered for participation. There are no foreseen costs or risks to participate in this research beyond the time expended to complete the surveys. It is estimated that it will take participants no more than 20 minutes to complete the survey.

Questions, comments or concerns about this research can be directed to Heather C. Robertson (703-244-8536 or heatherR@vt.edu) or Dr. Pamela Brott (pbrott@vt.edu).

By clicking on "Next" below, you indicate that you have read the explanation of this research and voluntarily agree to participate. Thank you in advance for your time and participation.

Sincerely,
Heather C. Robertson, M.S.

Qualitative Questions

What insights have you gained from your career transition that might benefit others as they pursue a mid-life career transition? Please provide your insights in the space below.

Given your stage of transition (i.e., moving-in to the transition, moving-through the transition, moving-on from the transition), what additional thoughts come to mind about the relationship you see between your mid-life career transition and your life satisfaction?

Transition Questions

What is your stage of Transition?

- Pre Transition (I have not yet left the military)
- Mid Transition (I have left the military but have not begun teaching)
- Post Transition (I have begun teaching)

What was/will be your military rank at discharge?

	Enlisted	Warrant Officer	Officer
Rank at Discharge			

How many years have you served in the military?

Under what branch of service did you most recently serve?

What date did you separate from the military, if applicable (MM/DD/YYYY)?

What date did you begin teaching, if applicable (MM/DD/YYYY)?

What grade level are you currently teaching, or what grade level do you plan to teach in the future?

What is the geographic size of the area where you currently teach, or the area you plan to teach in the future?

- large city/over 250K
- medium city/50 - 249K
- small city/20-29K
- Small town/10-20K
- suburban/outside central city
- rural

Demographic Questions

The questions below will help us better understand who our respondents are, as well as their backgrounds.

What is your gender?

What is your age?

What is your combined annual household income to the nearest 10K (e.g. 60000)?

What is your relationship status?

How many children do you claim as dependents?

Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

Yes

No

What is your race?

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African American

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Multiracial

White

Thank you!

Thank you for participating in this research survey. Please click the "Done" button at the bottom of the page to submit your responses.

Questions about this research should be directed to:
Mrs. Heather Robertson, heatherR@vt.edu, or
Dr. Pamela Brott, pbrott@vt.edu

APPENDIX B
EMAIL TO MENTORS

November 2, 2009

Dean Wilson
ALABAMA Troops to Teachers Mentor
wilsonw@pchs.pickens.k12.al.us

Dear Dean Wilson,

You have been selected for this study because you are a participant in the Troops to Teachers Mentor program. I am conducting research on midlife career changers, **specifically military members transitioning to the field of teaching**. My desire to study individuals such as your self came while I was working for Old Dominion University's Military Career Transition Program. In this role, I traveled among Fort Myer, the Pentagon, Fort Belvoir, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Quantico MCB, and Fort Lee and spoke to service members who were making a midlife career transition. Around this same time, I also witnessed my own spouse transition from a fourteen-year career in the Marine Corps to a job in the civilian sector. As a counselor, I searched for a way to better understand factors that impacted one's ultimate satisfaction with their transition. Mr. Peters from the Troops to Teachers National office advised me to contact mentors directly to request their participation.

I have selected military members transitioning to teaching because your commitment to serve in the military along with your commitment to teach is both admirable and unique. There is no MOS in the military similar to educating a child in a K-12 setting. You have chosen to transition from one career to a completely different arena – and you have committed yourself to that goal by participation in Troops to Teachers or a teacher education program. I hope that you will consider sharing your valuable experiences with others who may be considering a similar career transition.

My research focuses on factors that contribute to life satisfaction for individuals experiencing career transition. Participation is voluntary and participants may withdraw from the research at any point. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers and all answers are anonymous, meaning that answers will be in no way be connected to the participant. There is no incentive or reward offered for participation. There are no foreseen costs or risks to participate in this research beyond the time expended to complete the surveys. It is estimated that it will take participants no more than 20 minutes to complete the survey. This research has been approved by Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Questions, comments or concerns about this research can be directed to Heather C. Robertson (703-244-8536 or heatherR@vt.edu) or Dr. Pamela Brott (pbrott@vt.edu).

By clicking on the link below, or cutting and pasting it into your browser, you indicate that you have read the explanation of this research and voluntarily agree to participate. Thank you in advance for your time and participation.

Sincerely, Heather C. Robertson, M.S.

Life Satisfaction among Midlife Career Changers: a study of military members transitioning to teaching
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=sphlo2maPtZ_2fum9aKOmdUA_3d_3d

APPENDIX C
FOLLOW-UP EMAIL TO MENTORS

November 16, 2009

Lewis A. Germann
ALABAMA Troops to Teachers Mentor
lagermann@knology.net

Dear TTT Mentor,

I wanted to take a moment to say thank you to those of you who completed the survey for my doctoral research entitled “Life Satisfaction among Midlife Career Changers: a study of military members transitioning to teaching.” I had a very strong response rate from the TTT mentors with over half of the mentors already responding. Also, several of you responded and inquired about a summary of the results. I will forward a summary of the results once they are compiled, hopefully by early spring.

If you have not yet had a chance to participate, I will provide the link again at the bottom of this email. I have also included a link for “non-mentors.” If you know of other individuals who have transitioned to teaching or are considering transitioning to teaching, you are welcome to forward the link to them. It is the same survey as the mentor survey with a different title. I hope to close the survey by Thanksgiving and would value any additional input. Thank you again for your time, consideration and participation. I truly appreciate it.

Sincerely,
Heather C. Robertson
703-244-8538, heatherR@vt.edu
Doctoral advisor: Dr. Pamela Brott (pbrott@vt.edu)

TTT Mentor survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=sphlo2maPtZ_2fum9aKOmdUA_3d_3d

TTT Non-mentor survey:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=ObRaCZui076xM1hyjVdlBw_3d_3d

APPENDIX D
EMAIL TO STATE/REGIONAL DIRECTORS

November 3, 2009

Mr. Steve Traylor
TTT Specialist
Alabama Troops to Teachers
straylor@alsde.edu

Dear Mr. Steve Traylor,

I am conducting research on midlife career transition, specifically, military members transitioning to the field of teaching. Mr. Peters at the Troops to Teachers national office in Pensacola has also allowed me to distribute my research to the Troops to Teachers mentor group.

I am reaching out to you today in an effort to expand my participants to members of the state-level Troops to Teachers organizations. Specifically, I am seeing your assistance in three ways, if possible:

1. Please email members directly, seeking their participation in the research.
2. Please post a description of the research and a link to the survey on your website.
3. If you produce a newsletter for your state, please write a brief summary of the research, along with my email address, inviting members to contact me for participation.

I am able to provide text for any of the actions requested above, or you are welcome to create text that you feel is most appropriate. I will be calling you in the next few days to discuss the possibility of your state's participation in my national research. Thank you in advance for your time and participation.

Sincerely,
Heather C. Robertson, M.S.
heatherR@vt.edu, 703-244-8536
Doctoral Supervisor: Dr. Pamela Brott (pbrott@vt.edu)

Life Satisfaction among Midlife Career Changes: a study of military members transitioning to teaching (please click on the link below or cut/paste it into your browser).

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=ObRaCZui076xM1hyjVdlBw_3d_3d

APPENDIX E
FOLLOW-UP EMAIL TO STATE/REGIONAL DIRECTORS

December 6, 2009

I am writing to follow up with my 11/3/2009 email below requesting your assistance with my doctoral research. I called your office on 11/16 to inquire as to its receipt.

I have had very strong success with Troops to Teachers mentors completing the survey and I am hoping that state directors will be willing to forward the message below to their members via email. I am trying to reach any service member who is considering teaching, as well as those who have begun or completed the transition. I will follow up this email with a phone call to your office Monday or Tuesday. Thank you in advance for your time and attention. I look forward to speaking with you further.

Sincerely,
Heather C. Robertson
heatherR@vt.edu
703-244-8536

Troops to Teachers Research Request

Heather Robertson, a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech and former military spouse, is requesting your participation in research on midlife career changers, specifically military members transitioning to the field of teaching. Previously, Heather assisting service members who were transitioning to teaching in her work with Old Dominion University's Military Career Transition Program. She selected military members transitioning to teaching for this study because a commitment to serve in the military along with a commitment to teach is both admirable and unique. You have chosen to transition from one career to a completely different arena – and you have committed yourself to that goal by participation in Troops to Teachers or a teacher education program. It would be appreciated if you would consider sharing your valuable experiences with others who may be considering a similar career transition by completing the research survey below.

The research focuses on factors that contribute to life satisfaction among midlife career changers. Participation is voluntary and participants may withdraw from the research at any point. It is estimated that it will take participants no more than 20 minutes to complete the survey. Questions, comments or concerns about this research can be directed to Heather C. Robertson (703-244-8536 or heatherR@vt.edu) or Dr. Pamela Brott (pbrott@vt.edu). If you are interested in participating in this survey, please click on the link below (or cut/paste it into your browser): https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=ObRaCZui076xM1hyjVdlBw_3d_3d

APPENDIX F
EMAIL TO DISTANCE LEARNING EDUCATION PROGRAM DIRECTORS

November 16, 2009

American Military University
Craig Gilman
cgilman@apus.edu

Dear Craig Gilman,

I received your name from the Troops to Teachers website (www.proudtoserveagain.com) as the Service Member Point of Contact (POC) for American Military University's Distance Learning Teacher Education program. I am conducting research on midlife career changers, specifically military members transitioning to teaching. I am hoping that you will be able to assist me with this research by forwarding the request below to students in your program. I am specifically seeking military or former-military members transitioning to teaching, however the descriptor can be sent to all students in the program. You are also welcome to click on the survey link to read my full research introductory statement. You may click through all questions to review the content prior to distribution, however please do not submit or select any responses while doing so as this may skew the results. Please contact me via phone or email (indicated below), with any questions or concerns. I will follow up this email with a phone call later in the week to see if I can provide additional information. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,
Heather C. Robertson

Troops to Teachers Research Request

Heather Robertson, a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech and former military spouse, is requesting participation from military members or former military members in her research on midlife career changers, specifically military members transitioning to the field of teaching. Previously, Heather assisting service members who were transitioning to teaching in her work with Old Dominion University's Military Career Transition Program. Whether you are a military member who is considering transitioning to teaching, midway through the process, or you have already transitioned to teaching, it would be appreciated if you would share your experience with others who may be considering a similar transition by completing the research survey below. If you are not a military member or former military member, please disregard this request.

The research focuses on factors that contribute to life satisfaction among midlife career changers. Participation is voluntary and participants may withdraw from the research at any point. It is estimated that it will take participants no more than 20 minutes to complete the survey. Questions, comments or concerns about this research can be directed to Heather C. Robertson (703-244-8536 or heatherR@vt.edu) or Dr. Pamela Brott (pbrott@vt.edu). If you are interested in participating in this survey, please click on the link below (or cut/paste it into your browser): https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=ObRaCZui076xM1hyjVdlBw_3d_3d

**APPENDIX G
SPRINGER PUBLISHING COMPANY APPROVAL**

10/22/2009

Heather Robertson
Stony Brook University
Melville Library
Stony Brook, NY 11794



Dear Ms. Robertson,

Thank you for your permission request made on 9/22/2009 to make reproductions of the following:

Counseling Adults in Transition, 3rd ed
Figure 2.1: The Individual in Transition and Figure 2.2: Integrative model of the transition process
pg 33 and 50 / Total Number of Pages requested (2)

This material will be used in:

Doctoral Dissertation

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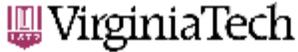
Sincerely,

Jessica Perl
Sales Associate

Ref# R-PO1022001

Federal ID 20-4816538

**APPENDIX H
VIRGINIA TECH IRB APPROVAL**



Office of Research Compliance
Carmen T. Green, IRB Administrator
2000 Kraft Drive, Suite 2000 (0497)
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061
540/231-4358 Fax 540/231-0959
e-mail ctgreen@vt.edu
www.irb.vt.edu
FWA00000572 (expires 1/20/2010)
IRB # is IRB00000887

DATE: October 29, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Pamela E. Brott
Heather Robertson

FROM: Carmen Green 

SUBJECT: **IRB Exempt Approval:** "Life Satisfaction Among Midlife Career Changers: A Study of Military Members Transitioning to Teaching", IRB # 09-893

I have reviewed your request to the IRB for exemption for the above referenced project. The research falls within the exempt status, CFR 46.101(b) category(ies) 2. Approval is granted effective as of October 29, 2009.

As an investigator of human subjects, your responsibilities include the following:

1. Report promptly proposed changes in the research protocol. The proposed changes must not be initiated without IRB review and approval, except where necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects.
2. Report promptly to the IRB any injuries or other unanticipated or adverse events involving risks or harms to human research subjects or others.

cc: File

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