

# **Career and Relationship Satisfaction among Female Faculty in MFT Programs**

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### **(ABSTRACT)**

In this study, I explored the career satisfaction, relationship satisfaction, friendship intimacy, and mentoring functions of female faculty in marriage and family therapy (MFT) programs. Study participants included 111 women affiliated with a MFT program in a research or liberal arts institution or training institute. Participants completed the Faculty Satisfaction Questionnaire (FSQ), Kansas Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire (KMS), Miller Social Intimacy Scale (MSIS), Mentoring Functions Questionnaire, and a demographics section with open-ended questions about their experiences. Faculty women reported higher levels of satisfaction with teaching than with service or research and higher satisfaction with service than research. Faculty who were part of a significant relationship reported high scores on the KMS while faculty who had a close friend indicated moderate intimacy levels on the MSIS. Those with a mentor reported that their mentor provided more psychosocial mentoring functions than career mentoring functions. Characteristics of the mentor and the mentoring relationship predicted the extent of the psychosocial and mentoring functions provided.

Associations among career satisfaction, relationship satisfaction, friendship intimacy, mentoring functions, and demographic variables were determined using stepwise multiple regression analyses on a subsample of 37 faculty with complete data on key career and relationship functions. Expanded service duties, psychosocial mentoring functions, being Caucasian, and having received an award for research were associated with greater levels of career satisfaction. Career mentoring functions were associated

with reduced levels of career satisfaction. Possession of a doctorate and psychosocial mentoring functions were associated with greater levels of friendship intimacy.

Based on the results of this research and the literature of women in academia, implications and suggestions for improving the academic climate are presented for institutions, MFT programs, the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (AAMFT), and the Commission on Accreditation of Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE). Limitations and suggestions for future research are also discussed.

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