WHY ARE SATELLITE CAMPUS STUDENTS HIGHLY SATISFIED: AN

INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

A doctoral thesis presented

by

Mary Burke

To the

Graduate School of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor

of Education

in the field of

Education

College of Professional Studies

Northeastern University

Boston, Massachusetts

March 2017

Abstract

Community college satellite campus students often experience limitations in terms of resources, academic programs, course offerings and access to faculty. Despite these facts, studies conducted at colleges and universities demonstrate that satellite campus students report higher levels of satisfaction than those at main campuses where limitations do not exist (Peake, Par, & Roberts, 2013). The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of high levels of satisfaction of community college satellite campus students. Eight graduates from the same satellite campus participated in the study. The researcher employed an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach to examine satellite campus student's experience. The findings suggest that satellite campus students tend to be satisfied when they study in a small learning environment, develop meaningful relationships with faculty, staff and peers, and feel as though the college is attentive to their satisfaction. In addition, the study suggests that highly satisfied students tend to persist and have improved academic performance. The study suggests that students would benefit if satellite campus administrators incorporated these student preferences into decision making, policy and training Additional qualitative research is needed to explore satellite campuses and their students.

Keywords: attrition, branch campus, nontraditional student, persistence, resource allocation, satellite campus, student satisfaction, student services.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement Page

First and foremost, I must thank Dr. Kimberly Nolan for her guidance and support. The dissertation process is daunting for students who are working, have families and are attending a graduate program. Her consistent feedback allowed me to perfect my writing while her encouragement motivated me to complete the process. Similarly, Dr. McNabb was critical to the adherence of qualitative research, IPA methodology and APA formatting. I appreciate his knowledge and attention to detail. And a special thank you to Dr. Stephen Kearney for serving as my external advisor. At a time when he was extremely busy with his own work, he took the time to read my lengthy study and provide invaluable feedback.

I also must thank my children, Anna and Jack. Throughout the years of coursework and writing, they sacrificed time from their own busy schedules, allowing me to pursue this goal. Their patience and support was inspiring; encouraging me to persist. I love you both. My parents instilled in me the importance of learning and education. Their support was invaluable. By their example, I have learned many things in life and I am forever grateful. I love you both. I must especially thank my dad for his constant review of my dissertation. His faithful red pen corrected many errors that improved my writing tremendously.

Also, I would like to thank the participants in the research study. Their interest and candor during interviews was instrumental in providing insight into the satellite campus student experience. Testimony from their interviews will have a direct impact on future decision making as well as improving the experience for other satellite campus students. Finally, I would like to thank President Peter Tsaffaras for allowing the research to take place. From the beginning, he supported the research and committed to implement changes for the betterment of students. His

leadership is truly focused on student success and should be used as a model for other academic institutions.

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Academic programs and course offerings at community college satellite campuses in the United States are often limited (Hoyt & Howell, 2012). Resources are scarce and some departments are centralized at the main campus making it difficult for satellite campus students to access however, students often pay the same tuition rates on both campuses. Despite these facts, studies conducted at universities and colleges demonstrate that satellite campus students report higher levels of satisfaction than those at main campuses (Peake, Par, & Roberts, 2013).

The purpose of this interpretative phenomenological study was to gain a better understanding of high levels of satisfaction of community college satellite campus students. Limitations of student services would presumably cause dissatisfaction, however this seems not to be the case. Despite the apparent lack of resources, satellite campus students are highly satisfied. Because high satisfaction is linked to improved academic performance, continued learning, persistence and graduation (Booker & Rebman, 2005; Sinclaire, 2011; Sloan, 2010), this information is critical to the college community. Data from this study will be shared with stakeholders to better inform decision making.

This chapter begins with a brief overview of research related to satellite campuses to provide context and background to the study. The rationale and significance of the study is discussed next, drawing connections to potential beneficiaries of the work. The problem statement, purpose statement, and research questions are presented to focus and ground the study. Finally the theoretical framework that serves as a lens for the study is introduced and explained.

Context and Background

Satellite campuses are often established by colleges and universities to serve the educational needs of a more distant community. These campuses are typically smaller and physically located a significant distance from the main campus. One growing trend is the presence of the international branch campus. Some universities and colleges have created specializations at a particular campus in order to allocate appropriate resources for expensive programs that cannot be offered on both campuses (Harrison, 2010; Peake, Par & Roberts, 2013). Other colleges have opened satellite campuses to provide higher educational opportunities for students who would otherwise not have access (Cossman-Ross, 2005). In order to facilitate the delivery of programs and services, some colleges will utilize virtual networks that allow access to classroom instruction and services (Harrison, 2010). Many colleges and universities are expanding their facilities to increase enrollment, improve access for students, increase student diversity, and improve student participation in professional experiences (Harrison, 2010). If satellite campuses continue to proliferate, it will be important to consider the experience of students that affect student satisfaction and achievement at these locations.

Several studies reference the fact that services and programs are limited on satellite campuses (Lee, 2004). Access to such things as transportation, disability services, library services and information literacy instruction as well as full time faculty are deficient (Hoyt & Howell, 2012). Poor communication between the main campus and satellite campus exacerbates issues for students, staff and faculty (Macdonald 2006; Poling, LoSchiavo & Shatz, 2009). Main campus student populations are often very different from the satellite campus populations in terms of age, socioeconomic status, family responsibilities, diversity and employment status (Bambrick, 2002:

McClelland & Daly, 1991). Due to these differences, improving student services for the satellite campus population is critical; however they are often inadequate (Bambrick, 2002; Merzer, 2008). For example, the impact of having fewer student services results in fewer resources such as accommodation plans for students with disabilities.

Disability students without accommodations will require more support from faculty and staff. Without it, they will not persist. Other student services such as counseling can be critical to mitigate obstacles outside of the classroom. These counselors often assist students with making arrangements for daycare, transportation, and coordinating support from community agencies. Referrals for such issues as substance abuse and domestic violence can sometimes make the difference as to whether a student withdraws or persists. Limitations in library hours or library services impact the students' ability to complete assignments and learn research methods. In some colleges, satellite campuses must limit program offerings due to costly equipment and administrative decisions regarding the allocation of resources. Therefore satellite campus students are denied the possibility of pursuing programs that are of interest to them. These examples of limitations on the satellite campus could prevent student satisfaction. However, students continue to report high levels of satisfaction despite these differences. Therefore, experiences that create higher levels of satisfaction are worthy of study.

Rationale and Significance

 With a national focus on access to education and degree attainment, it is important to investigate students who face obstacles to both. Satellite campuses often provide this access, particularly in remote locations. Satellite campuses are now commonplace in institutions of higher education and are expected to proliferate as they enroll an increasing non-traditional student population (Poling, LoSchiavo, & Shatz, 2009). Colleges and universities are

investigating new ways to reach prospective students to increase enrollment and retention. One method is the branch campus that often services a different population. When studying student experience in a first year seminar course, Ballantyne (2012) notes that demographics on the main campus are often very different from that at the satellite campus. Main campuses are often located in urban settings with a diverse population, whereas satellite campuses are often located in a suburban or less urban setting and can tend to attract a more homogeneous and nontraditional population (Bambrick, 2002; McClelland & Daly, 1991). Because non-traditional populations continue to be a focus of educators, it is important to study limitations students may face and levels of satisfaction experienced at the satellite campus (Hoyt & Howell, 2012). In many cases, non-traditional students are more vulnerable because they have more obstacles outside of school and have less access to services, resources, programs, course offerings, and faculty. Being able to influence change in this area would be beneficial to students, staff and faculty at satellite campuses as well as the entire institution of higher education. If satisfaction fosters persistence for these students, then identifying attributing factors was critical. According to Lee (2004), there are an increasing number of academic institutions building satellite sites to meet the needs of the community and therefore issues of disparity must be addressed. Bambrick (2006) states that this non-traditional population is no less deserving of a high quality education and is entitled to the same services and attention as their peers receive at other campuses. Therefore, it is imperative to provide data regarding the student experience at a satellite campus to college administrators. The fact that these students are highly satisfied does not mean that limited resources can be ignored. It does however, warrant further investigation as to why satisfaction levels are high if resources are limited. The experience contributing to high levels of satisfaction need to be fostered and replicated.

Literature is deficient regarding information on student outcomes at community college satellite campuses. As referenced, research suggests that satellite campus students are, in some cases, more satisfied than main campus students because of the more intimate setting and ability to develop relationships with peers, staff and faculty. Retention theories claim these factors increase persistence (Tinto, 1987). However, there is no evidence that literature supports the theory that limited resources affect outcomes, particularly since the satellite campus students are more satisfied and likely to persist. Several student development studies suggest that relationships with peers and faculty positively affect levels of satisfaction (Galambos & Thomas, 2004; Tinto, 1987). Data gathered from past student satisfaction surveys and graduation surveys at the satellite campus report that positive relationships exist with faculty, staff and students on campus and are considered important to students (QC, Student Satisfaction Survey, September 2016). Also, the surveys suggest that these positive relationships contribute to a welcoming learning environment. It was not known whether these relationships directly affect levels of satisfaction at the community college satellite campus. Research conducted in this study will report the current experience at the local community college satellite campus regarding limitations and high levels of satisfaction.

Knowledge generated will inform the operations of satellite campuses. By examining the findings regarding the experience and perceptions of satellite campus students, administrators will identify factors contributing to high levels of satisfaction at the satellite campus. Administrators can then support the continuation and enhancement of such factors. This information can inform decision makers about standards and processes on campus. Training for new staff and faculty can include attention to factors that contribute to high levels of satisfaction. In addition to these factors, perceptions of limitations will also be identified as they relate to

dissatisfaction. These areas can be targeted for improvement, restructuring, or the dedication of additional resources. Instructors at this satellite campus can learn the deficiencies of their students' resources and provide alternative instruction or assistance. Governing boards of the college can be more aware of the impact of expansion and what issues must be addressed to ensure student success on all campuses. In addition, contributing factors can be supported and enhanced to ensure continued high levels of satisfaction that may create improved academic performance, continued learning, persistence and increased completion rates (Booker & Rebman, 2005; Sinclaire, 2011; Sloan, 2010). Administrators can replicate these factors at other campuses to improve levels of satisfaction for all students.

Research Problem and Research Question

Satellite campus students at community colleges often have limited resources, fewer faculty, and fewer student services than those students who study at the main campus. A lack of services and resources exist at the satellite campus. Satellite campus students often go without academic and administrative services. Nevertheless, they are often highly satisfied, which can reduce attrition and lead to persistence. Based on surveys from recent years, students at this satellite campus report that there are some deficiencies in resources that would better prepare them for academic success. In one survey, students indicated that the satellite campus needed to improve services such as counseling and life balance, access to tutoring, increased library hours and course offerings (QC, Student Satisfaction Survey, September 2016). Despite these limitations, the students reported extremely high levels of satisfaction overall. Their levels of satisfaction scores were much higher than those reported by main campus students where these limitations do not exist. Interestingly, the satellite campus students report that most importantly, faculty cared

about their success, they were accomplishing their educational goals, the campus was warm and friendly, and they felt welcome on campus. These factors were not as high at the main campus where resources, including access to faculty and staff, are more plentiful. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the experiences that contribute to high levels of satisfaction at a community college satellite campus. The perception of students who study at the satellite campus will be described in regard to overall experiences. The research question that the study will seek to answer is:

How do satellite campus graduates describe the impact of their college experience?

Definition of Key Terminology

Attrition-a decrease in the number of students enrolled due to drop out or withdrawal.

Branch Campus- a location of an academic institution that is geographically separated and independent from the main campus.

Non-traditional Students- characteristics possessed by college students that include such factors as higher age upon entry to college, part-time enrollment, family and work responsibilities and completion of a GED.

Persistence- the ability to continue enrollment at an institution of higher education.

Resource Allocation- administrative decisions regarding types of services and resources available at an academic institution.

Satellite Campus- a location of an academic institution that is geographically separated and independent from the main campus.

Student Satisfaction- levels of fulfillment and gratification in regards to social and academic experience in an institution of higher education.

Student Services-academic and administrative services provided to reduce obstacles and increase student success.

Theoretical Framework

Many academic institutions are adopting a customer focus toward higher education. The student customer theory suggests that if universities apply a business model to their institution, they are more likely to have success (Mark, 2013). If students are considered consumers, then their satisfaction is an important factor in the success of the institution as a customer's experience is important to a business's success. Similarly, as a business seeks to learn about their customers' needs through consumer satisfaction surveys, universities use the data from the student satisfaction survey to discover unique characteristics of their students. Therefore, if factors involved in satisfaction can be determined from surveys, colleges and universities can partner with students allowing administration to create a more efficient and effective college community (Emery, 2001; McCollough & Gremler, 1999; Scott, 1999). This research used data from student satisfaction surveys and interviews to further explore this population and determined factors involved in the reasons why these community college satellite campus students remain highly satisfied despite having limited resources. Answers to the research questions became apparent by utilizing the theory of the student-consumer in a business model and employing a customer focus in higher education practice.

In 2012, 21.6 million students attended college in the United States, representing an increase of 6.2 million students since 2000 (Hussar & Bailey, 2013). Since then, the educational

environment has become competitive with colleges desiring to recruit and retain students and the public's demanding more accountability. Institutions nationwide are challenged to demonstrate student success to various constituents (Sanders & Burton, 1996). Parents, students, colleges and policymakers are seeking evidence of institutional quality to guide decision making (Galambos & Thomas, 2004). For this reason, colleges are realizing the importance of student satisfaction. (Elliot & Shin, 2002). Data from satisfaction surveys are incorporated into mission statements, marketing initiatives, institutional goals and strategic planning (Elliott & Shin, 2002).

According to Douglas and McClelland (2008), recruitment, retention and student satisfaction are closely linked. Therefore, colleges and universities invest in satisfaction surveys to ensure they are meeting student demands for retention and to increase current and future enrollment. Attention to satisfaction will not only increase persistence and graduation rates but also will create an improved long-term affiliation with the college including alumni support and involvement of university enhancement activities and campaigns. In this way, colleges and universities are viewing students as consumers and the education and services provided as the product (Cheng & Tam, 1997; Driscoll & Wicks, 1998).

Evidence exists that post-secondary students benefit from being treated like consumers (Mark, 2013). As education costs continue to rise, students are becoming more critical of choices. Academic institutions are forced to compete for students. Because satisfaction is linked to institutional success, colleges and universities must be aware of consumer needs. Increased satisfaction can be the impetus of more robust institutional improvement programs including academic areas and student services. Research demonstrates that high student satisfaction has a positive effect on student's motivation, retention, and future investment in the college (Elliot &

Shin, 2002). High satisfaction is also linked to improved academic performance, continued learning, persistence and graduation (Booker & Rebman, 2005; Sinclaire, 2011; Sloan, 2010). Therefore, data from satisfaction surveys that are utilized by academic institutions directly benefit the student. Such is the case with the research of community college satellite campus students. Data from past satisfaction surveys were used to develop questions for student interviews during the research process for validation. The attributing factors will be presented to college administration for the consideration of an investment of resources to promote identified factors. Ultimately, students will benefit from the satisfaction survey process by expected improvements and resource allocation that has been determined by survey findings.

Many colleges use data from satisfaction surveys to inform decisions and assess institutional effectiveness; however, its determinants are difficult because student satisfaction can be complex (Galambos & Thomas, 2004). Little debate exists that student satisfaction is important but the assessment criteria is still unresolved (Guolla, 1999). Sweeney & Ingram (2001) define student satisfaction as "the perception of enjoyment and accomplishment in the learning environment" (p. 57). Previous research on student satisfaction focuses on campus services, academic achievement and retention (Galambos & Thomas, 2004). However, in the student consumer model, student satisfaction occurs when quality matches or surpasses the student's expectations (Elliott & Shin, 2002; Hill, 1995; Kelly, Donnelly & Skinner, 1990; Sirvanci, 1996; Swan, Bowers & Grover, 2002). The difference between definitions as well as the theory is controversial.

There is ample literature regarding factors that contribute to high levels of satisfaction.

Elliot (2003) posits that "key determinants of student satisfaction are the quality of education and a feeling of belonging" (p, 277). Wiers-Jenssen & Stensaker (2010) remark that student satisfaction factors include the learning experience however social climate, physical infrastructure and access to faculty, administrative staff and services should not be underestimated. In fact, a most students are reported to be satisfied with their academic programs, but often dissatisfied with insufficient support services such as academic advising, tutoring and career counseling (Kotler & Fox, 1995). Douglas and McClelland (2008) found in their study that responsiveness, communication and access are the most important factors in student satisfaction. The theoretical principals of student satisfaction in a student customer model were utilized to further identify the reasons why students are highly satisfied in an environment that lacks a full complement of support services such as the satellite campus.

Critics of the Student Consumer Theory

The student consumer theory is controversial among educators and in academic circles. Many professors reject the tenants of the student consumer model and are apprehensive about applying business concepts and theory to the educational setting. The main concern is that they claim that education is not analogous to a business because success and failure cannot be measured in the same manner. They state that education has a more principled mission that does not include an end goal such as a profit or market share. These group of educators also reject the theory that the customer is always right. Critics suggest that college administration should not strive to meet the demands of students in order to ensure satisfaction (Mark, 2013).

Other critics oppose the student customer theory because they claim that the academic process is jeopardized if the focus is on satisfying the student. They claim that the student-customer

theory can create opportunity for the student to blame the college for their personal failure (Mark, 2013). They contend that applying the theory encourages students to assert that they received poor instruction rather than accepting responsibility for their own personal failures. Simultaneously, this encourages faculty to relax academic standards and rigor for fear of receiving poor student evaluations. As a result, faculty would have to participate in negotiation with their students because of the focus on satisfaction and student evaluations. Satisfaction survey results could then be used in decision making regarding tenure and whether or not to reappoint faculty and renew a contract (Courtney & Courtney, 2006).

Critics also argue that students should not be considered consumers because typically they are not fully responsible for tuition and fees associated with their education. Often educational costs for students are subsidized by outside entities such as taxpayers and scholarship (Bay & Daniel, 2001). Critics also feel the survey is misleading as students do not have a full understanding of what constitutes quality education. Students often strive for the immediate short term goal and therefore their perception is flawed. Trying to meet expectations could be detrimental to students and academic institutions. In this instance, "universities would have to focus on keeping students happy rather than on preparing them for the future or creating new knowledge" (Franz, 1998, p.5). Franz (1998) states that students in this model expect to be entertained and pedagogy becomes entertainment and a popularity contest.

Rationale

Consumer satisfaction is the focus of many business management journals. Literature supports the theory that customer satisfaction is critical to the survival of a business (Reh, 2011). Experts write about how to design a customer satisfaction survey, when to conduct a survey, how often to

seek this information and what to do with feedback (Mittal & Kamakura, 2001). Organizations

hire consultants to conduct surveys and devote significant time and financial resources toward

collection of this data. Other organizations have internal measures to routinely survey customers.

Literature contends that an organization must collect the data to look for trends and comparisons

with competitors (Reh, 2011). It is recommended that businesses find solutions to stated

consumer issues and consider suggestions given by survey participants in order to foster loyalty

and encourage continued patronage.

The rationale behind applying the principals of consumer satisfaction surveys to student

satisfaction surveys is to elicit the same type of information. As previously stated, high levels of

satisfaction are linked to improved academic performance, continued learning, persistence and

graduation (Booker & Rebman, 2005; Sinclaire , 2011; Sloan, 2010) and therefore must be

studied to foster such outcomes. The purpose of this research was to ascertain why students at a

particular community college satellite campus report high levels of satisfaction on recent

surveys. When applying the same tenets of customer satisfaction surveys that are used in

business theory to student satisfaction surveys, data informed the research. The data collected

contributed to the findings about experience that contributes to high levels of satisfaction. These

experiences will be shared with faculty, staff and administration. Survey data will inform

decision making and resource allocation in order to further foster high satisfaction of students

who study at this community college satellite campus.

Applying the Student Consumer Theory to the study

Research findings on the community college satellite campus were utilize student

satisfaction theories to assist in the explanation as to why students are highly satisfied. Factors

that have been identified in research studies and literature were compared to those factors reported by students at the community college satellite campus. The student-consumer theory was be applied to support and validate the utilization of student satisfaction data and the importance of understanding potential outcomes associated with satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This theory incorporated business model tenants to further explore the factors surrounding satisfaction such as enrollment, graduation and persistence. Trends in recent years were discussed to report any correlation with levels of satisfaction. After applying a student-consumer model to the community college satellite campus students, data was produced that answered the question as to why students are highly satisfied.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Despite the increased number of community college satellite campuses, Fonseca and Bird (2007) state that satellite campuses "remain largely ignored in the academic literature" (p.1). While there are few studies focused specifically on satellite campuses, what exists are papers that cover various aspects of this topic. Many colleges and universities with satellite sites combine statistics on their total population when reporting on college information. For that reason, it is difficult to access information on satellite campus specific data. There are numerous articles describing the increase in the number of international branch campuses. Several colleges and universities have established satellite sites in other countries. A common theme emerges in literature regarding all types of branch locations: the experience of students who study at a satellite campus differs greatly from the experience of students who study at other locations. This is a significant finding due to the fact that demographics of students studying at community college satellite campuses often include non-traditional students with less opportunity and access to education (Ballantyne, 2012).

This population is more vulnerable because they experience more obstacles outside of school making degree attainment difficult. In addition, satellite campuses often have fewer resources and support services (Cavanaugh, 2007). Despite these limitations, research studies suggest that satellite campus students are highly satisfied and experience better outcomes (Bambrick, 2002).

The literature review was conducted with a representative sample approach. In this method, a large sample of related articles were used to make assumptions about the entire population of articles from that sample (Randolph, 2009). In terms of format, the articles and research studies were grouped together in different categories. Randolph (2009) describes this format by organizing literature around concepts that apply to the topic. Initially, key words used to query the literature were "satellite campus," "branch campus, "and "multi-campus universities." After scanning and reading articles, a second search was conducted using the following words: "student satisfaction" and "satisfaction levels" and "student outcomes" and "limitations" These words were searched on both the Northeastern University Library website as well as a local community college library website. Articles and research studies were collected, recorded and evaluated. In some instances, articles were scanned for appropriateness where some articles required reading the entire submission. Data was collected and recorded for analysis and interpretation. Articles and research studies were grouped by category or how they related to the main topic. Once organized, a draft was written that outlined each section of articles that related to similar concepts or aspects of the topic.

Satellite Campus Overview

Origin and Background

Satellite campuses have been in existence for over a century. In 1877, Thomas Jefferson spoke of the necessity to create a district college "which shall place every father within a day's ride of a college where he may dispose of his son" (Carr, 2004, p. 135). In fact, the origin of the community college satellite campus came out of the Morrill Act of 1890. At this time in the country's history after the Civil War, a need to educate the general population was identified and the system of land grant institutions emerged (Klein, 1931; Vaughan, 2000). Educational extension services were used to reach those living in rural areas. The GI Bill, also known as The

Serviceman's Readjustment Act of 1944 was enacted after World War II, and some satellite campuses were developed to meet the demand of these new students (Vaughan, 2000). Today a similar rise in student population exists and has led to an increase of branch campuses, particularly international branch campuses (Dessoff, 2011; Macdonald, 2006). Despite the increased number of sites, there are very few research studies that focus solely on the satellite site (Fonseca& Bird, 2007). Academic literature on satellite campuses is comprised of various aspects of this topic. In the literature, a common theme emerges: the experience at a satellite campus differs greatly from the experience at the main campus.

A search of the literature uncovered many different aspects of issues that face a satellite campus. For example, studies are written about organizational structure, the process of establishing a new satellite campus, political considerations in decision-making at satellite campuses, and the use of technology to enhance instruction (Clark, & Tullar, 1995; Dengerink,

2001; Knapp, Roffman, & Cooper, 2009; Marx, 2005). The term referenced to describe these

campuses are as varied as the topics of the literature. Examples include: satellite campus

(Lombardi, 1973), extension centers (Medsker, 1971), branch campus (Blocker & Campbell,

1963), joint-use campus (Floyd, Skolnick, & Walker, 2005), off-site campus (Merzer, 2008), and

partner campus (Florida Statutes, 1985). Hermanson (1995) reports that the most common term

used during a proliferation of campuses in the 1990s was regional campus.

  While many articles reference a rise in satellite campuses (Fonseca & Bird, 2007), it is

difficult to ascertain how many satellite campuses exist in the nation and internationally. The

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) report that there are a total of 7,021 academic

institutions of higher education in the United States (Snyder & Dillow, 2011). Also, the NCES

distinguishes statistics to indicate how many are private versus public institutions, degree

granting and non-degree granting, profit versus non-profit, and 2 year college versus 4 year

college. What is not listed is the number of satellite campuses. Two comparative tables display

these institutions; one that includes branch campuses and one that excludes branch campuses. A

footnote indicates that branch campuses are only listed if the college indicates the location on the

Integrated Postsecondary Educational Data System (IPEDS) reports (National Center for

Educational Statistics, 2012). No information regarding the number of branch campuses exists

prior to 1985. A search on the NCES website of local branch campuses in Massachusetts reveals

that numerous branch campuses are missing and not listed at all. Nickerson & Shaefer (2001)

conducted a study of branch campuses that recorded 1,089 such sites in the United States but

noted that no national compiled directory exists.

International Branch Campus

International branch campuses, on the other hand, are well written about. As of 2012, there were 200 international branch campuses worldwide with 37 additional sites planned to open over the next year (Dessoff, 2011). The greatest numbers of branch campuses worldwide are represented by United States institutions of higher education (Dessoff, 2011). Australia also has a large number of what are called offshore campuses and report many advantages and disadvantages (Macdonald, 2006)**.** Advantages include lower operating costs, relaxed visa requirements which allow more students to attend, local academic staffing, and increase overall enrollment to the parent university (Macdonald, 2006). Disadvantages include difficulty retaining staff, lack of resources and programs, feelings of being a "second class citizen" (p. 212), lack of authority and poor relations with the parent organization (Macdonald, 2006). These issues are similar to those experienced at a satellite campus that is located in the same country.

Conclusion

Although there are similarities between an international branch campus and a satellite campus located within the United States, there are also several obvious differences. Therefore, while ample literature exists about international branch campuses, not all data can be used to make comparisons with local campuses. Unfortunately, a review of articles relating to satellite locations are few and varied in topic. Statistics are unreliable due to a lack of information reported. National statistics are gathered from data submitted from academic institutions that may or may not report location specific information. In many institutions, statistics are combined and reported together making comparisons difficult. In fact, it is difficult to estimate how many satellite campuses exist nationwide or worldwide.

Based on the lack of literature discovered, a research study on the experience of satellite campus students will bring attention to this neglected topic. More information is needed to explore the differences between parent and satellite campus. In addition, the high level of satisfaction needs to be further explained considering the reports of limited resources that exist at many satellite locations.

<div align="center">

Limitations of a Satellite Campus

</div>

The resounding theme in the literature is the disparity between satellite campuses and main campuses. The difference in physical location often creates a unique need for certain programs and resources which add to the disparity. Often one campus is large, urban and consists of a more diverse population. The other campus may be more suburban or rural consisting of a local and homogeneous population. Typically, satellite campuses have fewer students, fewer resources, fewer full-time faculty, and services centralized at the main campus (Cavanaugh, 2007). Because of the distance between the campuses and finite resources, challenges exist for the satellite campus including faculty issues, administrative issues and student issues.

Faculty Issues

According to Curtis (2005), there has been a downward trend in compensation for faculty at satellite campuses since 1998, resulting in resentment and attrition. According to Cavanaugh (2007) the difference in salary is not explained by fewer faculty, lower tuition, or by any student demographic variables, but rather because the campus is located in a different community. This difference in compensation has greatly affected satellite campus faculty satisfaction levels. The satisfaction of the faculty at the satellite campuses is important because a key factor that contributes to a college's success is the interaction between students and faculty (Cosman-Ross & Hiatt-Michael, 2005). In fact, when faculty are not satisfied in the workplace, they are less

able to encourage and motivate students and therefore the satellite campus student can be at a disadvantage (Feldman & Paulsen, 1999). MacDonald (2006) reports several areas where satellite campus faculty are dissatisfied. When surveyed, faculty report disappointment with a perceived status of inferiority when compared to the main campus staff as well as a "lack of career structure and promotion opportunity; limited research options and support; heavy workload; uncertainty about their status; inconsistent application of policies; and unhappiness with management communications and transparency" (Macdonald, 2006, p. 212). The faculty express a feeling of frustration due to a lack control because of the influence of the academics within their department at the main campus. This lack of power frustrates the satellite campus faculty as they discover that they have to mirror the course content of the class that is offered at the main campus with little academic freedom. This prevents them from modifying or changing the course content to meet the needs of their satellite campus students or to highlight their own personal interests in the subject matter. Once the students understand this lack of power, respect is lost and the faculty feels as though they have fewer mechanisms available to engage and motivate students in experiential learning and new teaching strategies (Macdonald, 2006).

Psychology faculty at a regional campus in Ohio have written about this feeling of being disenfranchised. They note that although 24 regional campuses exist to educate over 47,000 students (Ohio Board of Regents, 2007) there is little academic literature referencing their works, as opposed to main campus psychology instructors. Further, stated in the article is that psychology departments on regional campuses often consist of one to three faculty members. These instructors are forced to teach multiple, varied courses and because of the small size of the campus, often must participate in general service obligations (McReynolds, 1986). Amongst themselves, satellite campus psychology faculty develop strategies to conduct effective course

preparation of several different topics and therefore often do not feel connected to the discussion of the main campus psychology instructors (Poling, LoSchiavo, and Shatz, 2009). Although the distance fosters autonomy and individualism, it also creates a division between colleagues. Psychology faculty reference the fact that departments often vote on such issues as promotion and tenure status and when physically separated, this division can result in negative consequences for satellite campus faculty (Poling, LoSchiavo, and Shatz, 2009).

In some instances, faculty at the main campus have rejected the establishment of a new satellite campus effectively preventing expansion and progress. This was the experience at Duke University when the School of Business decided to open a satellite campus (Dessoff, 2011). The Duke University Board of Trustees voted to approve significant financial resources dedicated to build the campus and hire local faculty. Months of planning included developing relationship with local industry and outreach to civic organizations. What the board overlooked was a bylaw stating that Duke faculty must approve any degree program offered at an alternative site (Dessoff, 2011). In this instance, Duke School of Business faculty did not support the project fearing a lack of academic rigor at the satellite campus which they cited as the hallmark of academic life. In this example, the stereotype of an academically weak satellite campus jeopardized the success of the expansion project.

Resentment from faculty at a main campus is documented in literature and is concerning because of the potential effect it can have on student perceptions. Some faculty at a main campus perceive themselves more intellectually sophisticated than the branch campus faculty (Bambrick, 2002). Some become disagreeable when they are asked to share in the teaching responsibility of the satellite campus on a temporary basis. Other faculty resent the diversion of funds and resources that can become exacerbated if the campus begins to thrive and increase enrollment.

Issues Concerning Administration

In addition to faculty issues at satellite campuses, administrators also feel the need for more cooperation and collaboration from the main campus. Roles are often confused which can lead to issues for students, faculty, and staff. Bambrick (2002) wrote "Where the distribution of administrative power is by location and the distribution of academic power is by discipline, the potential for strain in the system can be easily realized" (p. 3). She went on to say that if decision making for both academic and administration is in one location, on either the main campus or satellite campus, there is a potential for disconnect. Further, she adds that problems arise when authority and responsibility are not clearly delineated. Limited resources are available to help administrators solve these types of issues or collaborate with others. In fact, there appears to be only one professional organization that exists called the National Association of Branch Campus Administrators (NABCA). A scan of available higher education journals displays no results for academic journals dedicated to branch campuses.

Stanley (2002) conducted a study examining administration and the organizational structure of multi-campus universities and focused on issues concerning resources, decision making, status and prestige. In her study, she included chief officers at both the main and satellite campuses. She surveyed 152 administrators at 36 universities. Stanley (2002) concluded that the efficiency of communication between the two campuses has a great impact on how successful the administrator is at reaching goals and objectives at the off-site location. Several other studies have concluded that it is critical to have successful communication between the main campus and the satellite campus (Lee & Bowen, 1975). Hermanson (1995) points out in his study that lack of communication is a problem that warrants serious attention. He found that satellite campus administrators feel disjointed from the main campus and need cooperation and collaboration to

be effective. Specifically, they report a need "to be treated more equitably, to receive more support, and to be respected by the main campus for the educational services provided by the branch campus" (Hermanson, 1995, p. 6).

In some cases, administrators felt they needed more direction and clarification with regard to governance and the division of duties between administrators at the main campus. Often these details are not clearly delineated and can lead to strained relationships. Hermanson (1995) found that mid-level administrators at the main campus, such as student affairs directors, did not have a good command of the operations of the satellite site nor the nuances of the differences in student populations. One of the critical functions of the student affairs department is to support the academic mission of the college. Therefore, a disconnect with the satellite site can have great impact on satellite campus students (Stanley, 2002).

Student Issues

Dengerink (2001) remarked in his study that since the satellite student population can be quite different from the main campus, the responsibility for functions of the student affairs department should be distributed. Therefore, a lack of coordination between campuses can have negative effects for satellite campus students causing more of a difference in experience between students of the two sites. In fact, the Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission (1988) conducted a study on the impact of multi-campus universities and found differences in services for students to be an issue. The report stated that students should have access to the full array of services afforded to the main campus students (Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission, 1988). More recent studies have focused on the impact that the organizational structure can have on students and ways to improve (Bailey, 2002; Gratto, 2001).

Bambrick (2002) understood the impact of poor intercampus relations. She observed the effect it had on students and wrote about it in her study. The learning environment is effected when there is uncertainty about decision making. Faculty, staff and administrators who are frustrated with the poor communication can transmit negative attitudes about being impotent to decision making regarding academic or administrative issues. Students experience difficulty when they seek approval or direction from personnel at the satellite campus and are unable to move forward until final approval is given from the main site. Students cite this as a disadvantage to enrolling off site (Hoyt & Howell, 2012).

Other disadvantages satellite students reference were a lack of research and library services. As academic institutions have increased the number of new satellite campus, demand for library services has increased significantly (Lee, 2004). As a result, library staff have been challenged to implement new methods for the delivery of services to remote students. In order to ascertain awareness and utilization, Eva (2012) conducted a survey at two satellite campuses. She found that a lack of awareness and communication prevented the satellite students from obtaining library services and information literary instruction. In many survey courses and certainly upper level courses, it is critical to be able to appropriately research and develop ideas through literature review and exploration. In this regard, again, satellite students do not receive equivalent access (Richard, 2006).

Satellite campus students also are at a disadvantage when it comes to disability services. Greelie (2006) conducted interviews with satellite campus administrators of disability services as well as students. She spoke with a disability coordinator, a counselor and an autism specialist who commented on the difficulty of providing much needed services to students enrolled the satellite campus. The individuals referenced a disconnect from the main campus disability staff

and therefore a lack of collaboration regarding students with serious limitations. They also

mentioned a lack of resources available as well as financial constraints and limited budgets.

These disability professionals referenced how they would often postpone events, such as

Disability Awareness Month activities, until after the main campus so that they can borrow items

such as marketing posters and other such materials or would go without the same materials

(Greelie, 2006). The students also complain of these disadvantages and are aware of the different

level of service provided for students at the main campus.

Other disadvantages effecting satellite campus students are problems with effective

technology. In many instances, satellite campuses utilize the use of compressed interactive video

(CIV) to ensure the same level of instruction at different sites, however this is often problematic

and not preferred by students (Kennedy, Ward, & Metzner, 2003). A study conducted at schools

of pharmacy with multi-campus venues reported complaints of unequal services or experiences

to all campuses (Penderson, 2012). Other examples of issues discussed by students included:

socialization, inconsistent policies, transportation and adequate staffing (Harrison, 2010).These

issues caused students to report feelings of inequality and a division between campuses.

Conclusion

Limitations at a satellite campus are widespread and can affect students, staff, faculty and

administration. Faculty report feeling disenfranchised and disconnected from other colleagues in

their disciplines. Also, they feel as though their students are not considered and their work is not

respected. This type of resentment from faculty can affect classroom instruction as students

become aware of the difference. Administrators often have difficulty managing the needs of a

satellite campus. They report that communication is lacking. A division of labor is critical

between the main campus and the satellite location to best serve students. Because the

population is different in the two locations, the needs of students are also different. Often these

differences are unattended to and as a result, students are lacking resources. Student services are

particularly affected and students report limited access to disability services, library services and

technology. Limitations affect all who study and work at the satellite campus.

Satisfaction Levels and Preference of Location

Despite the limitations for these students, the satellite campus location was still preferable

to participants in research studies. Ballantyne (2012) reported that students felt a sense of

ownership toward the site that they selected to study at, even if the campus was located a

significant distance from the main campus, which is often more prominent and well known.

These students want to become involved in the university environment and connect to the school

they had chosen. Once enrolled in the satellite location, students report high levels of

satisfaction. In some instances, the levels of satisfaction were higher than the parent location or

other campus locations.

Selection of Campus Location

Some of the students at satellite campuses have chosen the location specifically because

of the differences with the main campus. Students report a main reason for selecting a satellite

campus is the smaller class size (Bambrick, 2002). In fact, Hoyt & Howell (2012) surveyed

students at Brigham Young University and found that students were willing to travel over two

hours to the satellite campus in Salt Lake City in order to avoid the main campus classes with

hundreds of students enrolled. Smaller classes can lead to increased interaction with instructors

and peers. For this reason, retention and satisfaction levels can be greater at a satellite campus as

compared with a main campus (Tinto, 1995). A three year study reveals that student's informal, positive relationships with instructors are associated with persistence in college (Terenzini, & Pascarella, 1980). Further, students at a satellite campus are often non-traditional students who balance multiple priorities of family, work and school. For retention efforts, these students are thought to have a stronger need for developing relationship with faculty (Tinto, 1995). In addition to connecting with faculty, satellite students report that they also choose the smaller setting because of the personal attention provided by staff. Developing these types of relationships in the academic environment can provide a more successful outcome (Ballantyne, 2012).

Students report that colleges are not focused on the non-traditional student and often overlook issues that prevent them from being successful (Ballantyne, 2012). One student wrote "the main campus culture can be frustrating to me because it is so focused on the single, freshman …" (Hoyt & Howell, 2012, p. 113). Satellite campuses tend to be a more conducive environment for non-traditional students. University administrators need to be familiar with the different needs of all their students, particularly when the populations are very different.

Parking can be a significant obstacle for some main campus students. Main campuses are often located in an urban setting where parking can be a challenge and an extra expense for students. Often students struggle to find parking and must park far away from the main campus. A study done on parking at a university reported that the satellite campus had free parking available from less than a one-minute walk as opposed to the main campus where students walk anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes and have to pay parking fees (Hoyt & Howell, 2012). This issue was included on reasons why student chose the satellite location.

An issue, such as parking, can appear to be a minor factor when considering students decision on where to enroll, however, logistical issues can be obstacles for the typical nontraditional student who attends a satellite campus. While these issues can be difficult for students on the main campus, smaller satellite campuses often include more at- risk students who are vulnerable (Bambrick, 2002). The opportunity to park for free and save time needed to attend class, can be more important to students who lack financial resources and balance work and family in addition to school. One of the reasons stated for opening satellite campuses is to provide access to education for students, like these, who would otherwise not have access (Cattell, 1971; Fonseca & Bird, 2007; Hoyt & Howell, 2012; Pennucci & Mayfield, 2002).

Satisfaction and Outcomes

University administrators would be wise to make their satellite campus more of a priority in college business. It is widely accepted and reinforced in the literature that the experience at the main campus is very different than that at the satellite campus. Further, a review of the literature demonstrates that satellite campuses are often under-resourced and undervalued. Despite this fact, students surveyed at the satellite campus have higher satisfaction levels. Peake, Par and Roberts (2013) conducted a quantitative study at the University of Georgia, (UGA). The university has a main campus in Griffin, Georgia and two satellite campuses located in Tifton and Athens, Georgia. The three campuses offer a variety of programs however there is a focus on agriculture and environmental sciences at UGA occupying over 7,000 acres in partnership with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and conducts successful research projects at these locations (Esco & Watson, 2007). The Tifton Campus is by far the smallest campus with classes that do not exceed 25 students and the student body consisting of an average of 60 students. In Tifton, there are fewer resources than the other campuses and the community is

small and more intimate. The researchers surveyed students with a questionnaire regarding levels

of satisfaction. When compared with students at the main campus and the Athens Campus, the

Tifton Campus students reported higher levels of satisfaction despite having fewer resources and

programs (Peake, Par and Roberts, 2013). The more intimate setting and manageable class size

contributed to these satisfaction levels.

Similarly, Butler County Community College in El Dorado, Kansas conducted a

quantitative study investigating student satisfaction with the student experience (Esco & Watson,

2007). While all students reported that they were satisfied overall, students at the satellite

campus reported higher levels of satisfaction. Once again, the satellite campus was smaller and

under-resourced however students appreciated fewer students in the classroom and better

relationships with faculty and staff (Stalnaker, 1994).

In addition to higher levels of student satisfaction, there is some support in the literature

that satellite campus students perform better academically than their peers who are studying at

the main campus. Researchers came to this conclusion from a study performed comparing

student performance in pharmacy education. Due to the aging population in the United States,

there was a shortage of pharmacists (Pederson, 2012). The demand for additional providers

produced rapid growth in new schools and colleges for pharmacy. Universities created new

programs and existing schools opened satellite campuses to meet the demand. The industry

leaders were concerned that the academic rigor and quality would be sacrificed and decided to

conduct a study to measure outcomes. The researchers utilized ability-based outcomes to

compare existing schools with new satellite campuses and online programs (Lenz, Monaghan,

Wilson, Tilleman, Jones, & Hayes, 2006). Much to their surprise, students studying at the

alternative setting, including the satellite campus students, had better outcomes on performancebased outcomes than those studying at the main campus (Stillman & Gillers, 2006).

These findings support the fact that satellite campuses are academically strong and can accommodate students that have learning styles more conducive to smaller class settings. This finding is important because some literature references the fact that main campus faculty and students are of the opinion that there is poor academic rigor at satellite sites (Bambrick, 2002; Dessoff, 2011). In one study a student commented that he intentionally signed up for a class at the satellite campus because he heard it would be easier, but in fact it was not. In the same study, 33% of matriculated students said they were told from others that courses are easier at a satellite location (Hoyt & Howell, 2012).

Conclusion

Despite known limitations, the satellite campus is sometimes preferable to students because of the difference with other campus locations. Smaller class size, free parking, and a greater ability to connect with peers, staff and faculty are a few of the reasons why students chose a satellite location. Once enrolled, these students report high levels of satisfaction and in some cases have better outcomes than the students who study at the main campus location. While academic rigor and appropriateness at the satellite campus have come under scrutiny from faculty and administration, there is no research that suggests these concerns are valid. In fact, in some instances, satellite campus students scored higher on exams and had better outcomes.

<div align="center">

Summary

</div>

A review of the literature supports the fact that there is opportunity to further explore the experience of the satellite campus student. Articles and research studies focused on these off- site locations are sparse and varied in topic. Satellite campus-specific data and statistics are not

readily available as some universities and colleges report aggregate data. This is unfortunate considering that student populations vary in terms of ages, socioeconomic status, life-balance issues. Therefore, satellite campus students are often considered non-traditional. However, several universities do not take this into consideration in terms of providing adequate services for the differing needs. In addition, aggregate data from colleges and universities make analysis of student experience difficult. It is widely agreed upon and written that satellite campuses face different challenges and often go with fewer resources and fewer faculty. Despite these disadvantages and differences, satellite students report higher level of satisfaction and in some studies, better outcomes.

Additional research is needed to determine the correlation between the satellite campus student and high levels of satisfaction. Despite ample literature regarding limitations at these locations, there is also literature that supports the fact that these locations are preferable to some students. Preliminary review of literature suggests that some factors contributing to high levels of satisfaction include small class size, free parking, and a greater ability to develop relationships with peers, staff and faculty. Such relationships have been proven to contribute to persistence and reduce attrition (Tinto, 1997). Other literature suggests that the student environment can be a factor in satisfaction (Braxton, 2003). An emphasis is placed on environments that foster or facilitate involvement both socially and academically (Tinto, 1997). This may further add to the satisfaction of satellite campus student who study in a smaller more intimate setting. The environment of the satellite campus appears to provide better opportunities for students to develop critical relationships with others and subsequently report feelings of satisfaction. Therefore, the small, satellite campus may be more conducive to interpersonal interaction and create higher levels of satisfaction.

Research is needed to determine all factors involved in high levels of satisfaction for satellite campus students. An interpretative phenomenological study was conducted and approved to examine a single satellite campus and the reported experience of students. Interviews were conducted with students to determine experiences involved in satisfaction using the specific case as an illustration. Qualitative responses were used to develop a causal relationship between location of student and satisfaction. Questions were designed to explore the phenomena of why students who study with limitations at the satellite campus remain highly satisfied.

Chapter 3: Research Design

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of student experience that contributes to high levels of satisfaction for community college satellite campus students. Since students at satellite campuses typically have limited resources, students would presumably be dissatisfied, however recent satisfaction surveys and current literature suggests this population is highly satisfied. Therefore, the following research question will be used to focus the study:

How do satellite campus graduate describe the impact of their college experience?

This question was prescribed to gain understanding of common experiences of satellite campus students (Moustakas, 1994). Answers to this question informed the researcher as to why students report high levels of satisfaction. Administration, trustee members, staff and faculty will gain an understanding of the student's experience. Experiences that are contributing to satisfaction have been illuminated and decision makers can reinforce their importance.

Qualitative Research Approach

Research problems in which the variables are unknown and need further exploration are best suited for qualitative research (Maxwell, 2005). Often literature yields little information and

the phenomena is explored through the participants' perspective (Creswell, 2012). Qualitative researchers are primarily interested in how individuals derive meaning from experiences and events (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). Data is collected from a small number of subjects who participate in interviews in order to capture perspective. Observational protocols can also be used to note behavior of participants or to gather information from documents. Data collection and analysis contains a rich description of the phenomena where themes are developed. The researcher discusses their own biases, assumptions and experiences that may influence the research.

Constructivist-Interpretivist Paradigm

Guidelines for qualitative research often note that the researcher should clearly state the predominant paradigm followed in a research study (Elliott, Fischer, Rennie, 1999). Both Creswell (2012) and Ponterotto (2005) provide descriptions of various paradigms. This research employs a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm. In this paradigm, the interaction between the researcher and participant is central as together they discover the meaning of a social phenomenon or reality through the experiences described by the participant (Schwandt, 1994). This paradigm was used to discover the experiences of the community college satellite campus students with full disclosure of the fact that the researchers is employed at the site and has her own experiences and perspective that relate to the topic. Variables that contribute to satisfaction levels were unknown. Quantitative research methods would not allow for the detailed descriptions from this population and would not allow the researcher to fully explore the information captured in a qualitative study. Quantitative research would prohibit the researchers influence or experience to be part of the study. For these reasons, a qualitative approach with a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm was utilized.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Research methods of this study employed the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) strategy. IPA has been defined as an approach to qualitative research with the goal of exploring in detail how participants find meaning from their experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2007). This method attempts to explore the perception of experiences from individuals. The research is dynamic and the researcher is actively engaged in the process from an insider's perspective (Conrad, 1987; Creswell, 2013). Data analysis involves the review of personal accounts of experience in order to develop themes paired with the researcher's interpretation (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

IPA was introduced by Jonathan Smith in 1996 as a psychological qualitative method for health psychology (Wagstaff, et al, 2014). Today it is widely applied to a variety of disciplines and types of research projects. IPA utilizes the fundamental principles of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idography (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

Edmund Husserl (1983) first developed ideas about phenomenology to explain the experiences of individuals and identify the essential components of phenomena. In this methodology, the researcher seeks "to construct a possible interpretation of the nature of a certain human experience" (Van Manen, 1990, p. 41). Husserl developed the concept of "bracketing" ones preconceptions such that the phenomena is a result of the data alone (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Not merely descriptive phenomenology, but rather, IPA is a detailed account of a participant's perception with the researcher's interpretation of the individual's connection to the world (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

Hermeneutics, the second principal of phenomenology, originates from the Greek word meaning

"to interpret or make clear" (Shinebourne, 2011, p. 16). Originally used to interpret biblical passages, Heidegger adopted this term to stress the importance of the researcher's ability to translate the words used from participants into meaning (Freeman, 2008; Smith & Osborn, 2008). The analysis phase is often referred to as double hermeneutics to account for both the participant's sense of meaning and the researcher's interpretation of the meaning from a review of data (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

 The third principle of phenomenology is referred to as ideography which seeks to create an indepth analysis of individual perspectives. Here the IPA researcher focused on a single case before producing any generalities (Smith, Harre & Van Langenhove, 1995). In this method, the focus is on the "particular rather than the universal" (Pietkiewicz, & Smith, 2012, p. 363). The idiographic focus allows the researcher to identify what is distinct to individuals and what is shared in terms of perception.

The intended outcome from this type of strategy is a rich interpretation of a phenomenon based on the analysis of interview data generated from the interaction between participants and the researcher (Wagstaff, et al, 2014). Therefore, IPA was an appropriate strategy as it allowed the researcher to gain a detailed individual account of each participants experience at the community college satellite campus and the reasons why satisfaction levels are high. The described meaning and interpretation of each individuals experience allowed themes to be created that ultimately define the factors attributing to high satisfaction. This methodology rejects formulating hypotheses prior to beginning the data collection, therefore the tenets of IPA shaped the entire process including the types of questions, the form of data collection and the procedures used during analysis. The types of questions asked were open ended to allow the participant to share freely the

holistic experience at the satellite campus. Data collection was facilitated by in depth, one-on-one interviews that allow the participant to expound on the description of specific instances and perceptions of the campus. Analysis included the review of interview transcripts to organize themes that inform the experiences associated with high satisfaction at the community college satellite campus.

<div align="center">**Participants**</div>

Because the study sought to learn the factors associated with high satisfaction levels, the participants were graduates from an associate degree program at the community college satellite campus.

Sample Criteria and Sample Size

The sample consisted of graduates of an associate degree program because the individuals completed at least four semesters on campus and had various experiences and knowledge to reference in their answers to questions posed during interviews. In keeping with IPA methodology, the sample was homogenous according to the variable of completing the requisite number of semesters and having lived experiences at the satellite campus. Voluntary purposeful sampling is an important technique within IPA methodology because it allows the researcher to choose individuals because of their potential contribution to the study (Creswell, 2013, Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). In this way, the selected sample can enhance the understanding of the stated research problem (Creswell, 2013). In this research study regarding experience at a satellite campus, voluntary purposeful sampling allowed the researcher to find defined participants for whom the study has personal significance and relevance (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Sample size in IPA tends to be small and homogeneous (Baker & Edwards, 2012; Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012). As such, the study included 8 graduates who have all studied at the same community college satellite campus (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2012; Turpin, 1997). Typically, a research study using IPA methods will enlist a small sample rather than single individuals (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). Because participants in IPA are typically interviewed multiple times, a smaller size is preferable in order to be able to manage and capture the copious data collected. This purposeful sampling identified the closely defined group for whom the high satisfaction level affected (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Since the sample included individuals who have completed at least four semesters and have graduated from the satellite campus, a smaller sample size was also necessary in order to locate such individuals.

Recruitment and Selection of Participants

 The initial plan for recruitment involved obtaining a list of recent graduates of the community college satellite campus from the college registrar. Since graduates no longer have access to their college assigned email address, an additional request was intended to be submitted to the Information Technology Department (IT) for the personal email address of each graduate listed in their college account. A letter of intent was intended to be sent to potential participants (Appendix A) along with a brief questionnaire (Appendix B) via the researcher's Northeastern University email address. The letter in the email informed graduates of the research purpose and the opportunity to participate. A request was made for interested individuals to respond within two weeks. Simultaneously, the letter in the email was posted and displayed on campus in numerous locations including the student lounge, library, main reception, nursing wing, main classroom hallway and the administrative area. The intent was to also attract graduates who were continuing to take course on campus for the purpose of taking advantage of existing articulation

agreements with four year institutions. These articulation agreements allowed graduates to transfer in the 60 credits earned in the associate's degree and an additional 30 credits if the student continued at the community college after graduation.

Participants were selected on a rolling basis until 8 individuals had agreed to participate. Surprisingly, over 8 students came forward from the posted letter before the email from the registrar was sent. Therefore, it was not necessary to send the letter via email because 8 students were selected from those that came forward after seeing the posted letter. Students were selected because they could purposely inform the factors contributing to high satisfaction (Creswell, 2013). After the sample was selected, a letter was given to the 8 graduates (Appendix C) informing them of selection and identifying a time and place to meet for the first face-to-face interview.

Setting

The goal of the study was to examine the perception of students who study at a specific local community college satellite campus in terms of high levels of satisfaction. This satellite campus is located in a suburban area of Massachusetts approximately 30 miles from the main campus which is located outside of Boston. The main campus is located in a city and has a very diverse population. The satellite campus population is local and homogeneous. Approximately 1200 students study at the satellite campus and 4800 students study at the main campus. Associate degrees and certificates are awarded to students who complete designated curriculum. After graduation, students enter the workforce or apply to baccalaureate degree programs. Several articulation agreements with four year institutions exist and several students take advantage of this benefit. In some agreements, students are allowed to complete 90 credits at the community college before transferring to the four year institution. The population consists of

traditional and non-traditional students. Permission was given by the president of the college to conduct the study on campus and to conduct a research project to further discover the factors that contribute to high levels of satisfaction at the satellite campus. In addition, the community college institutional research board gave approval to conduct the study. Interviews were conducted at the satellite campus and other locations mutually convenient for the participants and the researcher. The satellite campus student's perception and corresponding high levels of satisfaction were examined to better understand contributing factors.

Procedures

After participants were selected, the research question guided the research process including interviews, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation. Prior to beginning the interviews, permission was requested from the Northeastern University Institutional Research Board and approval was granted.

Institutional Research Board Approval

In order to ensure the protection of participants, a request was made for approval from Northeastern University's Institutional Research Board (IRB). Additionally, approval was given from the IRB that is established at the community college satellite campus. Northeastern IRB monitored such ethical considerations as informed consent, protection from harm, and confidentiality. According to Madsen (1992), IRB boards are designed to protect participants from "stress, discomfort, embarrassment, invasion of privacy or potential threat to reputation" (p.80). It is recommended that an IRB panel is not solicited until the proposal for research has been submitted and accepted by the dissertation committee. The researcher followed this process. According to Rudestam & Newton (2007) when there is minimal risk to participants, an

expedited review of research and interview questions can be requested. An expedited review was granted from the community college IRB and as stated, approval was granted.

Informed Consent

Before beginning to interview and collect data, participants were given informed consent about the research (Appendix D). In fact, this written statement included the research purpose as well as the expectations of participants will be given to each individual. Although there were no anticipated associated risks, a discussion took place regarding the fact that participation is voluntary in nature and that at any time the participant could opt out of the study. In this written statement, the benefits of conducting the research on satellite campus students' experiences were outlined as well as how the data will be used to improve procedures or inform administrators.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality refers to "an agreement with participants about what is done with their data" (Sieber, 1992, p.52). In this study, participants selected a pseudonym to identify their distinct responses while maintaining confidentiality. It was necessary to obtain demographic information and socio-economic status information so as to tally and describe the purposeful sample however anonymity was guaranteed. Individual names were never used and only the researcher and principal investigator has access to this information that was kept in a locked storage unit. Because the research was conducted at a small campus, it was important to protect participant names that could be identified by demographic information or response. For that reason, data was combined so the individual's identity is not obvious. Another option or technique recommended is to use numbers as opposed to names (Roberts, 2010). However, the researcher chose to use participant selected pseudonyms.

Data Collection

   Data collection was gathered from the products of multiple semi-structured interviews with each participant (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009). This interview is the main source of collecting data (Shaw, as cited in Forrester, 2010). An in-person interview took place consisting of 60-90 minutes. The first 20-30 minutes the participants were given a thorough introduction to the study, the consent forms and given the ability to ask questions before the interview began. The remaining 60 minutes were devoted to interview questions. Each interview was recorded via www.rev.com, a professional transcription service, for accuracy. In lieu of an additional meeting for participants to review the transcription, participants were given a member checking letter rather than another meeting, because scheduling time to meet was difficult (Appendix E). All interviews were conducted in a distraction free conference room located on campus or at a mutually convenient location conducive to interviewing. All but one interview was recorded via www.rev.com for verification and accuracy. Due to technical difficulty, one interview was transcribed by hand. Recordings were transcribed in order to read and re-read participants response for data analysis.

   Open-ended questions that are free from assumptions along with active listening were critical to build rapport with participants and gain the trust needed for participants to share their experience (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012). The researcher allowed for the free flow of conversation as well as the reflective nature of any silence during interviews (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2013). The semi-structured nature of the process allowed for clarifying any questions that were confusing or misunderstood by the participant. Also, this type of process allowed the researcher to explore the meaning of responses with additional follow-up questions (Smith &

Osborn, 2008). The most significant disadvantage of the semi-structured interview process is the copious data needing analysis and the length of time needed to do so. Responses from questions as well as clarifying interviews, observations, and demographic information add to the rich discussion between each participant and researcher (Butin, 2010). Student demographics informed the researcher of additional data such as age, race, the number of dependents, whether or not they were the first in family to attend college, employment status and residence. Specific questions confirmed this information as well as informed the researcher as to the number of hours the student worked while a student, how many hours the student spent commuting to campus, and other obstacles they faced while a student. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) contend this information is important to gain a social understanding and context for each participant's perspective.

In addition to interview data, observations help inform the study. Observations can assist the researcher in interpreting meaning from participants and attribute a respective level of importance and significance (Creswell, 2013). Inaudible reactions or gestures are not captured on audio taped interviews but informed the researcher. During one interview, a participant unexpectedly became temporarily emotional when describing the impact of attending the satellite campus and the relationships she developed. For this reason, it was important to write down all such observations in order to consider when data analysis was conducted.

Data Analysis

All data analysis was conducted using the framework of the six step process outlined by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). Each transcript was analyzed one-by-one based on the first four steps until the researcher could look for patterns. The following process was utilized to critically analyze all data:

Reading and Re-reading. Once the data collection was completed, the researcher began by reading the first transcript from the interview. This process allowed the researcher to become familiar with the data. It was necessary to listen to the interview and review the entire transcript for any missed detail (Shaw as cited in Forrester, 2010). The researcher re-read the transcript several times and focused on the words used to describe the participant's experiences

Initial Noting. After the researcher became familiar with the data, initial noting of observations took place. This is the most time consuming phase as it requires examination of detail (Smith, Larkin, and Flowers, 2009). The goal of this phase was to develop comprehensive and detailed notation that represents significant comments and also represents the participants meaning (Smith, Larkin, and Flowers, 2009). Saldana (2013) states that *In Vivo* coding in qualitative research is preferred. In this process, the participant's actual words were used verbatim to establish patterns. These notations were written in the left margin of the transcript and aided in the development of emerging themes. After compiling the data, naturalistic generalizations were developed by interpreting the data to state what was learned (Creswell, 2013).

Developing Emerging Themes. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) describe this phase as simultaneously reducing the volume of detail from the transcript data and initial notes while increasing the complexity by a more critical analysis of meaning and connections. This level of analysis involves the focus on chunks of transcript that are significant. Themes are typically expressed in phrases and are written in the right margin of the transcript. At this phase in the process, the researcher is responsible for data management as she interprets and derives the participants meaning from data. This is the double hermeneutics process whereby the participant

and the researcher are in a dual interpretation process of the participant discovering meaning from experience and the researcher decoding the participants meaning (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2012).

Searching for Connections across Emergent Themes. Next the researcher reviewed each transcript to look for patterns or themes. The researcher uses charting or mapping techniques to discover association between transcript themes (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). In this research study, the numeration method was utilized to find connections. In this method, the researcher noted the frequency by which themes appear throughout the transcript. Frequency is not a definitive correlation to importance, however it can be an indication that a theme is consistent and worth further investigation. Researchers should use inductive and deductive logic in qualitative research when reviewing transcripts (Creswell, 2013; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). Ultimately, the researcher looked for patterns and consistent themes which were organized by utilizing a word table or similar visual (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009).

Moving to the Next Case. Once the researcher completed a thorough review of the first transcript, she repeated the same process with the next participant transcript. This phase in the process was difficult as the researcher must bracket out emerging themes and suspicions about the shared experience (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009). Because IPA focuses on an individual's perspective of experience, there may be connections between cases or there may not be any similarities (Shaw, as cited in Forrester, 2010).

Looking for Patterns across Cases. In this final stage of analysis, the researcher clustered like-themes and produced a superordinate group of themes to best represent the participants experiences (Shaw, as cited in Forrester, 2010). At this stage, irrelevant themes and subthemes

were dropped from the notations (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2013). Each theme was described and exemplified by interview quotes followed by interpretation from the researcher (Smith, Flowers, Larkin, 2009: Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2013).

The researcher recognized similarities and difference between responses. The researcher created a master table of themes for the participants and created a narrative account (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009).

Ethical Considerations

Qualitative researchers often face ethical considerations during the data collection and data analysis phase (Creswell, 2013). Because participants are often asked to recount their own personal experiences, the subjects can become vulnerable depending on the subject matter (Wagstaff, et al, 2014). Potential issues include unclear explanations about the nature of the research, lack of confidentiality, the use of sponsors or undisclosed sponsors, and the stated benefits or risks to subjects (Lipson, 1994). The researcher protected the anonymity of subjects by assigning a pseudonym to identify the participant and explained the purpose of the study in writing and verbally (Creswell, 2013). To minimize risk and any confusion experienced by the participants, consent was discussed and granted in writing (Wagstaff et al, 2014). In addition to keeping the transcripts from interviews safe and organized, the data was protected and kept confidential (Davidson, 1996; Plummer, 1983). During the study and the writing of the dissertation, all data from interviews with community college graduates was collected under a pseudonym and locked in a file cabinet in the researcher's office, which is not accessible to any other staff within the college campus. Participants were given informed consent letters (Appendix D) and ample reminders that their participation was voluntary and that they could opt out of the study if they felt uncomfortable in any way. In addition, all of the physical data

including transcripts, recordings and notes will be destroyed in accordance with college policy and guidelines.

In addition to these safety and ethical issues, the data and findings of the study are trustworthy, credible, and able to be transferred to another study and replicated if necessary.

Trustworthiness

In the past, authors speculated that qualitative research studies were not published or funded because they lacked reliability and validity measures that are often utilized in quantitative studies (Altheide & Johnson, 1998; Morse, et al, 2002). The rigor of qualitative studies was in question and as a result, Lincoln and Guba (1981) suggested the utilization of new criteria to dispel criticism. Strategies include credibility, transferability dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1981). In addition to specific mechanisms used to address Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria, the researcher must be cognizant of interpersonal issues such as sensitivity, responsiveness, adaptation, as well as the ability to summarize and clarify issues of the participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1981). In addition to interpersonal skills of the researcher, verification techniques were employed to ensure the rigor of the study as outlined below in the four areas of trustworthiness (Leininger, 1994; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985) state that ensuring credibility is the key factor in verifying trustworthiness. Several techniques were employed to ensure the accuracy and credibility of data. Yin (1994) states that the first step in ensuring credibility is the adoption of well-established research methods. Since the study followed IPA techniques, data collection involved the use of different sources of data such as observations and existing satisfaction survey data however relied most heavily on the individual interviews (Shenton, 2004). Each participant

was encouraged to report their experience honestly and without hesitation. Each were informed of their right to refuse questions or withdraw if they felt uncomfortable (Appendix D). Rapport was established early on so that participants could feel confident that responses could be made without retribution or concern. After interviews were completed, subjects were asked to participate in member checking (Appendix E), which involved a review of interview transcripts to confirm their words and their intent or meaning (Shenton, 2004).

In addition, the researcher sought the counsel of colleagues and peers for academic review. I encouraged others to challenge assumptions so that research techniques could be improved or changed if necessary. A thorough review of other research findings is recommended by Silverman (2000) and therefore other studies were examined.

Transferability. Research that utilizes the IPA methodology is cautious to claim that the findings of a study can be transferred to a similar group of individuals or population (Smith & Osborn, 2003). Merriam (1998) suggests that there is limited extent of transferability in this type of research because qualitative work is very specific to individuals experience or environment. Although this is supported in literature, Stake (1994) contends that transferability should not be outright rejected in all qualitative work. Lincoln and Guba (1985) contend that the researcher's should provide specific contextual information about the data and participants so that others can determine if transferability is possible.

In this study of the community college satellite campus student experience, specific information was given about the location. Although a name will not be provided, enrollment statistics, geographical location and proximity to the main campus, and types of degree programs informs the reader about the community college satellite campus. Demographic information,

background and area of study was also discussed for each participant. A thorough description was outlined so that the reader can determine if transferability will be possible.

        Dependability. Similar to ensuring transferability, a researcher must be explicit when describing the research design and implementation in order to establish dependability (Shenton, 2004). In order to demonstrate that the study could be repeated with similar results, an internal audit trail was conducted. Because the nature of qualitative research can be changing, dependability will be possible only within the same context, methods and participants (Fidel, 1993). These conditions must all be similar for another researcher to replicate the study and experience similar results.

        It is the responsibility of the researcher to detail the entire study for replication. Yin (1989) suggests a particular filing system such that another researcher could be guided through the process step-by-step. This system would consist of "initial notes on the research question, the research proposal, an interview schedule, audio tapes, annotated transcripts, tables of themes and other devices, draft reports, and the final report" (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p. 183). This audit trail was employed in the research related to the satisfaction levels of the community college satellite campus students. The researcher conducted this audit and review of the data as suggested in the literature, to ensure rigor and dependability.

        Confirmability. Ensuring confirmability in a qualitative research study using IPA methods can be difficult (Shenton, 2004). Since providing the researcher's background and interest is encouraged, establishing objectivity is uncertain. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that it is critical for the researcher to state clearly any bias. A thorough audit trail was used to demonstrate that the data determined the methods and findings and not researcher bias. This audit trail can be represented diagrammatically for visual effect (Shenton, 2004). The researcher

is particularly sensitive to researcher bias due to the fact that she is employed at the community college satellite campus and has a perspective from an administrator viewpoint of student satisfaction. While certain factors were suspected to contribute to satisfaction, they remained uncertain and inconclusive until data collection and analysis was complete. Therefore, particular attention was necessary to avoid directing the study or study participants and let the data guide the research.

Potential Research Bias

Having learned the techniques to avoid researcher bias as stated above, careful application took place during data collection. Although some qualitative studies suggest that a researchers experience and influence can be valuable (Maxwell, 2005), best practices during methods and findings includes the elimination of any personal reactions that can influence the data and results. Remaining neutral was a difficult task as the researcher was the current campus dean and vice president at the satellite site and is able to observe students daily. Theories existed as to why these students were highly satisfied despite having limited resources although only the data can inform the findings. It was difficult not to have expectations from results obtained from data. For this reason, it was critical to examine the researcher's data analysis and interpretation. According to Roberts (2010) it is also important to be cognizant of using gender neutral words and phrases as well as not to reinforce existing stereotypes. Therefore, word choice was specific and certain not to lead the participants with questions that are not neutral and direct answers that satisfy a predisposition or suspicion.

Limitations

According to Brocki and Wearden (2006) it is advisable to discuss the limitation of a chosen research method. In addition, the chosen theoretical framework should be examined.

This is important because the theoretical framework shapes the interview protocol. Questions are developed through the lens of the chosen theory which ultimately shapes the data. This research study employed the student consumer theory and therefore the questions focused on consumerism and what experiences contributed to student satisfaction. Had the theoretical framework concerned a different model, the interview questions would have been prescribed by the alternative theory and shaped the data accordingly. Thus any one theoretical framework limits the study in that its data is limited to the perspective of the chosen theoretical framework.

Data can also be altered by influences on the participants. A possible limitation was that participants may have felt unintended pressure to participate or to answer questions in a particular manner which could jeopardize and limit the accuracy of data. Since the researcher is the most senior administrator on campus, she is known to most all students. She is responsible for all academic and disciplinary issues concerning students at the satellite campus. Work study students are also under her direction and well known to her. All staff, faculty and adjuncts are hired, evaluated and disciplined by the campus dean. The participants of this study may know the researcher and may come from this population. However, she made all efforts to emphasize that participation is voluntary and repeated the fact that participants could withdraw at any time. Also, the researcher emphasized that participation would have no impact whatsoever on the relationship of the graduate to the college. The informed consent form clearly delineated the voluntary nature of agreeing to participate (Appendix D) and that responses in no way impacted their status at the college.

Another concern was whether or not the findings of this study could be applied to other community college satellite campuses. The college where the study was conducted is unique in

organizational structure, financial operations and size. The enrollment at the satellite campus has increased and the campus has expanded physically as well as in the number of program offerings. It is uncertain whether the findings would be transferable to other academic institutions or whether it is too unique to do so.

While it is not the focus of this study, it would be interesting to explore if four year college satellite campus students experiences are similar to two year community college satellite campus student experiences. It would be necessary to consider different student demographics of the different types of universities. Literature suggests that satisfaction levels at varying types of satellite campuses experience high levels of satisfaction (Hoyt & Howell, 2012). Whether or not findings are limited to the specific context of this study or whether they can be transferred to others remains to be seen.

Conclusion

Utilizing the IPA methods in this qualitative research study allowed the researcher to develop a narrative account of community college satellite campus students experience and create awareness concerning the reasons for high levels of satisfaction. Because the nature of the research involves student experience, a qualitative research project using IPA methodology was most appropriate. Data collection and analysis informed the researcher which created a greater level of understanding of this population.

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of students at a satellite campus to gain a better understanding of the high levels of satisfaction of satellite campus students. Eight graduates of the same satellite campus, provided detailed accounts of their student experiences

that led to satisfaction. The analysis of interview data generated three superordinate themes and six subthemes. The superordinate themes and their subthemes were:

1) Small Campus Culture (1.1 Sense of Community, 1.2 Welcoming Environment); 2) Relationships (2.1 Faculty, 2.2 Staff); 3) Attention to Satisfaction (3.1 Customer Service, 3.2 Open Forums).

While there is ample literature regarding student satisfaction and customer service, literature pertaining to satellite campus student satisfaction is extremely limited. In order to better understand why students who study at satellite campuses tend to be satisfied, particularly when their resources are limited, interview questions explored the experience of students who studied at the same satellite campus.

This chapter will discuss the themes that emerged from interviews with graduates. In-depth interviews were conducted comprising of open-ended questions regarding student satisfaction. These interviews allowed for qualitative responses that informed the researcher of positive experiences ultimately leading to satisfaction. After the completion of all interviews, several themes arose from thorough analysis of the transcripts.

Table 4.1 provides a listing of the superordinate themes and sub-themes that were discovered after reviewing participant data. In addition, the table indicates the number of participants who discussed each theme and sub-theme. Themes and sub-themes were identified after an exhaustive review and analysis of responses and frequency was then noted. Each theme will be described in the chapter and evidenced with direct quotes from participants. **Table 4.1 Superordinate and Sub-Themes**

Why are Satellite Campus Students Highly Satisfied: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis	Alexis	Bill	Jennifer	Kelly	Mirabel	Mr.X	Natasha	Susan
Small Campus Culture								

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Sense of Community	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Welcoming Environment	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Relationships								
Faculty	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Staff	X	X	X	X		X	X	
Attention to Satisfaction								
Customer Service	X	X	X	X		X		X
Open Forums	X	X	X		X	X		X

Small Campus Culture

A resounding theme in all of the participant's responses related to the small campus culture. Eight out of eight graduates interviewed described a hospitable environment that is created by the small size of the campus. Participants described the physical campus and the ease by which you can "quickly learn your way around campus." Administrative offices are located immediately off the lobby, allowing students to easily obtain services. It is also difficult to get lost or "wander around with questions because when you enter campus you are in a very visible and open space" said one participant. Students felt as though the small environment made their college experience easier, particularly when they were new to the campus. The small campus setting made the transition to college less intimidating and overwhelming.

Participants described small classrooms for both introductory courses as well as program

required courses. The satellite campus does not have large lecture halls and therefore most classes tend to be small. The maximum number of students that can register in any given course is 24. Smaller classes with fewer students were noted by several participants as preferable. In regard to the comfort of the small classes, Bill said:

> I've had probably anywhere from 6 to upwards of 20 students in a class; like 25. I feel like once you get larger than that, I wouldn't have enjoyed it as much, where you can have dialogue in a class and not just listen to a teacher go through a PowerPoint to a huge group. I wouldn't have enjoyed that.

In addition to creating an environment of open inquiry and discussion, the smaller classroom was preferable to graduates and they credited this environment with improving their academic performance. Susan said "Since it's a smaller school and the classrooms are smaller, it almost gives you more attention from the teacher to be able to help you when you need it." Alexis describes how she had less difficulty learning concepts because there were fewer students enrolled in each class. Individual help was available because there were fewer students and therefore the instructors were more available to assist each student. She compares her experience to what it would be like to attend a larger campus:

> I was able to gain more of that one-on-one experience and education from the faculty members that you wouldn't see in some of the bigger institutions where they have 75 students in a teaching hall with one instructor. It's like a lecture and you're just listening and taking notes. That's not the type of education I wanted. Being in the classrooms here at the satellite campus where it could range from 10 to 20 students and I think I did a Saturday class once where it was just seven of us. I learned so much more, and that really

paved my foundation of everything I learned for the rest of my life. I know how to take better notes, how to write essays, research papers, presentations, just really the foundation of everything else you build upon in education came from here at the satellite campus. I definitely think that.

In response to interview questions, the smaller campus was frequently compared with larger campuses. All participants mentioned that it was their preference to attend a smaller college. Some participants had experiences at larger colleges and noted the difference. The larger campus was cited as a more difficult learning environment where you might not have the same opportunity to connect with others. Being in a smaller environment was described as more conducive to developing relationships. Forming relationships can be particularly difficult in a campus where students do not have dormitories but rather commute to campus each day. Bill said:

I really think it has something to do with the smaller community. If I had to really analyze it, I think it really would have to do with that, because you get to know more people and you don't get the same thing in a larger place whether it's a workplace or something like UMass, Amherst. I think the smaller versus the larger, sometimes you can just feel like number.

Mr. X expanded on the differences between smaller and larger colleges, clearly supportive of the smaller environment for students:

If you go to a big campus, all these other colleges, there's factors that go on there that you have to keep in mind that you would never have to at a place like this I mean here, like I said, maybe it sounds cliché or overly simple to say it feels homey or cozy here.

The small campus culture increased students comfort level and subsequently enhanced their overall satisfaction. The feeling of comfort and familiarity allowed students to better prepare for academic work. Alexis describes this sentiment "I fell in love with the campus, the community, the atmosphere, the environment. It was me and I just felt so comfortable that I was ready to take on anything."

All participants stated that the small environment and the small culture of the satellite campus was preferable and more desirable. The data did not include information about student choice and if participants initially sought out a smaller environment. However the experience described by all participants confirmed that a small environment contributed to high levels of satisfaction. Kelly said "I liked that it was small. I like the atmosphere. It is definitely my number one in terms of satisfaction."

In summary, the size of the campus and the environment it created defines the theme of small campus culture. Participants credit the size of the physical campus with creating a warm and inviting culture. Because classrooms are physically small, the number of students enrolled in each course was small. These intimate environments gave students a comfortable atmosphere in which to study and learn. All eight participants describe the benefit of feeling comfortable and secure, which positively impacted their experience and level of satisfaction. This environment allowed students to be receptive to learning and the academic experience. The small campus culture also created a setting that produced a welcoming environment and a sense of community.

Sense of Community

The small size of the campus was often credited by participants as creating a strong sense of community. Transcript data was rich with comments from almost every participant regarding

how the sense of community was beneficial to their overall experience and satisfaction and thus created a subtheme in the data. Several participants discussed the fact that because the campus was small, they were better able to connect with others and establish a community for themselves. Many participants mentioned that they had not experienced feeling part of a community in the same way prior to enrolling at the satellite location. The small environment created opportunities for students to feel like they were part of a larger group which helped with the transition to college. Numerous participants referred to the value in feeling connected and compared the experience to being part of a family. Mr. X gave an analogy:

> It's like if a family moves into a bigger house, sometimes they feel less connected. Sometimes even though they're on top of each other in the small house, the forced communal aspect of it makes them closer. That's kind of how you describe here. Maybe cozy is a weird word to use for a college, but because every classroom's small, both in size and number of people, it creates a level of intimacy that if you're one of those people who you need to be, I don't know, eased into the next process of education, it's very fitting.

Participants describe the value of being part of a community and several compare this experience to being part of a family. Many participants commented that they felt connected to the school and developed a commitment to continue because of the sense of belonging. The cohesive environment is credited with helping individuals as students because they are a member of a community where they are known and valued. The nurturing environment encouraged students to persist and improve academic performance. Alexis commented:

It makes you want to achieve more and to be able to show other members of this

community look what I've done. Look what I can do. It's just being able to achieve more.

I feel like everyone really supports those achievements.

The familial aspect of the small campus community gave students a level of comfort that fostered

positive feelings about the campus. This inviting environment encouraged persistence and made

students want to return. Kelly describes this concept:

I think that being a small campus it had a family feel to it. You walk in there and

just saying good morning, and hello, how are you, to everybody. You really felt

like a family and even leaving there, you know you feel like you're walking away

from your family. Any time I go back to stop in for whatever reason, it's just like,

you had to stop in and say hello to everybody... The family feel, I feel like made

such a big difference for me rather than just being lost among the numbers. It

helped me.

In addition to giving students motivation and increased persistence, graduates attributed a new

found confidence to the small environment and the community that felt like family. This was

particularly important as students transitioned to a new environment. Mr. X said "When you're

18 years old, you're in search of yourself and a community. I think in a lot of ways, if you're

mature enough to accept it, then this campus has that community to offer." This was particularly

true for Maribel, who was new to this country when she first enrolled. She experienced difficulty

transitioning to a new home and different culture, however felt as though her experience at the

satellite campus helped her adjust. She said:

As an immigrant, it is hard to fit and learn how to be successful in a different society. The campus was perfect for me. With the small classes, it made the transition easy, giving me academic tools but also social ones to feel confident. The college did not provide the opportunities with activities or clubs, but it was so small that it felt like a family.

Several other participants described difficulty transitioning to the college environment. Several participants were adult learners who were anxious about starting over. There was a fear of being an older student among younger more traditional students. Other participants had enrolled after a short break from high school while working and were unsure about their future. One participant enrolled in order to finish her high school requirements after moving from another state. They all described uncertainty about beginning college coursework. Like Maribel, the sense of community and family feel to the campus gave them a level of confidence to persevere and a high level of satisfaction. When talking about his transition, Bill said:

This is definitely a smaller community, which helped. That was probably one of the biggest things. I don't think that really played a part on my job prospects or anything, but it's definitely a difference where it is a smaller community which helped me become comfortable enough to stick it out and keep going.

Several students said it was easier to feel part of the community because the campus was local and gave them a level of comfort. The surroundings were familiar and the people were, for the most part, local. Jennifer said "I think there's a comfortable feel here, just being local, it encourages you to go, and once you're here, you feel part of this community." Natasha also describes this sentiment:

I feel like coming to the satellite campus that was close to my home, I gained a lot

of in school contacts and out of school contacts that were local to me. We became

a community and now I know them and see people. I feel that if I went up to the

main campus I probably wouldn't have got that. I think I would have met people

up there but I think it wouldn't have been people that are local to me. I have to

stay local.

Jennifer also felt the local community aspect gave a certain comfort level that may otherwise have been missed at a different location. A level of ease and assurance was also at play because of the proximity to home.   She said "I think there's a comfortable feel here, and just being local, it encourages you to go, especially if you're juggling it's good to have a school that's local; it's easier to attend." Many students were in this situation and trying to balance competing priorities and commitments. Kelly is a single mother and juggled her daughter, work and school. She said "It was such a small community. My community. And it was close to home, so it was really accessible for me to get here and if I had to leave for an emergency, I was 10 minutes away, so that was great."

For both younger and older students, the sense of community experienced at the satellite campus was felt early on in their enrollment. Participants described that due to the environment, you could experience being a member of this community with very little effort. For those who wanted to experience the communal aspect of their education, it was available to them. Mr. X said:

I think it comes with the territory of being young or if you're restarting some aspect of

your life that you're looking for a community. It may sound quite like it's right in the

name 'community college,' but if you come here and make yourself part of the

community in some way…it doesn't mean you have to join some team or join some club,

but you have to have some investment in where you are in your education because the

honesty is that it is reflective in investing in yourself.

Participants credit the small size of the campus with creating an environment that

developed a strong sense of community. Many participants compared the satellite campus

community to a family. This sense of belonging fostered a connection to the campus and a

stronger commitment to their academic goals. The local setting of the small campus made

transition to college easier and graduates placed value in knowing other students and staff who

were from surrounding communities. The sense of community increased motivation and gave

students confidence to persevere. The sense of community contributed to satisfaction,

particularly due to the fact that there was a welcome environment.

Welcoming Environment

A second subtheme quickly emerged in the data surrounding the welcoming environment.

While discussing the welcoming environment of the campus with participants, the theme song

from the 1980s television show *Cheers* could have been playing in the background. Like the

song, every participant described a welcoming environment where everybody knows your name.

In an almost verbatim manner, all eight participants described an environment where they could

feel safe to be themselves and enjoy the learning process because college personnel were so

friendly and welcoming. In addition to staff and faculty knowing students names, there is a sense

that they are cared for, which as a result makes students feel comfortable and encourages them to

do their best. When describing her satisfaction, Susan said:

I would say it's more the fact that everybody is just so friendly and welcoming. They

know you. The second that you walk through the door, everybody knows your name,

everybody talks to you, everybody greets you. It's just so welcoming.

Natasha explains the fact that not all schools give you the same feeling of being welcome.

She describes how without the greetings and approachable staff and faculty, a student can feel

less important and as a result be less engaged. Many of the participants described their high

school experience as negative, impersonal and lacking engagement. However, after enrolling at

the small satellite campus, interest in their education was reinvigorated and they experienced a

new level of commitment to learning and graduating. Alexis gives examples of interactions

"When I'd walk in the door, they'd be like, good morning Alexis. How are you? How was your

weekend? They just remember you and know how to connect with the student population." The

small campus community fosters a warm and welcoming environment. Natasha describes her

perspective:

I think it makes a difference when you come to a school and you feel welcomed. That

makes a big difference, when you come in and people are eager to help you and get you

where you want to be. I think that makes a difference, than if you go to a school and

you're just a number in line. I think that's what makes this school is that people that work

here care and they want to help you. They're very welcoming when you come here.

Studying in a small environment that students feel connected to, allowed them to explore

new ideas and interests due to an increased level of comfort. When describing the environment

and feeling of comfort, Bill said "It's just safe not only from physical harm, but safe in the idea

of being who you are." He explains how an environment where people are familiar with one

another is like home. Bill gives examples "Even like Professor J, who does the programming classes, he knows everybody. He knew all these other teachers that I've taken classes with and stuff. It's kind of like everybody knows everybody." Alexis describes a similar feeling: I've been to other institutions and their campuses, and no one really knew who I was or my student ID or anything. But here… everyone knew everybody. They know my name.

There's just that welcome feeling that makes a whole different level of comfortability. The welcome environment created by knowing others and in turn, being known was highlighted in every participant's comments. The friendly atmosphere made students feel comfortable and more engaged in the academic process. One participant compared the environment to home and noted how it increased satisfaction in his experience. Not only did the welcoming environment increase the level of satisfaction experienced by each participant, but according to the participants, it increased motivation and the desire to be a successful college student. Students report feeing safe to explore and enjoy the learning process. This level of comfort allowed them to ask questions and ask for clarification when necessary which subsequently improved academic performance. The small campus culture, sense of community and welcoming environment produced a rich academic environment conducive to learning.

Conclusions. Based on the analysis of the transcripts and the consistency of the responses, it is clear that the small campus culture led to high levels of satisfaction. The community aspect creates a rich, cohesive environment that gives students confidence. In some cases, this confidence had been absent in prior educational experiences. Graduates report this new self-confidence fostered a commitment to their academic goals, compelling the student to persist. Also, this new found confidence motivated students to increase their efforts toward success. The strong sense of community encourages students and provides a sense of belonging.

In addition to being part of the campus community, students feel welcomed and cared for which allows students to feel free to seek out help and guidance. They sensed that college personnel were eager to help, which made asking for assistance easier. Graduates felt comfortable in the campus environment and as a result, felt a deep connection to the campus and to the college. The theme and subthemes that were present in the transcripts are critical to the high level of satisfaction experienced by graduates. Participants enjoyed their campus experiences because of these factors. In addition, this small campus culture fosters relationships with faculty, staff and peers. These relationships are discussed as they were a superordinate theme in analysis of transcript data due to the frequency and importance they were given during interviews.

Relationships

A second superordinate theme quickly emerged in the data pertaining to the ability to develop relationships with others. Eight out of eight participants noted the importance of developing relationships with faculty, staff and peers. Because of the small, welcoming environment, graduates reported that it was easy to develop relationships. As stated in the previous chapter, the campus environment fostered a sense of community which allowed students to cultivate meaningful relationships with others. Participants suggested that it was important to take advantage of these relationships because they were beneficial to the individual. Strong bonds were formed with peers that developed into lifelong friendships. Relationships with college personnel were supportive and encouraging. When talking about relationships, Natasha said:

I think when you participate in things that are going on in the school, either academically or even just going to something that they're having that day, create an opportunity for yourself where you meet faculty or staff that you didn't know; students that you didn't know. I think they're a wonderful thing for students to take advantage of. If you don't take advantage of them, you miss that experience of gaining contacts in the school and outside of the school. I feel like, yeah, I gained a lot of contacts in school and in the community.

Participants discussed how these relationships were supportive throughout their college experience. Several graduates talked about peer relationships and how they encouraged one another to persevere. Students became close through shared interest and adversity. Susan explains how the relationships developed:

I think it was because we were all kind of in the same boat. Our goals were similar things. That type of thing brought us together and made it something that we had to talk about and something we had in common. I think the teachers also opened it up for people to get to know each other as well.

The shared purpose and goals brought students together. Deep bonds were formed and long lasting relationships exist. "I actually met some of my best friends there that I still keep in touch with. They were all in my classes" said Susan. Participants talked about knowing students and faculty in their program because they were focused on the same discipline. Bill describes how students were familiar with each other because the environment was small. If you were in the same program, students would see each other in classes because the course offerings were limited. Eventually, the group became solidified and like a family:

It was almost like a cohort, but not; where we're so together. I might need this class and they might need that class but there's definitely those familiar faces that I was going through the business program with. With business classes you kind of move through with similar people. I definitely got to know people. At one point, there was a group that graduated a year before me. With that group, at one point they were like family, kind of like a family type deal.

While students mentioned the ability to develop relationships with peers, a stronger emphasis was placed on the relationships with college personnel. Relationships were described as important and having significant impact on the students experience and satisfaction. When talking about relationships with faculty and staff, Susan said "I felt like everybody was there to help you and to push you to do better and everybody wanted you to basically succeed and do the best that you could." They reported that faculty and staff were invested in students. Kelly said:

I can probably name on 2 hands how many people made such an impact on me who I can tell were very much invested in me and I didn't feel like just another student. I felt like I actually had people there supporting me while I need to really do well and walk away from the school with a good education and bring it forward, bringing it somewhere else. It was always so many faculty and staff members that were always there for you being so supportive and just really wanting you to do well and be happy. Be successful. Whatever they can do to help you, they would.

Faculty and staff were described as having an informal mentoring role with students. College personnel established rapport early on in the student experience and became a critical factor in the success of the student. Participants describe their relationships as nurturing. In some

instances, faculty and staff took on a familial role, as they were the only support that the students experienced inside or outside of college. Several students face challenges and obstacles to student success. Participants felt as though the relationships were both professional and personal. Alexis said "They definitely knew me as a student and as an individual. They wanted to help me, like your family would." As an adult student, Maribel felt the relationship with college personnel were more like friendships. "I did socialize with several. Almost everyone was friendly, helpful and approachable. They were willing to help, especially adults like me." When asked about what significantly contributed to her satisfaction, Maribel credits these relationships. "I think that getting to know them; socializing with them."

The ability to develop relationships with other students, faculty and staff was extremely important to participants and greatly contributed to satisfaction. This outcome was true for both participants who entered college immediately after their high school graduation as well as adult students. All participants describe meaningful relationships that provided support and encouragement to persevere and be successful. As with other themes and subthemes, relationships were compared to family members by providing strong mentoring and guidance. Only one participant did not reference the ability to develop relationships in a general sense however all participants discussed one or more relationship that was significant during their time as a student. The development of two subthemes arose from the data: relationships with faculty and relationships with staff.

Relationships with Faculty

There was an overwhelming consensus that faculty significantly contributed to student satisfaction. Eight of out eight participants responded that faculty relationships contributed to

high levels of satisfaction. While some participants spoke about relationships with specific faculty members who had an impact on their experience, others commented that relationships were easy to develop with most faculty because they genuinely seemed to care. When asked about her satisfaction, Jennifer said "the instructors…easy accessibility to instructors and just the overall feel that people here wanted to help students." In addition to providing assistance, faculty were often credited with preventing students from dropping out and encouraging them to do better. Susan said:

> All around the school just had good teachers. The teachers made you want to come back and learn more. They made you not want to skip class because they made the classes fun. The fact that the teachers pushed me and acted like they cared about me and cared about how well I was doing, and the fact that I ended up getting B pluses and A's. All throughout high school I never got those grades, ever. It kind of showed me what I was capable of doing if I had somebody there who actually cared about me.

There is a general sense that the faculty members cared and wanted students to persist. This was true despite the different teaching styles and perspectives. Participants talked about developing numerous relationships throughout their enrollment, even with instructors who were not teaching in their discipline. Bill talks about specific instructors who were available and would go "the extra mile" to help students because they cared. He explains:

> He definitely cares. Mr. D. definitely, he's willing to help and everything with this recently. Definitely, just in general, even Professor L. who ... We had our differences and stuff, which is our personalities and then my preferred learning style versus preferred teaching style, kind of thing. But he's still, when I saw him in the learning center and

everything, he's still friendly, asking me what I'm up to and everything. He still cared and everything, just like I did about him. Definitely felt that way, yeah.

Bill goes on to explain how these relationships were beneficial to learning and how it gave him a comfort level to ask questions and express his opinion more freely. He describes an incident where he took a criminal justice course and was given an assignment that he was uncomfortable completing because of the subject matter. He explains that he was not a criminal justice major but rather took the course as an elective. Because of the relationship with the instructor, he was able to express himself. He credits this relationship with giving him the ability to learn more and engage in his work. He compares this experience with what it would be like if the relationship did not exist with the instructor:

He understood. I just can't see that if he was some random person, I just would have done it and did it and maybe been like, this is really dark and I'm not really 100% comfortable doing this but I got to do it because I don't know this person.

Other responses echoed these sentiments. When talking about how the relationship with faculty contributed to satisfaction, others describe a similar feeling that not only would the instructors be available to help, but that they cared about students and their success and as a result, the outcomes were better. Alexis describes the difference between receiving tutoring from a random instructor at the tutoring center versus tutoring from her math teacher with whom she had developed a relationship and knew well. Mr. X describes how he felt a connection with teachers because they "took an interest in me" which created a desire to succeed. In addition, most participants credit an instructor with encouraging them to continue their education and pursue a higher degree. Alexis actually began to tear up when she said:

They gave me advice on where to go and where to do it and helped me with applications.

I think that was pretty much the teacher taking you under their wing, but then letting you

go. It was a wonderful experience. I didn't want to leave, though!

Because the faculty were consistently available to students and genuinely cared about

student success, participants developed long lasting relationships with faculty that persisted even

after graduation. Natasha explains "there's even faculty members now that I still keep in contact

with. There is one English teacher who I'm very fond of. I'm always asking her oh when you go

to a play with your class, I want to come." The availability of the faculty made a lasting

impression on the participants. Kelly echoes the same thoughts:

I actually still keep in touch with a lot of the professors that I had my very first classes

with. All of them, always so…you know, office hours, always available to students not

even just their posted office hours but if you weren't available during those times, you

could certainly ask the professors to meet before or after class or another time that was

better for you. Oh my goodness, that made a world of difference to me knowing that I

had support from my professors and they wanted to see you do really well.

The relationships with faculty were rich and valuable to students. The perception of the

participants was that the faculty cared about students and made themselves available to improve

student success. Participants describe encouraging, positive feedback that had an impact on their

level of confidence and ultimately their persistence. Mr. X compares the experience at the

satellite campus to his high school experience:

I can tell you that when I was in high school, I was one of those people who would get

really good grades on tests but I couldn't stand being in that room and that I just overall

wasn't an amazing student. I had such a negative idea of what education was that honestly I didn't even know if I wanted to be a college student. When I came here, there were so many people who told me that I was going to do well when I went on to get a four year degree that I could have a career, which I actually do now. That I was smart. That I was worth something. All those things you need to hear as a person, just a person who's alive, not like that but just as a student, as someone who needs to know their worth and their ability to succeed. I was able to get that here.

All eight participants described the importance of relationships with faculty. Because faculty genuinely cared about the success of students, participants reported that there was less attrition. In fact, students attribute their success to faculty who encouraged them to persist. Some participants attributed their increased academic performance to the confidence developed from relationships with faculty. Relationship with faculty allowed them to feel confident to ask questions and participate in classroom discussion. Participants said they were more engaged in the classroom and learned more due to the faculty taking an interest and being invested in their future. Many participants said they enrolled in a four year program after graduation from the satellite campus due to the encouragement from a faculty member who was a mentor. Relationship with faculty clearly contributed to high levels of satisfaction. In addition to relationships with faculty, a second subtheme emerged regarding relationships with staff.

Relationships with Staff

In addition to the increased satisfaction created from relationships with faculty, participants reported that relationships with staff members were equally important. All but one participant specifically mentioned the importance of the staff. Some graduates described difficulty

navigating the paperwork and the administrative process that is required when enrolling in college. Others talked about being confused with new technology used to rent books or to register for classes or to sign in to the college portal. At times, participants described feeling like they would not persist because of the complicated process. Many commented that if they did not receive assistance from staff with financial aid paperwork, they would not have completed the documents and subsequently would not have been able to afford the tuition. The staff are credited with making the transition easier and encouraging students to persist because of their attentiveness and desire to help students succeed.

Getting help with questions was easier because the staff was approachable and engaged with students. Participants felt connected to the staff and had regular communication and interaction. One graduate talked about limitations on campus regarding financial aid services. She said that although there were no dedicated financial aid staff, the existing staff would help regardless of their position. They would contact the main campus so that she did not have to wait on the phone and risk not getting answers. Alexis explains:

> They were always checking in with me, asking me questions and helping me select courses or whatever. I definitely had a lot of inquiries about financial aid, so they would answer questions or be able to direct me.

Staff were also described as extremely knowledgeable. They went out of their way to be helpful and to find solutions to student issues. Participants began to rely on the limited staff for all their needs and developed close relationships with them. Jennifer said "The staff were really respondent if you had any questions about anything, and wanted to make sure that if you had any concerns they were addressed." Staff were helpful with more than administrative functions. They

described feeling like the staff were mutually focused on their success. Alexis illustrates this "if my cellphone was dead they'd let me use the desk phone to call because they knew it was important that I needed to get my books or something." Natasha also provides an example of the collaborative focus on success and persistence:

> Even if I had already met with them and something else came up, and they saw me walking by, they would grab me and be like, "Oh you didn't leave your health insurance, make sure you do that." I think that's just because everyone knows everyone and the staff know the students…they are attentive enough to come and let you know when something is going on. Like I said, like waiting on your health insurance. They would grab you and say, "Here is the paper, go and do it." That was a really great aspect of the school.

Participants describe relationships with staff that helped them through all types of difficulty. Alexis said "they were definitely able to take away any type of stress I was feeling because they understood." Several participants described a feeling of confidence and assurance that they would endure because of the support given from the staff. Bill talks about relationships with specific staff. He explains how getting help was easy, even if there were very few staff members, because of the formed relationships. Bill said:

> He's always been great at answering any question. Anything you need to know, he always knows it. I definitely always was talking to Chris. It was nice because you know them. There's not twenty people going through that position, you know him, he knows you. It was great where you know each other on a face-to-face basis, on a first name basis. It's probably easier to ask for help and stuff in a situation like that.

In addition, participants recognized that the ability to get assistance was always available. Participants stated that their formed relationships with staff made asking questions easier and as a result they resolved issues and had better outcomes. Mr. X said "it's not some random person, you actually know them and over time you have a feel for who they are. When you know someone it's easier probably to be like, ask for help."

Relationships with staff members were important to graduates and described in detail. Connecting to the staff was certainly a large factor in participant satisfaction not only for the assistance with completing college documents but also for the encouragement and support. Participants described a bond with staff that made them more like friends than like employees of the college. Feeling connected to the staff made participants feel connected to the college and as a result, increased the overall level of satisfaction.

Relationships with staff members were credited with helping students navigate the myriad of paperwork and administrative process that otherwise may have prevented persistence and ultimately graduation. A dedicated staff were reported as being knowledgeable, helpful and approachable. Close relationships allowed students to feel confident to ask questions and satisfy requirements of enrollment. Many participants describe these relationships as a professional relationship that developed into a friendship. Participants felt supported and encouraged while they were enrolled which fostered persistence.

Conclusions. The overwhelming majority of participant responses involved describing the importance of developing relationships with others while a student at the satellite campus. The transcript data supports relationships as a strong and consistent theme. Relationships with faculty and staff quickly became subthemes. These relationships had significant impact on

student satisfaction and persistence. Participants described the ease with which one could develop relationships with peers due to the environment and small classrooms. These relationships encouraged participants to work through obstacles and continue their education. Since the number of students enrolled in any given program was small, students were able to get to know one another after being in multiple classes together. Bonds with classmates were strong due to shared goals and common interests. Peers were described as like family members who were supportive and encouraging. Participants credit these relationships with helping them to attain their academic goals.

Faculty relationships were discussed by all participants as critical to student success. Faculty were invested in students and genuinely seemed to care about students as individuals. Participants felt supported in their goals and credit faculty relationships with improved academic performance. Some graduates claim that they would not have been successful without the guidance and encouragement of faculty. Several participants compare their experience at the satellite campus with other academic experiences and claim the difference was in the faculty involvement. Students felt inspired and as a result, thrived in the academic environment.

Staff were also important to students particularly as they transitioned into college life. Both younger students and adult learners claim that if not for the helpfulness of the staff, they would not have been able to navigate the administrative process necessary to enroll. One participant described how she avoided enrolling for several semesters due to the financial aid paperwork and only after meeting an advisor who assisted her, did she register for classes. Staff made asking questions easy and as a result, participants progressed and had better outcomes. These relationships were often described as friendships and greatly impacted student satisfaction.

Attention to Satisfaction

A third subordinate theme emerged in the transcript data regarding the fact that college personnel were attentive to student satisfaction. Seven out of eight participants referenced the responsiveness of employees that they encountered while a student at the satellite campus. Obtaining assistance and guidance was easy because staff and faculty were motivated to remove obstacles that prevented a positive experience. Participants reported feeling like their feedback mattered and that staff, faculty and administration cared about student's opinions. Some of the graduates described participating in open forums with administration where they were asked about their satisfaction and had input into decision making. Partaking in open forums coupled with good customer service throughout their enrollment were subthemes mentioned by several participants and noted as important. The fact that the campus was focused on ensuring students were satisfied made graduates feel as though their success was a collaborative effort. This attention to satisfaction greatly impacted participants overall experience and increased levels of satisfaction.

Many of the participants referenced the fact that being helpful was a natural response from personnel when there were student issues. Because of the relationship developed with the limited staff, getting help was organic and fostered persistence. This helpfulness gave participants the sense that college personnel were attentive to satisfaction. When talking about student services and support staff, Mr. X made comments regarding the ease with which he could obtain assistance:

It just felt like an open door. If I ever had a question, whether it was something about my

financial aid or even something like an IT service, there wasn't a chance that I was going

to walk out of the college that day without having that issue fixed.

Several graduates referenced that this high level of service and attention to satisfaction

was different from other organizations and was appreciated. Some participants described

experiences at other colleges they had attended that lacked the same responsiveness to student

needs and satisfaction. The attention to satisfaction was noticeable and set a high standard for

excellence. Due to limited available services at the satellite campus, often times students would

need to contact the main campus. The larger environment often was perceived as more difficult

to navigate. A difference was appreciated in the level of service. Kelly said:

Anytime you had a question you would always go right to them and you'd get the

question answered. Even more so, not to put down anyone else, but I know the main

campus was a little bit hard to maybe reach them. …but my personal experience down

here at the satellite campus anytime I needed any kind of assistance or anything, I could

go right to the front desk and ask questions. If they couldn't answer it, they would find

the answer.

The attentiveness of the staff and faculty was noted as not only contributing to student

satisfaction but also student success. Bill said that there was a sense that people cared about

satisfaction and inquired about how to make his experience better. Formal and informal methods

were employed to ensure satisfaction including surveys and open forums.

Natasha commented that in addition to satisfaction, staff and faculty worked hard to prevent dissatisfaction. Student issues were attended to by administration and a formal complaint system was in place. However, participants said that problems were always dealt with locally. She said "if ever there were concerns, like an issue in a class or on campus they were addressed." In fact, a few students mentioned issues that arose while they were taking classes. Susan talked about an incident she experienced and how it was addressed and resolved:

> There was this one time that I had to bring it up with somebody that just certain topics made me uncomfortable because of what I was going through in my personal life. The teacher didn't really handle it the right way, and as soon as I brought it up to someone, it was addressed.

Other students discussed support they received to prevent them from being unsuccessful and dissatisfied. Several of the participants reported that while they were a student, they were also working and caring for children or family members. The juggle of school and other responsibilities made success sometimes difficult. The attention to satisfaction often included support which encouraged students to persist. Jennifer explains a situation where this occurred:

> Right before I was going to graduate, I was worried about the workload I took on in the last semester. The registrar agents were so helpful when I registered and knew I was worried. There wasn't an advisor available so they helped me make an appointment with the dean. We talked and worked it out and I graduated on time.

Almost all participants commented on the noticeable attention to student satisfaction. College personnel were focused on ensuring students were prepared for the college process and worked hard to assist students and give guidance. Participants felt as though their feedback was

important and were able to give input when appropriate to decisions regarding the campus. Graduates felt as though the attention to satisfaction was a genuine attempt on the campus staff and faculty to be helpful and foster student success. The focus on the student experience made participants feel as though there was a collaborative effort between the student and college personnel. Conversely, college personnel were focused on preventing dissatisfaction. When obstacles or issue arose for students, administration worked hard to assist and remedy the situation. Participants credit these efforts with fostering persistence and increasing satisfaction. This attention to satisfaction was due in large part to a concerted effort of providing good customer service.

Good Customer Service

The subtheme of good customer service quickly became apparent in the interview data. Participants describe good customer service that was part of everyday life at the campus. Graduates gave examples of staff and faculty inquiring about their needs and satisfaction. Participants describe feeling as though working toward their goals were done jointly with faculty and staff. There was a sense that people genuinely cared about student success which directly related to the high levels of satisfaction. This collective effort created a positive attitude that helped students persist. Participants describe the ease with obtaining assistance and the obvious desire of staff and faculty to help students. There was a sense that college personnel were attentive and responsive to feedback. Mr. X said:

> Like I said, the nice thing about here is all you need to do is open the door a crack and
> then they'll do the rest of the work for you, and open it up all the way. You just have to
> be open to, like I said, doing some things that just kind of start that relationship or do

something to make them care about your progress and then they'll give everything they

can do making sure you are satisfied here.

The attention to satisfaction and good customer service was helpful to the progress of the

participants. Their levels of satisfaction increased because there was a feeling that people cared

about their success and wanted to help remove obstacles. Participants describe staff and faculty

as part of a team that were all focused on pursuing their academic goals. This support is credited

with making students more successful. Alexis explains:

I definitely received amazing customer service, so much so that the institutions that I

have been to, besides the satellite campus, I'd have to say that the customer service at the

satellite campus blows everything else out of the water. I've never experienced that

anywhere else in my life, even from the high school level as well. I wouldn't even say

that I felt like a consumer or a customer. I more felt like a partner, like a team, like I was

part of a team.

Making sure students were satisfied and fulfilled was reported as a priority for the

college. Good customer service was experienced on every level of the campus from faculty to

staff and administration. Participants felt that the campus made a concerted effort to ensure good

customer service and instilled it in every employee. This attention to student's happiness helped

to shape the students positivity and attitude toward being a student. Participants noted that they

felt reinvigorated about the learning process as a result of good customer service and felt

supported in their goals. It also impacted outcomes and motivation to succeed. Mr. X describes

the impression it made on him while a student:

This college made me feel differently about academics. To go back to the idea of how,

like I said, being brought into the group ... The idea that I was at a place that cared about

student feedback that much and cared about improving who they are as a facility, as

professors, as people who run the college, it made me change my outlook on it. Like I

said, all the positive reinforcement made me feel differently about myself, too.

The impact of being cared for gave students confidence and created a very positive

environment. Susan described the environment as "constructive" and noted "you felt like you

mattered." Mr. X talked at length about how faculty, staff and administration made a concerted

effort to constantly improve the campus in a manner consistent with student satisfaction. During

his time of enrollment, the campus experienced growth in enrollment and in the physical campus

facility. He said:

The idea was that the mission was carried out by the staff and by the people that work

here, that people were satisfied was important. It was very evident that there was a sense

of maturing and stuff like that and constantly growing, and with that I think it was

important that they noticed that the school made sure the students noticed we're

constantly growing but we still care.

Participants described the college's attempts to ensure satisfaction in both formal and

informal ways. In addition to providing good customer service, the college administered surveys

to capture all student feedback. "The surveys had a range of questions from everything from

what you were actually learning and how you were learning as well," said Kelly. Jennifer

remembers the surveys exploring all aspects of the campus "I do think they are really good to

have to help improve the class whether it be just the furniture in the class or the atmosphere in

the class, the temperature, or anything." Feedback from student surveys were used in decision making and resource allocation. Several students mentioned the addition of the library which came directly from student feedback on surveys and other informal methods. The addition of a full time librarian on campus was mentioned several times as a significant addition which impacted academic performance. Graduates commented on more than one occasion that they have not felt this level of customer service at other academic institutions nor the ability to give meaningful feedback that will be considered, particularly in a significant capital investment such as a library. The participants also described opportunities to give feedback during open forums or focused groups.

There is ample literature about the positive effects of providing good customer service however few articles reference the impact of attentiveness to student satisfaction, particularly at a college satellite campus. Based upon the responses of the participants it is clear that collectively, they feel as though good customer service was important and increased levels of satisfaction. Good customer service was commonplace at the satellite campus and part of the mission guiding college personnel. Staff, faculty and administration worked hard to ensure students' needs were met and feedback was considered. Good customer service created a positive attitude as there was an obvious desire to help students. As a result, participants feel as though they were more successful because there was a joint effort toward achieving their academic goals. During the enrollment of several participants, the campus experienced physical growth and students were asked for feedback and input by formal and informal methods. Being involved in the decision making of campus expansion made participants feel more committed to the campus and encouraged them to persist. During this time, several participants participated in open forums and focus groups which further increased levels of satisfaction.

Open Forums

While not as many students referenced the open forums or focus groups as part of their responses, it became a subtheme due to the amount of discussion evidencing the attention to student satisfaction. Five participants had similar experiences that were important and contributed to their overall satisfaction while a student. The opportunity for student input increased while the campus underwent changes. During the past few years that participants were enrolled, the campus experienced growth in the number of students and amount of physical space. The college held focus groups to capture student feedback pertaining to the changes. Several issues were addressed including expansion of the campus and potential new programs. Participants reported that being part of the focus groups made them feel as though they were an important part of the community. Jennifer said "the focus group was a good event to give you the impression that at least your feedback mattered." In some cases, feedback was listened to by college administrations and significant changes were made. Alexis describes how her feedback was acknowledged and instituted:

> I remember early on at the campus we had a very small library area, and I was excited one day to be able to see a bigger library. I remember going to an open forum with the president of the institution and asking about a library and seeing what that could be like for the future for other students. I'm still highly satisfied with what you could receive there at the satellite campus, but I was definitely interested in more books and reading more. That was the only thing. I was able to voice it and see that change.

Mr. X talked about a particular experience where he participated in a focus group. His opinion was valued and sought after. Administration of the college were looking to obtain

feedback and suggestions for improving the campus. Being part of this selected group gave Mr. X a sense of pride as one of the students that were being asked about their experience. Attention to satisfaction was highlighted as important to the college by selecting students to participate in the focus group and provide input. Also, he comments that it was refreshing to see that his school was soliciting feedback to actually make real changes. He said:

> I will say that one thing I did take place in one year is I was selected as a group of students who were brought into a meeting with the dean, the president ... I forget the name of the group exactly. It was a student focus or reflection group. We were asked to be totally honest about how could the college be better. How could the classes be better? What should they offer? To give some honest assessments without sandbagging people, obviously, about the professors and stuff. I not only took place in that, but took extra pride in working in that because A, it made me feel like someone had noticed my ability and my work here to think I should be a part of that. B, it was nice to see this form of higher education actually care that much about what the students thought. There was definitely a lot of honesty. There was plenty of platform for the students to speak. It didn't feel like we were brought there for ceremonial reasons and then all the people in charge talked. Plenty of students talked, and they talked honestly. No one made them feel bad for talking honestly. I thought that was really nice because when you compare that to your public high school education and coming here, you can have a horrible public high school education. You're the student. No one really cares what it is your experience is.

Bill talked about a forum he attended that was arranged by the president of the college. The forums were called "Presidents Unplugged" and held with various groups college-wide. At the

meetings, the presidents updated students, staff and faculty on college business and also gave students the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions. The satellite campus held such forums once or twice during the semester. The participants enjoyed attending as they had an opportunity to give feedback and hear about the progress of the college. Participants felt as though this was a significant opportunity to express their academic needs or desires to the leader of the college which could have a direct impact on the ability to implement change. These meetings were recognized as an effort to address the needs of students. Jennifer said "the idea behind Presidents Unplugged was geared totally toward student satisfaction." Students appreciated the ability to give feedback that would be considered. The forum was open to all and participants were given lunch for attending. No topic was considered off limits. Mr. X said:

> Yeah, because I remember during the meeting that there were a couple of students who said, not inflammatory things, but definitely things that I would think maybe would be hard to hear if I was the person on their end. It was taken with a lot of grace and everything wasn't just heard, but then was, "Well, what can we do to improve that?" I just remember being really impressed with that because it just shows how maturity and caring about people here and making the place better.

Participants appreciated the opportunity to discuss issues that were ongoing at the campus and at the college. Many of the graduates noted that they had never experienced attending a similar meeting at other schools or colleges. Often times, students would bring up issues they wanted addressed. They reported that there was a sense that the college administrative was genuinely interested in their opinions and satisfaction. Follow up on outstanding issues were always attended

to. Having administration attentive to student's comments increased the overall level of satisfaction on campus. Mr. X said:

> It's tied in to the idea of it's about overall idea of how satisfied I was as a student here. Something like that could single handedly just make me feel totally different about my experience here. It could make me feel like it's an institution that cares about feedback and the people who are in it.

Open forums, including President's Unplugged, still exist today on the satellite campus as they have proven to have impact on student satisfaction. Participants note the importance of being able to give feedback and how it improves the connection and commitment to the campus and the college. Graduates comment that the opportunity to give feedback and input is not present at all academic institutions. Having the ability to be part of focus groups was important to participants as it gave them a sense of pride and reinforced the idea that satisfaction was important to campus administration. Many students discussed the impact of giving feedback to administration regarding the lack of a campus library. Not only were students satisfied that a new library was built, but also that their feedback and input directly related to real changes on campus. The ability to voice opinions, to be heard and to see implementation of changes had significant impact on student satisfaction.

CONCLUSION. Graduates highlight experiences at the satellite campus where it was evident to them that the campus and the college had a student centered approach. Participants describe an attention to satisfaction that was obvious in the good customer service they received from staff, faculty and administration. Students were able to provide feedback through formal and informal means. Course evaluations and open forums provided

opportunity for students to comment on their experiences both positive and negative. What was important to graduates was the sense that the college and the campus administration cared and was devoted to student success. In fact, several participants said that their feedback was valued and ultimately led to changes on campus. The establishment of a new campus library was mentioned by a few graduates as an example of the college listening to feedback and input to meet the needs of students. The student centered focus approach enhanced student satisfaction of the participants.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of high levels of satisfaction of satellite campus students. The study sought to answer the following question:

How do satellite campus graduates describe the impact of their college experience?

The eight participants in this study were graduates of the same satellite campus who had completed at least four semesters at the campus. Responses to interview questions led to themes that were discovered after reoccurring words and similar meaning were conveyed. Each of the three superordinate themes and six subthemes generated interesting conclusions about how experiences contributed to their satisfaction and how satisfaction impacted their college experience.

The first emergent theme that influenced satisfaction was the small campus culture. Participants describe feeling connected to the campus because of the intimate environment. The atmosphere created on campus increased graduates comfort level and overall satisfaction. Several graduates reported that the small campus was preferable to a large campus where a student would be "just a number." In addition, small classes allowed students to feel more

comfortable asking questions and participating. This small campus culture reinvigorated the participants focus on education and motivated them to be successful.

Due to the small campus environment, participants noted that there was a strong sense of community. Because being part of a community was discussed as highly valued by graduates, it quickly became the first subtheme. Participants described a bond with the campus and with others who were in their campus community. Several participants compared the community to a family. Being a member of the campus community gave participants a sense of belonging which further strengthened their connection to the campus and to the college. Participants felt supported by others in their community and were subsequently motivated to persist. This support also produced confidence in the participants and inspired them to complete their education.

The small campus culture also provided the second subtheme, a welcoming environment for students. Participants describe an atmosphere where they are known and know others. Almost all participants commented that faculty and staff knew them by name and would greet them daily. They felt the friendly nature of college personnel was genuine and created a positive tone on campus. Participants describe feeling like employees cared about them as students and as individuals and this allowed them to feel safe to be themselves. Being familiar with their surroundings and with college personnel allowed participants to feel relaxed and secure. Because of the warm atmosphere, participants reported feeling comfortable and as a result, enjoyed the learning process more.

A second subordinate theme involved the ability to form meaningful relationships with others. Because of the small environment and campus culture, participants report it was easy to

form relationships with other students, faculty and staff. These relationships gave students confidence and as a result, outcomes were better. In addition, the support from college personnel encouraged students to persist. Several described the enormous impact of developing relationships with faculty and staff which ultimately created high levels of satisfaction.

When discussing meaningful relationships with faculty, participants mentioned both specific instructors as well as the faculty in general. All eight participants stressed the importance of relationships with faculty and it became an obvious subtheme. They reported that faculty genuinely cared about them as individuals as well as students and focused on their academic progress. Participants attribute this attention to improved academic performance. One participant credited a faculty member's care and concern with preventing her from withdrawing. Even when students and faculty did not agree, participants noted a mutual respect and consideration toward one another. In addition, these relationships are recognized as having tremendous impact on students, particularly in regard to giving advice toward continuing their education after graduation. Relationships with faculty undoubtedly contributed to high levels of satisfaction.

The second subtheme, equally important to graduates, were relationships developed with administrative staff. Participants reported these college personnel made the transition to college easier and in some cases, possible. Staff were described as helpful, approachable and knowledgeable. These qualities made participants feel significant and as though others were mutually focused on their success. The positive attributes of the staff members increased satisfaction and contributed to better outcomes and persistence.

The third subordinate theme found in the transcript data was an attention to satisfaction. Graduates responded that faculty, staff and administration were focused on ensuring students were satisfied. They commented that their feedback clearly mattered and was taken into consideration particularly as it pertained to changes on campus and academic offerings. The opinions of students were important and the college surveyed student feedback in both a formal and informal manner.

A subtheme quickly emerged in the data surrounding good customer service. Participants reported that good customer service was part of everyday life on campus and that personnel inquired about the needs of students. Moreover, staff members were responsive to these needs which created a positive, receptive environment. Personnel made a concerted effort to constantly improve the campus and the student experience. Participants reported appreciating the care and concern of staff which had a significant impact on their overall satisfaction. Good customer service gave students the feeling that there was a joint effort toward their success and ultimately this confidence increased persistence.

A subset of participants mentioned that in addition to the attention to satisfaction and good customer service, they had the opportunity to participate in open forums. At various times in the history of the campus, as well as regularly during the semester, the college utilized open forums and community meetings to elicit feedback and deliver important information to the student body. These meetings highlighted that student feedback was important to the college and welcome, even when the feedback was negative. In fact, many participants mentioned that their feedback was valued and ultimately led to changes on campus. This ability to have input not only increased satisfaction, but also created a deeper connection to the

campus. Students felt a sense of pride in being asked for feedback which created a new found confidence. This concerted effort on behalf of the college to elicit student feedback also improved student satisfaction as well as the commitment to the campus.

In order to ensure the rigor of the study and subsequent findings of satellite campus student experience, verification techniques were employed in the four areas of trustworthiness. While conducting data collection and analysis, IPA methods were followed closely to ensure credibility. Interview transcripts were relied upon for data and graduates participated in member checking to ensure accuracy. Specific context was provided so that transferability could be possible for future researchers. In addition, a detailed description of the steps of data collection were outlined in an audit trail so that they could be repeated and guarantee dependability. Confirmability was particularly important considering the role of the researcher and therefore the data guided the research to prevent researcher bias.

The following chapter addresses how the subordinate themes and subthemes fit into the larger body of current literature and the implications for practice. Findings discussed in this chapter are related to the theoretical framework and to the role of satisfaction for satellite campus students.

Chapter Five: Discussion and Implications for Practice

The purpose of this research study was to gain a better understanding of the high levels of satisfaction of satellite campus students. The theoretical framework guiding the study was the student-consumer theory which suggests that if universities apply a business model to their

institution, they are more likely to have success because high satisfaction is associated with improved academic performance, continued learning, persistence and graduation (Bailey, Bauman, & Lata, 1998; Booker & Rebman, 2005; Mark, 2013; Sinclaire, 2011; Sloan, 2010). Also, high student satisfaction has an impact on student's motivation, retention, and future investment in the college (Elliot & Shin, 2002; Miller, 2003). A qualitative approach was used to capture the experiences of satellite campus students leading to high levels of satisfaction. An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) research method was employed allowing the researcher to explore how graduates of the same satellite campus described their experiences while a student. Eight graduates of the same satellite campus were interviewed to discover if there were similar experiences leading to satisfaction. IPA methods allowed the researcher to interpret how participants made sense of experiences and developed meaning through a double hermeneutic process. Further investigation allowed the researcher to develop themes from the similar responses of participants.

Data collection began with in-depth, one-on-one interviews with the eight graduates. Each graduate was asked the same questions regarding their experiences at the satellite campus. Responses provided rich data that described positive experiences leading to satisfaction. Participants provided detailed accounts of their experiences including stories and examples highlighting their answers to interview questions. Some follow up data was collected with selected participants after the initial interview for clarification. Data analysis was conducted exactly per the process outlined by Smith, et al. (2009). From the analysis of the transcript data, three superordinate themes and six subthemes emerged. The superordinate themes and their subthemes were: 1) Small Campus Culture (1.1 Sense of Community, 1.2 Welcoming Environment); 2) Relationships (2.1 Faculty, 2.2 Staff); 3) Attention to

Satisfaction (3.1 Customer Service, 3.2 Open Forums). The themes and subthemes answered the research question as to how graduates describe their college experience at the satellite campus and what events contributed to satisfaction. The participant responses support the student-consumer theory which contends that when students are highly satisfied they tend to persist, have increased academic performance and graduate.

Chapter Five will present and discuss the findings of the research study on high levels of satisfaction of satellite campus students. The findings will be discussed as they relate to a literature review and the theoretical framework from earlier chapters. Each finding that was developed from themes and subthemes will be examined. Implications of these findings for the practice setting, as well as suggestions for future investigations will be discussed.

<p style="text-align:center">Small Campus Environment</p>

The small, intimate environment of the satellite campus greatly impacted high levels of satisfaction. All participants discussed the fact that the small campus was inviting and easy to navigate. The pleasant atmosphere made transition to college easier for participants and increased their desire to persist. Because of the setting, graduates describe feeling part of a community that was friendly and welcoming. Staff, faculty and administration were approachable and pleasant which encouraged students to persevere. Small classrooms with fewer students were reported as a preferable learning environment and greatly contributed to overall satisfaction of the student experience.

Graduates reported that the small classrooms made learning easier and gave the student a greater ability to ask questions and participate. Most participants revealed that they

would not have been as satisfied if they were in a larger institution that offered classes in

large lecture halls with high numbers of students. In fact, they said their academic

performance would suffer because they would not have felt as comfortable engaging in

dialogue and open inquiry. This finding is consistent with literature on student satisfaction

and has been confirmed in other research studies. While a review of the literature did not

yield numerous articles or writings on satellite campuses or their students, a few studies exist.

Stalnaker and Price (1994) conducted a study at Butler County Community College in El

Dorado, Kansas to compare levels of satisfaction between a main campus and a satellite

campus. Their findings indicate that while the main campus had more resources and more

faculty, the student satisfaction level was higher at the satellite campus. Satellite campus

students in their study indicated that fewer students in the classroom and the smaller

environment greatly increased their levels of satisfaction.   Similarly, Peake, Par, and

Roberts (2013) conducted a research study regarding differing satisfaction levels at the

University of Georgia's three campuses. He found that the smaller satellite campus had the

highest level of satisfaction of all three campuses, even though the other two campuses had

more resources available to students including services and faculty. The researcher noted that

the higher levels of satisfaction were attributed to a smaller environment with more

manageable class size. In fact, Ferreri & O'Connor (2013) reported on the redesign of a large

lecture course in a pharmacy program that was based on feedback from satisfaction surveys

regarding courses that were held on the main campus and the satellite campus. One course was

significantly altered to include smaller group learning units because students reported that at

the satellite sites they were better able to learn techniques and concepts because they were in

smaller groups. Smaller classes as well as a smaller environment are supported in the literature as factors contributing to student satisfaction.

The small setting created a rich, cohesive environment that gave students a sense of belonging and the feeling of being part of a community. This was particularly important to students as they transitioned to college from high school or as returning adult students. Graduates compared the experience in the small environment to being part of a family. Because of the familial feel, participants reported a new found confidence and commitment to their academic goals. They revealed in the interviews that these factors created a positive environment which is part of the campus culture and contributed to high levels of satisfaction. Graduates felt comfortable in the environment and as a result, felt a deeper connection to the campus and to the college. In addition to being part of the campus community, students feel welcomed and cared for which also greatly contributed to satisfaction and persistence.

A search of the literature confirms that when students feel connected to their campus not only are satisfaction levels higher, but students also tend to persist (Braxton, Breir, &Steele, 2007). Research suggests that the environment can play a large role in satisfaction and that its importance in creating a sense of community (Bruning, 2002). If students feel welcome and comfortable in their environment, particularly when transitioning, they are more likely to experience satisfaction (Davig & Spain, 2003). Many participants described feeling hesitant and unsure if they were suited for college life. They responded that the welcoming environment contributed to their satisfaction and a decision to continue in school. Elliot (2002) stresses that in addition to the quality of education, key determinants of student satisfaction

include a feeling of belonging. His findings demonstrated that student centeredness and campus environment influence students overall satisfaction (Elliot & Healy, 2001). Their study uses the well-known Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) developed by Noel-Levitz (Juillerat, 1995; Miller, 2003; Oja, 2011). The SSI is a tool used to assess student priorities as well as satisfaction (Bryant, 2006; Cardozo, 1965). A questionnaire is given to students where they rank the importance of factors along with their corresponding satisfaction level. Student centeredness relates to conveying to students that they are important to the college and feel welcome and valued (Bryant, 2006). Campus

Climate relates to the school's ability to create a setting that promotes a feeling of belonging and connection to the college (Bryant, 2006).

In summary, the finding of the research study relating to student satisfaction from a small campus environment is consistent with current literature. The small classrooms are reported as a more effective environment because students feel more comfortable. The intimate setting produced a sense of community and belonging that participants compare to being part of a family. Graduates describe a warm, hospitable environment where they felt welcomed and cared for as contributing to overall satisfaction. This small campus culture also fostered relationships with faculty, staff and peers, which quickly developed into the second finding.

Ability to Develop Relationships

As indicated from the superordinate theme Relationships, participants identified that having the ability to develop relationships with others was a key contributor to their satisfaction. Relationships with faculty, staff and peers were important to student satisfaction

and credited with enhancing the college experience. Graduates described the positive advantages of developing relationships with others such as increased motivation, positive attitude, commitment and self-confidence. Participant's credit these relationships with helping them attain academic goals, which led to increased satisfaction. Numerous articles and journals have been written about the impact of student relationships on satisfaction levels. Several research studies have focused on these relationships and confirm the ability to increase the satisfaction of students.

Due to the environment at the satellite campus and the small class size, participants describe the ease with which one could develop relationships with other students. Peer relationships were identified as important because they provided support and encouragement. Also, peer relationships were noted as making the college experience more enjoyable. Strong bonds were formed in cohort-like classes due to shared goals and common career interest. Graduates noted that many peer relationships developed into life-long friendships.

Peer relationships are well documented in literature as contributing to student satisfaction. Ullah & Wilson (2007) studied student relationships extensively and found positive associations with student friendships. The quantitative study examined how outcomes could be improved by developing such relationships. Sollitto & Myers (2013) conducted a similar study in which they determined that peer relationships could positively affect satisfaction and outcomes. Their study concluded that students with established peer relationships felt a stronger connection to the college and sense of belonging, which are factors known to improve satisfaction and performance. These findings confirm other studies suggesting that when students feel supported and connected to peers, they experience

satisfaction and added enjoyment in the learning process (Dwyer et al, 2004). These findings in research studies and literature are consistent with the research on satellite campus student satisfaction.

Satisfaction, as well as the learning process, was also found to be greatly enhanced when students developed relationships with faculty. All participants describe the student/faculty relationship as critical to student success and significantly impacting student satisfaction. Participants describe a supportive faculty who genuinely cared about student learning and students as individuals. They describe working together with faculty toward a mutual goal of academic achievement. This interaction and ability to develop relationships with faculty significantly increased satisfaction and persistence.

A literature search regarding students' relationship with faculty produced copious results. These relationships were the topic of many journal articles and research studies. Peer reviewed journals discuss varied topics within the student/teacher relationship. Student relationships with faculty are examined in different academic program such as nursing, business and computer science as well as in different learning formats such as online or in the classroom (Arrnett, Wittmann, Wilson, 2004; Gramas, 2013; Moro-Egido & Panades, 2010, Newman, 2015). Also, literature examines the impact of relationships on satisfaction by age and degree level such as high school, undergraduate or graduate. (Conlon, 1995; Kim, Y. & Saks, L, 2014, Wieck et al, 2014, Tomkins et al, 2016) A positive correlation was found in numerous studies relating to satisfaction and relationships with faculty. Similarly, a negative experience with faculty could create dissatisfaction (Jenkins & Downs, 2001). The faculty's willingness to participate in relationships with students was also well written about in respect

to contributing to student satisfaction (Cosman-Ross & Hiatt-Michael, 2005; Feldman & Paulsen, 1999; MacDonald, 2006). One interesting study concluded that although peers and family provide more support, perceived support from faculty was a stronger indicator of student satisfaction (Tomkins et al, 2016). This finding was consistent with data collected from the satellite campus students where more emphasis was placed on faculty than any other relationship. An important finding was discussed in a study by Browne, Kaldenberg, Browne, and Brown (1998) where they concluded that students were more apt to recommend a college to family or friends if they were satisfied with faculty. When asked if they would recommend the satellite campus to potential students, participants confirmed a positive recommendation and further explained they would suggest potential students take advantages of such things as relationships with faculty who were willing to help. Literature confirmed that relationships developed with faculty are extremely important and are linked to student satisfaction (Tomkins et al, 2016).

Relationships with staff and college personnel was also described as greatly contributing to student satisfaction. Many participants described friendships that developed with staff. These relationships were critical to students' persistence, particularly with the administrative process that may otherwise have been overwhelming. Staff were described as focused on student success and many graduates credit them with supporting them through their enrollment while a student.

Wiers-Jenssen & Stenaker (2010) stress in their study that access to relationships with college staff should not be underestimated as they greatly contribute to satisfaction. The literature pertaining to student satisfaction often stresses the relationship with faculty

and the academic environment, however staff and support service personnel can often be a significant factor in student satisfaction. Research demonstrates that increased interaction with staff who are helpful and interested will positively impact satisfaction (Richardson & Radloff, 2014). Therefore, colleges would be wise to invest resources into improving opportunities for staff and students to interact due to the impact on satisfaction. In fact, after a report of low satisfaction levels, George Brown College in Toronto decided to execute an overhaul of student services. After a two year project, they changed the focus to that of a student centered culture where student services staff were attentive to the needs of students. Staff and students formed meaningful relationships and subsequently satisfaction levels improved (Pipitone & Poirer, 2011).

There is sufficient literature that links increased satisfaction with positive student relationships. Having the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships with students, staff and faculty was stressed by participants as greatly contributing to their satisfaction. This study further complements existing literature by revealing specific testimony of all participants who confirm the association between high satisfaction and relationships with others as well as contributing to student success. Additional literature was discovered that suggests satisfaction levels may differ depending on such factors as gender, ethnicity or student major however, this distinction was not found in the research study (Lesure-Lester, 2003; Sollitto & Myers, 2013; Tomkins et al, 2016;). While there were only two male participants, both discussed the positive impact of relationships. Only one participant was an international student, and she, too, confirmed that relationships were an important determinant to satisfaction. The study did not ask students to rank the importance or level of

satisfaction nor did it focus on gender or ethnicity and therefore cannot confirm or diverge from literature on factors affecting levels of satisfaction by gender or ethnicity.

In addition to the relationships with the college, the manner in which the student was treated by the college was also important. In the next section, the third finding of a Student Centered Environment and attention to student satisfaction will be discussed.

Student Centered Environment

A student centered environment at the satellite campus was described by participants as important and evidenced with examples of the college and the campus administration having an attention to student satisfaction. Graduates reported that staff, faculty and administration were mutually focused on student success, which subsequently increased student satisfaction. Participants felt they were given good customer service and there was an overall mission of student centeredness. Participating in open forums such as focus groups and community meetings further enhanced satisfaction. Graduates felt that these forums demonstrated that administration was interested in student feedback and strived to provide the best academic environment. The participants commented that this student centered approach contributed to increased levels of satisfaction.

These findings support current literature regarding the impact of creating a student centered environment. When students feel that they are important to their college or university and that their feedback is valued by administration, they experience higher levels of satisfaction (Bryant, 2006; Cardozo, 1965; Oja, 2011). In a quantitative study on factors influencing student satisfaction, Elliot (2003) determined that student centeredness was a key determinant. The implications of his study recommend that university staff give priority to student concerns or desires and that that there be an obvious attention to their satisfaction. In a

similar study, Bryant (2006) discusses the importance of a student centered environment and of the ongoing measurement of student satisfaction. He recommends that academic institutions demonstrate to students that they value student feedback and information obtained from survey results. He also recommends that colleges actively respond to issues that students identify as important or concerning. Providing an environment that is sensitive to the fulfillment of students and conveys the importance of providing a student centered approach is well supported in the literature as contributing to student satisfaction (Bryant, 2006; Elliott, 2003; Miller, 2003; Schroeder, 2005).

A review of the literature clearly supports the finding of the research study on providing a student centered environment and an attention to student satisfaction. Interestingly, several articles discussed a finding of dissatisfaction when this atmosphere was not created (Brown, et al, 1998; Miller, 2003; Schreiner, 2009). There are several ways a college can accomplish this objective including frequent satisfaction surveys, course evaluations, focus groups, and community meetings. However, it is critical that the college utilize the data in a meaningful way such that students appreciate the impact.

In addition to increasing satisfaction, creating a small environment, building student relationships and creating a climate of student centeredness can also impact student outcomes per the student-consumer theory. The next section is dedicated to the connection between the research findings and the theoretical framework.

Discussion of the Findings in Relation to the Theoretical Framework

This study is positioned with the student-consumer theory to explain why a focus on student satisfaction is important. The theory contends that if universities apply a business

model to their institutional approach, they are more likely to have success (Mark, 2013). Student satisfaction is important and valued when students are viewed as consumers. More importantly, high satisfaction is linked to improved academic performance, continued learning, persistence and graduation (Bailey, Bauman, & Lata, 1998; Booker & Rebmon, 2005; Sinclaire, 2011; Sloan, 2010). Other benefits of satisfied students include increased motivation, retention, and future investment in the college (Elliot & Shin, 2002). Efforts toward researching factors that create satisfaction is therefore, a laudable goal.

There are many critics who reject the student-consumer theory because they claim a customer focus compromises the academic process and can create opportunities for the student to blame the college for their personal failure (Mark, 2013). Others claim that a poor student evaluation creates vulnerability with the faculty by preventing them from ensuring academic rigor and integrity for fear of reprisals in the tenure processes or contract negotiation (Bay & Daniel, 2001; Courtney & Courtney, 2006; Franz, 1998). However, the student-consumer theory does not support reducing academic rigor nor sacrificing the learning process for the sake of increasing satisfaction. In fact, literature supports that a strong learning environment and quality education contributes to satisfaction (Elliott, 2003; Oja, 2013; Roszkowski & Ricci, 2005). In addition, persistence and graduation are important factors with college students, particularly at community colleges who often serve non-traditional populations. Therefore, attention to satisfaction is important and applying the student-consumer model may improve outcomes.

In this study, participant's experiences that led to satisfaction were also reported to lead to persistence, improved academic performance and graduation. On several occasions,

students commented that because they experienced satisfaction, they were more apt to stay in school and not drop out, participate and enjoy the learning process which improved academic performance, and ultimately graduate. Some students even went on to say that because they were satisfied, they pursued other higher educational opportunities after earning the associates degree. The experiences they attributed to satisfaction and better outcomes were a smaller campus, a relationship with others and an attention to satisfaction.

Several journal articles and research studies support that these findings contribute to persistence and improved academic performance. Numerous studies were dedicated to the value of the relationship with faculty. Faculty relationships were often reported as critical to a student's decision to persist (Clark et al, 2009, Ullah & Wilson, 2007). The relationship with faculty was also reported to positively impact student success and academic performance (Astin, 1984, Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). Similarly, relationships with peers were also discussed as having an impact on improved outcomes such as persistence and grades (Dwyer et al, 2004; Sollitto & Myers, 2013; Ullah & Wilson, 2007). Interestingly, increased academic performance was also positively associated with persistence, furthering the support for the importance of the student-faculty relationship (Lufi & Cohen, 2003; Starr, Betz & Menne, 1972).

In addition to developing relationship with faculty and others, findings from the study indicated that a small environment and attention to satisfaction also contributed to persistence and improved academic performance. The small campus environment including small classrooms were reported to give students a sense of belonging that increased persistence (Fraser & Stott, 2015). In addition the small classroom size was cited as creating

a more comfortable environment for students to participate and engage in open inquiry; thus increasing academic performance (Bryant, 2006).

Literature also supports that outcomes can be affected by a student centered atmosphere. Students who felt welcomed and connected to their institution were more likely to persist and graduate (Bryant, 2006). Because the student felt their academic and personal needs were important to the college, they reported that they felt more connected and were more likely to persist (Braxton, Brier & Steele, 2007; Patterson, Johnson, & Spreng, 1997). Bolton, Kannan and Bramlett (2000) concluded that retention was improved when students felt they were provided good customer service.

Literature suggests that satisfied students have increased academic performance and are more likely to persist (Granke & Woosley, 2005; Lufi & Cohen, 2003; Pascarella & Terenzinin, 1991; Oja, 2011; Ullah & Wilson, 2007). Therefore it is critical that colleges and universities research what factors impact satisfaction at their institution and apply the student-consumer theory to their operations in order to experience better outcomes for their students.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of high levels of satisfaction of community college satellite campus students. To achieve this goal, the research question that the study sought to answer was how do satellite campus students describe the impact of their college experience. This was explored through the testimony of eight graduates of the same satellite campus. Using Interpretative Phenomenological

Analysis methods, the data was analyzed and produced themes and subthemes. These themes and subthemes led to three dominant findings. The findings conclude that students tend to be satisfied when they 1. Study in a small learning environment; 2. Develop relationships with faculty, staff and peers; and 3. Are treated with a student centered approach. In addition, the study used the student-consumer theory as a framework, which further suggests that highly satisfied students tend to persist and have improved academic performance.

There are numerous journal articles and research studies devoted to student satisfaction. Various aspects are explored including the factors that contribute to student satisfaction and the impact on student success. Although very few studies were specifically devoted to satellite campus students, literature supported that students tend to be satisfied when they have a small learning environment, develop relationships with others and feel as though they receive good customer service from the college. In these studies, several factors were discussed in relation to satisfaction including age or gender of the student as well as educational level. This study did not explore such factors and therefore cannot confirm or deny the impact on these populations. However, the findings of this study are consistent with peer-reviewed literature and research. Therefore, it is recommended that colleges and universities actively survey their students to better understand their needs and levels of satisfaction. They should adopt a student centered approach in all departments of the college and provide adequate training to ensure good customer service. In addition, staff and faculty should be made aware of the importance of developing relationships with students for the purpose of mentoring and fostering student success. When possible, it is also recommended that the academic environment is small and efforts are made to create a comfortable atmosphere that is conducive to learning.

The findings of this study suggest that a satellite campus can provide an optimal environment for student satisfaction. This concept was curious to the researcher due to the fact that satellite campuses are often limited in terms of student services, faculty, course offerings and facilities. Despite this fact, students at satellite campuses tend to be more satisfied. The impetus of the research was to discover why students would be more satisfied if more limited. An interesting discovery occurred while interviewing participants. It became clear that some participants were unaware that they experienced limited services at the satellite campus. Because staff and faculty provided assistance, in some cases outside of their job description, the participants were unaware that the satellite campus did not have dedicated staff to provide the service. While some participants were aware of the limitations, they did not express dissatisfaction because they were highly satisfied with the customer service and overall experience. This discovery enlightened the researcher who, for over a decade, has advocated for an increase in services for students who were unaware of their limitation. Because the researcher is the administrator of the campus, she is aware of limitations. Pursuing additional resources is a valid concern. However she was unaware of the student's perception and lack of feeling limited due to their positive experiences on campus.

The findings of the study are exciting to the researcher due to the implications for future research and practice. If students are satisfied when they study in a smaller environment, develop relationships and experience good customer service, then these factors can be applied to practice and academic institutions. If it is suggested that satisfaction is linked to improved academic performance, persistence and graduation, then additional research on

this topic is critical. The next two sections will discuss recommendations for practice and research.

Recommendations for Practice

The findings from the study regarding the satellite campus student experience suggests several recommendations for practice. The data suggests that students prefer a smaller environment, the ability to develop relationships with others, and a student centered approach. Colleges and universities would be wise to develop plans to implement methods by which these preferences can be incorporated into decision making, policy and training.

Both the data from the study and extant literature suggests that students prefer a smaller learning environment. Graduates assert that it is more difficult to participate in a large lecture and ask questions. Student engagement in a smaller classroom is easier and often occurs naturally due to the environment. Therefore, it is suggested that students may benefit from keeping classroom seat capacity low. The researcher has incorporated this finding into her own practice. The satellite campus in this research study has undergone major expansion and reconstruction. Part of the reconstruction plan includes a new classroom wing. In an effort to keep classroom size small, three of the seven new classrooms include seating for less than 20 students. No classrooms hold over 30 students. This design will allow students to enroll in smaller classes such that they can easily ask questions and participate.

In addition to small classrooms, students also commented that the small size of the campus contributed to a welcoming environment. Students were able to quickly get to know one another and easily navigate the small campus. Because of the small environment, students developed a sense of belonging and a connection to this community. This finding

suggests that students would benefit from an enrollment cap at satellite campuses. A maximum number of enrollees should be determined based on an institutional strategic plan determined by the college. This recommendation has been incorporated into future plans by the researcher. The growth in enrollment over the past few years has significantly increased the number of students studying at the satellite campus location. The researcher has begun efforts to establish an alternative location for instruction in order to minimize the total number of students at the location thus maintaining the small campus culture.

Approximately 30% of students live south of the campus and therefore discussions are taking place with a local organization regarding renting space in a community building to offer courses to this population. In addition, the researcher has requested that the institutional research department begin to survey students about the possibility of studying at this location to discover if the new site would meet the needs of students and be a successful college initiative. If so, enrollment at the satellite campus would remain at a manageable size allowing students to feel comfortable in the small environment.

This small campus environment also created an atmosphere conducive to developing relationships. Having the ability to develop relationships was important to participants because they were credited with contributing to student satisfaction. Participants referenced relationships with peers, staff and faculty of the satellite campus and described their supportive and helpful nature. It is well documented in literature that these relationships contribute to satisfaction and persistence. For that reason, it is critical for students to have opportunities to interact.

In an effort to foster relationships with students, the researcher has incorporated several new student service events where students can congregate and meet one another. Also, a new student lounge has been incorporated into a proposed budget for a future capital project to create a space conducive to interaction between students. This is particularly important at a location where students commute to campus each day and do not live on campus in dormitories.

In addition to peer relationships, participants describe the relationship with faculty and staff as critical to student success, satisfaction, and persistence. Faculty and staff were described as supportive and invested in the students. These relationships were discussed by all participants as important and positive. This finding suggests that students may benefit from having opportunities to develop relationships with faculty and staff. In an effort to foster these relationships, the researcher has made changes to personnel hiring and training. Due to an increase in enrollment, the campus has recently received approval to hire more faculty and staff at the satellite location. Professional development initiatives have been underway to train faculty and staff about the importance of coaching relationships with students. Training has included the mentoring of students as well as other human resource initiatives. In addition, the hiring process includes questions regarding the candidate's perspective on their respective role with students. Efforts are made to discover if the candidate has a student centered approach and is dedicated to student success.

A student centered approach with an attention to satisfaction was also highlighted in the findings of the study. Participants commented that the college was focused on ensuring students were satisfied. They responded that their feedback clearly mattered and was taken

into consideration when changes on campus and academic offerings were contemplated. The college surveyed students in both formal and informal manners including student surveys and open forums.

Based on this finding, it is important to communicate a clear commitment to student satisfaction. Creating opportunities for students to provide input and feedback appear to contribute to satisfaction. Therefore, the researcher has requested that the institutional research department at the college survey the satellite campus students and segregate data to appreciate the distinct responses of this population. Discussions are taking place about the possibility of changing the survey to include more qualitative information to better inform administration.

Also, the researcher intends to publish the data in the student newspaper and on the website. The publication of data and survey results is intended to convey to students the importance of their feedback in an effort to provide attention to their satisfaction.

While the findings of the research study are interesting and thought provoking, they also suggest the need for future research. The next section will discuss specific areas where research could further inform the satellite campus experience.

Recommendations for Future Research

Findings from the study on the satellite campus student experience suggest that optimal conditions may exist at branch campus locations that could contribute to increased student satisfaction. Because the campuses tend to have a small, intimate environment that fosters connection with others and a sense of community, satellite campuses may provide an atmosphere that is preferable to students. Unfortunately, a literature review provided very few articles and research devoted specifically to satellite campuses and their students. Of the

research that exists, most were quantitative studies that asked students to respond to specific aspects of their experience and did not provide open ended questions to capture the student's perspective on their experience. Further, there were very few studies that discussed the specific outcomes of satellite campus students. Satisfaction and the connection to outcomes must be further explored. Many research articles suggest a link between satisfaction and outcomes and therefore academic institutions must investigate what contributes to student satisfaction.

Fonseca and Bird (2007) state that satellite campuses "remain largely ignored in the academic literature" (p.1). While there are few studies focused specifically on satellite campuses, only articles that cover various aspects of this topic exist in literature. More satellite campus specific surveys are needed to measure the satisfaction, perspective and outcomes of this student population. In addition, qualitative studies are needed to determine how the student perceives their experience. While quantitative studies exist, they measure what the researcher deems important to students. Qualitative research allows the participant to provide their perspective on their experience and better inform the data. Finally, academia should continue to study the link between satisfaction and improved outcomes. If satisfaction increases persistence, academic performance and graduation rates, then it is an important topic that warrants further investigation.

Appendix A: Letter of Intent to Participants

Date:

Dear Graduate and Potential Participant,

As you may know, I am a dean and vice president at a local community college satellite campus. I am also a doctoral student at Northeastern University in the Doctoral of Education program. I am currently completing my dissertation and conducting research. The purpose of this research is to explore the experience of community college satellite campus students in order to better understand factors involved in high levels of student satisfaction at this location.

I have identified you as a potential participant because you are a graduate of this community college satellite campus and believe you could provide relevant contribution to the study. Should you choose to participate, we will meet for approximately ninety minutes to discuss your experiences and potential reasons for levels of satisfaction. The interview will be audio-recorded and documented by a professional transcription service. Shortly after the interview date, you will be given a copy of the transcript to check the accuracy of your responses.

Your interview and participation will in no way affect your status at the college. Your identity will be kept confidential through the use of a pseudonym and all responses and data collection will remain in a locked cabinet that is accessible only to me.

 If you would like to volunteer for the study, please complete the attached questionnaire and email it to me at burke-widdison.m@husky.neu.edu. If you are selected to participate, I will email you to discuss the study in greater detail, obtain signed consent, and schedule a convenient time to meet.

Please be aware that you can withdraw from the study at any time. If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study, please contact me via email. Thank you for your consideration of participating in this research study.

Sincerely,

Mary Burke, MPH, ABD

Northeastern University

508-333-7324

Burke-widdison.m@husky.neu.edu

Appendix B: Questionnaire for Potential Participants

Name: _____

Pseudonym: _____

I am a graduate of the community college satellite campus: Yes
No

I completed at least four semesters at this satellite campus   Yes
No

I transferred credits from other colleges used toward graduation   Yes
No

I attended the same community college satellite campus for _____ semesters.

My degree and major was _____

My GPA at graduation was_____

Questions I have about the research study:

_____
____Comments:

_____
_____
_____

    I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I can withdraw at
any time. Participation will have no impact on my status at the community college.
_____(Please initial here)

Appendix C: Participant Selection Email Date:

Dear Participant;

This letter is to inform you that you have been selected to participate in the research study regarding community college satellite campus student experiences and high levels of satisfaction. Congratulations! I appreciate your willingness to contribute to this valuable research.

Your participation in this research study will inform academics about how community college satellite campus student experience their education and what factors contribute toward making that experience satisfying. Research has demonstrated that students who are satisfied often have better outcomes and are more likely to persist. Your participation will allow me to highlight such factors so that they can be replicated and fostered.

Please be reminded that you can opt out of this study at any time. Should you have questions or concerns during the interview process or at any time during the study, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I would like to schedule a convenient time for you to meet and to conduct the interview. Please let me know if you are available during any of the following dates and times:

August __   12pm_____

                    1pm_____

                    2pm_____

August __   5pm_____

                    6pm_____

                    7pm_____

August __   9am_____

                    10am_____

If none of the above days and times are convenient, please provide two options for days and times that you are available._____. I can meet in my office or at the local library if you are more comfortable. Please let me know if transportation is an issue. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you,

Mary Burke, MPH, ABD

Northeastern University

Burke-widdison.m@husky.neu.edu

508-333-7324

Appendix D: Informed Consent Letter

Northeastern University, College of Professional Studies

Name of Investigator(s): Dr. Kimberly Nolan (Principal Investigator) & Mary
Burke (Student Researcher) **Title of Project:**

Why are Satellite Campus Students Highly Satisfied: An Interpretative
Phenomenological Analysis

Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

We are inviting you to take part in a research study. This form will tell you about the
study, but the researcher will explain it to you first. You may ask this person any questions
that you have When you are ready to make a decision, you may tell the researcher if you
want to participate or not. You do not have to participate if you do not want to. If you decide
to participate, the researcher will ask you to sign this statement and will give you a copy to
keep.

Why am I being asked to take part in this research?

We are asking you to take part in this research because you are a graduate of
the community college satellite campus. **Why is this research study being done?**

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of high levels of
satisfaction for community college satellite campus students. Since students at satellite
campuses typically have limited resources, students would presumably be dissatisfied,
however recent satisfaction surveys and current literature suggests this population is highly
satisfied. The goal of the study is to gain an understanding of experiences of satellite
campus students and inform the researcher as to why students report high levels of
satisfaction. Administration, trustee members, staff and faculty will gain an understanding
of the student's experience. Experiences that contribute to satisfaction will be illuminated
and decision makers can reinforce their importance. Interviewing you will allow us to
discover answers to these questions. **What will I be asked to do?**

If you decide to take part in this study, we will ask you to participate in
semistructured interviews to describe your experiences while a student at the satellite
campus. With your permission, your interview will be recorded by a professional
transcription service, www.rev.com, and later be transcribed. After the interview date, we
will send you a copy of the transcription for your review and edits.

Where will this take place and how much time will it take?

The interview will be 60-90 minutes and conducted in a mutually convenient
location. Review of the transcript will take no more than 30 minutes and can be completed
via email.

Will there be any risk or discomfort to me?

There are no foreseeable risks or discomfort to you by taking part in the research. Should you feel uncomfortable regarding any of the questions or any part of the study, you may decline to answer or participate. As previously stated, you can opt out of the study at any time.

Will I benefit by being in this research?

There will be no direct benefit or compensation for participating in the research study.

Who will see the information about me?

Your part in this study will be confidential. Only the researchers on this study will see the information about you. No reports or publications will use information that can identify you in any way or any individual as being of this project.

What will happen if I suffer harm from this research?

No special arrangements will be made for compensation or for payment for treatment solely because of your participation in this research.

Can I stop my participation in this study?

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You do not have to participate if you do not want to and you can refuse to answer any question. Even if you begin the study, you may quit at any time. If you do not participate or decide to opt out, you will not lose any rights, benefits, or services that you would otherwise have.

Who can I contact if I have questions or problems?

If you have any questions about this study, please feel free to call the student researcher, Mary Burke at 508-333-7324 or burke-widdison.m@huskey.neu.edu. You may also contact the principal investigator, Dr. Kimberly Nolan, at k.nolan@neu.edu.

Who can I contact about my rights as a participant?

I you have questions about our rights in this research, you may contact Nan C. Regina, Director, Human Subject Research Protection, 490 Renaissance Park, Northeastern University, Boston, MA 02115. Tel: 617-373-4588, Email: n.regina@neu.edu. You may call anonymously if you wish.

Will I be paid for my participation?

No, there is no compensation for participation.

Will it cost me anything to participate?

No, there are no associated costs with participation.

I agree to take part in this research.

_____   _____

Signature of person agreeing to take part   **Date**

_____ **Printed name of person above**

_____ **Signature of person who explained the study to the participant above and obtained consent**

_____   _____

Printed name of person above   **Date**

Appendix E: Member Check Email

Date:

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your time and willingness to share your experiences at the community college satellite campus on DATE. I enjoyed our discussion and believe you have provided valuable information that will contribute to the research study.

Attached please find a copy of the transcript from our meeting. Please take a moment to review the document for accuracy. Should you find errors, please mark corrections directly on the transcript. In addition, if you have additional thoughts or memories that you would like to add, please note that as well.

Please return the edited version of the transcription to me via email. If you have no edits, please let me know that you found the document to accurately reflect your responses. Please contact me via email or phone if you have any questions.

Tank you again for participating!

Sincerely,

Mary Burke, MPH, ABD

Northeastern University

Burke-widdison.m@husky.neu.edu

508-333-7324

Appendix F: Interview Protocol

TOPIC: Why are satellite campus student highly satisfied: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis?

DATE:
TIME:
LOCATION:
INTERVIEWER: Mary Burke
INTERVIEWEE #:

{Ask permission to begin recording and if given approval, turn on recorder}.

<u>Introduction</u>

As you know, I am a doctoral student at Northeastern University and am currently working on research for my dissertation. My interest is to capture the experience of community college satellite campus student to better understand high levels of satisfaction. Since literature suggests that students who are satisfied have improved academic performance, persistence and tend to graduate, I believe the outcome of the research is important. The hope is that this research can identify factors involved in levels of satisfaction which can inform decision makers at community college satellite campuses. Such factors can then be fostered and replicated in order to improve student outcomes.

You have been selected as a participant because of your experience as a community college satellite campus student. As a graduate, you have many experiences that may inform the research. I want to emphasize that all participants in this research study will remain anonymous and that your participation today is completely voluntary. At any time, if you feel uncomfortable or would like to end the interview, we will stop. I have a written signed consent form that I would like to review before we begin.

{Review and sign NEU Written Consent Form}

Thank you. I would like to focus on your answers rather than trying to write them all down. For that reason, I would like to audiotape our conversation with your permission, of course. I will be using a professional transcription service that will transcribe the interview. Later when I am reflecting on potential themes from different participants, I will be able to play back your comments. The transcription service will receive the audio without your name, but rather, a pseudonym and will never know your name or identity. This is done intentionally to maintain confidentiality. Once the audio recording is transcribed, I will mail you a copy for your review. I will also forward you a copy of my overall findings to request your comments or corrections. Does that sound ok? Any questions?

{Answer any questions}

I estimate that this interview will take approximately one hour to one hour and a half. I have several questions to cover and may want to ask you follow up questions or clarifying questions to be sure I understand your meaning. Do you have any other questions before we begin? {Answer any questions and then begin}

1. Can you tell me about yourself? Where do you live?
- *Do you have children or a family?*
- *Are you employed and if so, what do you do for work?*
- *How would you describe your living situation?*
- *Do you own a home, live with family or rent?*
- *What is your ethnicity?*

2. Can you tell me about yourself as a student before graduation? What was your major of study?
- *How many semesters did it take to graduate?*
- *Did you work while a student?*
- *Did you care for children or family members while a student?*
- *Did you utilize any student services while a student?*

3. Can you tell me about your experience with satisfaction surveys while a student?
- *Did faculty and staff inquire about your satisfaction?*
- *Did administration inquire about your satisfaction?*
- *Did college personnel respond to student concerns?*
- *Did you ever experience follow up from college personnel about satisfaction survey results?*

4. Can you tell me about the student services that you knew about while at the satellite campus?
- *Financial aid assistance*
- *Academic advising*
- *Registration*
- *Career services*
- *Tutoring services*
- *Disability services*
- *Student Success Coaching*
- *Business Office*
- *IT Support*
- *Veteran Services*
- *International Student Services*

5. Can you tell me about your experience with student life activities?
- *Availability of extracurricular activities*
- *Availability of clubs*
- *Availability of sports teams/activities*
- *Student government opportunities*
- *Community Engagement/Volunteer*
- *Academic Fraternities*

6. *How would you describe the facilities of the satellite campus?*
    - *Classrooms*
    - *Science laboratories*
    - *Library*
    - *Student lounge*
    - *Security Services*
    - *Technical resources (i.e. computers)*
    - *Technical Support*
    - *Food Services*
    - *Sports facilities*
    - *Transportation/parking*

7. *What if any interaction did you have with peers?*
    - *Were there opportunities to meet other students?*
    - *Did you socialize with other students?*
    - *Did you experience diversity of student population?*

8. *Can you tell me about any interactions you had with faculty who taught your courses?*
    - *Accessibility to faculty*
    - *Willingness to help*
    - *Interest in you as a student*
    - *Assistance with career development*

9. *Can you describe the educational experience in terms of course selection options, rigor, of instruction? Can you give me specific examples?*
    - *Academic level of the course*
    - *Rigor/level of difficulty*
    - *Quality of instructors*
    - *Ability to find a job*
    - *Value for cost*
    - *Course selection/options*
    - *Availability of course/ability to fit your schedule*
    - *Availability of programs*

10. *How did you think being on satellite campus impacted your post grad experience in terms of finding a job, value for cost?*

11. *Can you tell me about any specific, memorable/ positive experiences that you remember while you were a student on the satellite campus?*

12. *How would you describe your overall experience as a community college satellite campus student?*

13. *What experiences do you think contributed significantly to your overall satisfaction as a community college satellite campus student?*

14. *Did you feel like a consumer while a student and that college personnel cared about your level of satisfaction?*
    - *Were college personnel committed to helping you?*
    - *Did others inquire about how they could help you or make your college experience better?*
    - *Were you satisfied as a student i.e. able to register, obtain advising, get class to fit schedule, etc.*

15. *Did you get good customer service while a student?*

    - *Were you treated well?*
    - *Did you feel as though your questions and concerns mattered?*
    - *Did you*

16. *What advice would you give to a student who was considering enrolling at a satellite campus?*

Thank you for your time and participation in this interview. I appreciate your willingness to share your experience. As a reminder, your identity is completely protected and will be unknown as I will be using a pseudonym.

As I mentioned, I will be emailing you a copy of our interview today within the next few weeks. You are welcome to review it and provide me with any feedback or corrections. If I should have follow up questions, would it be ok to contact you? If so, would you prefer email or phone? The following is the email and phone contact I have from you.

{Confirm contact information}

I expect to complete the study within six months and are happy to share my findings with you. You can let me know if you are interested in receiving it. Do you have any questions for me?

{Answer any questions}

References

Arnett, D. B., Wittmann, C. M., & Wilson, B. J. (2004). Encouraging future helping behaviors: The role of student-faculty relationships in higher education marketing. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education, 13*(1-2), 127-157. doi:10.1300/J050v13n01_08

Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, *25*(4), 297-308.

Bailey, B. L., Bauman, C., & Lata, K. A. (1998). *Student retention and satisfaction: The evolution of a predictive model. AIR 1998 annual forum paper.* Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED424797)

Ballantyne, J. (2012). Valuing students' voices: Experiences of first year students at a new campus. *International Journal of Pedagogies & Learning, 7*(1), 41-50. doi:10.5172/ijpl.2012.7.1.41

Bambrick, S. (2002). *The satellite/remote campus: A quality experience for Australian first year students.* Paper presented at The Sixth Pacific Rim - First Year in Higher Education Conference: Changing Agendas "Te Ao Hurihuri", Christchurch, New Zealand. Retrieved from http://www.fyhe.com.au/past_ papers/papers02.htm

Bay, D., & Daniel, H. (2001). The student is not the customer: An alternative perspective. *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, *11*(1), 1-19. doi:10.1300/J050v11n01_01

Biggerstaff, D., & Thompson, A. R., (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A qualitative methodology of choice in healthcare research. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 5*(3), 214-224. doi:10.1080/14780880802314304

Blocker, C. E., & Campbell, H. A., Jr. (1963). *Administrative practices in university extension centers and branch colleges.* Austin, Texas.

Bolton, R. N., Kannan, P. K., & Bramlett, M. D. (2000). Implications of loyalty program

   membership and service experiences for customer retention and value. *Journal of*

   Academy of Marketing Science, *28*(1), 95-108.

Booker, Q., & Rebman, C. (2005). E-student retention: Factors affecting customer loyalty for

   online program success. *Issues in Information Systems*, *6*(1), 183-189.

Braxton, J. M., Brier, E. M., & Steele, S. L. (2007). Shaping retention from research to practice.

   Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory and Practice, 9(3), 377-399.

Brocki, J.M., & Wearden, A.J. (2006). A critical evaluation of the use of interpretative

   phenomenological analysis (IPA) in health psychology. Psychology and Health, 21(1),

   87-108. doi: 10.1080/14768320500230185

Browne, B. A., Kaldenberg, D. O., Browne, W. G., & Brown, D. J. (1998). Student as customer:

   Factors affecting satisfaction and assessments of institutional quality. *Journal of*

   Marketing for Higher Education, *8*(3), 1-14. doi:10.1300/J050v08n03_01

Bruning, S. D. (2002). Relationship building as a retention strategy: Linking relationship

   attitudes and satisfaction evaluations to behavioral outcomes. *Public Relations Review*,

   28(1), 39-48. doi:10.1016/S0363-8111(02)00109-1

Bryant, J. L. (2006). Assessing expectations and perceptions of the campus experience: The

   Noel-Levitz student satisfaction inventory. *New Directions for Community Colleges*,

   2006(134), 25-35. doi:10.1002/cc.234

Butin, D. W. (2010). *The education dissertation: A guide for practitioner scholars*. Thousand

   Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cardozo, R. N. (1965). An experimental study of consumer effort, expectation, and satisfaction.

   Journal of Marketing Research, *2*(1), 244-249.

Carr, J. A. (2004). The state of the public education system of the twenty first century in the

    United States in contrast with the legislative and executive policy formulations of

    Thomas Jefferson. *University of West Los Angeles Law Review*, *37*, 30-221.

Cattell, N. (1971). Branch campus role in community-based education. *Educational Record*.
52(4), 368-370.

Cavanaugh, J. (2007). How do we compare? Branch and main campuses. *Association for*

    University Regional Campuses of Ohio, 13, 11-21.

Clark, L. M., & Tullar, P. (1995). *Three governmental entities collaborate to build a satellite*

    community college campus in northern Arizona: Working together to create a "one-stop

    learning center." Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED395618)

Clarke, L. (2009). The POD model: Using communities of practice theory to conceptualize

    student teachers' professional learning online. *Computers & Education*, *52*(3), 521-529.

    doi:10.1016/j.compedu.2008.10.006

Cosman-Ross, J. M., & Hiatt-Michael, D. (2005). *Adult student motivators at a university*

    satellite campus. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED490636)

Courtney, M., & Courtney, A. (2012). Science and engineering education: Who is the customer?

    Ithaca, New York: Physics Education, Cornell University Library. Retrieved from

    https://arxiv.org/ftp/physics/papers/0612/0612117.pdf

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative*

    and qualitative research (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Curtis, J. W. (2005). Inequities persist for women and non-tenure-track faculty. *Academe, 91*(2),

    20-98.

Davig, W. B., & Spain, J. W. (2004). Impact on freshman retention of orientation course content:

Proposed persistence model. *Journal of College Student Retention, 5*(3), 305-323.

Dengerink, H. A. (2001). Institutional identity and organizational structure in multi-campus universities. *Metropolitan: An International Forum, 12*(2), 20–29.

Dessoff, A. (2011). Cultivating branch campuses. *International Educator*, *20*(6), 18-27.

Douglas, J., McClelland, R., and Davies, J. (2008). The development of a conceptual model of student satisfaction with their experience in higher education. *Quality Assurance in Education, 16*(1), 19-35. doi:10.1108/09684880810848396

Elliott, K. M. (2003). Key determinants of student satisfaction. *Journal of College Student Retention*, *4*(3), 271-279.

Elliott, K. M., & Healy, M. A. (2001). Key factors influencing student satisfaction related to Recruitment and retention. *Journal of marketing for Higher Education, 10*(4), 1-11.

Elliott, K. M., & Shin, D. (2002). Student satisfaction: An alternative approach to assessing this important concept. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 24*(2), 197-209.

Elliott, R., Fischer, C.T., & Rennie, D.L. (1999). Evolving guidelines for publication of qualitative research studies in psychology and related fields. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 38*(3)*,* 215-229. doi:10.1348/014466599162782

Emery, C., Kramer, T., & Tian, R. (2001). Customers vs. products: Adopting an effective approach to business students. *Quality Assurance in Education, 9*(2), 110-115. doi:10.1108/09684880110389681

Esco, C., & Watson, B. (2007). *Tifton Campus profile and history.* The University of Georgia College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences. Retrieved from http://www.caes.uga.edu/campus/Tifton/profile/index.html

Eva, N. C. (2012). Improving library services to satellite campuses: The case of the University of

    Lethbridge. *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distance Learning*, *6*(2), 53-66.

    doi:10.1080/1533290X.2012.684429

Feldman, K., & Paulsen, M. (1999). Faculty motivation: The role of a supportive teaching

    culture. In M. Theall (Ed.), *Motivation from within: Approaches for encouraging faculty*

    and students to excel. San Fransico, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Ferreri S. P., & O'Connor S. K. (2013). Redesign of a large lecture course into a small-group

    learning course. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*. *77*(1), 13.

    doi:10.5688/ajpe77113

Floyd, D. L., & St. Arnauld, C. (2007). An exploratory study of community college

    baccalaureate teacher education programs: Lessons learned. *Community College Review*,

    35(1), 66-84. doi:10.1177/0091552107302237

Fonseca, J.W., & Bird, C.P. (2007, October). *Under the radar: Branch campuses take off.*

    Retrieved from https://www.universitybusiness.com/article/under-radar-branchcampuses-

    take.

Franz, R. S. (1998). Whatever you do, don't treat your students like customers! *Journal of*

    Management Education, *22*(1), 63-69.

Fraser, D., & Stott, K. (2015). University satellite campus management models. *Australian*

    University Review, 57(2), 79-83.

Gramas, M. (2013). *Faculty perceptions of student-faculty relationships in associate degree*

    programs of nursing (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and

    Theses database. (Order No. 3567754)

Granke, S. S., & Woosley, S. A. (2005). An exploration of the factors that affect the academic

success of college sophomores. *College Student Journal*, *39*(2), 367-376.

Greelie, N. (2006). Disability service offices on branch campuses can face added challenges. *Disability Compliance For Higher Education*. *12*(1), 2.

Greene, T. (1999). Massachusetts college takes a class in VPNs. *Network World, 16*(9), 15,18.

Guolla, M. (1999). Assessing the teaching quality to student satisfaction relationship: Applied customer satisfaction research in the classroom. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice, 7*(3), 87-96.

Harrison, L. C., Congdon, H. B., & DiPiro, J. T. (2010). The status of US multi-campus colleges and schools of pharmacy. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *74*(7), 124.

Hermanson, D. R. (1995). *Inter-campus relations as perceived by branch campus and main campus administrators* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (Order No. 9623659)

Hill, F. M. (1995). Managing service quality in higher education: The role of the student as primary consumer. *Quality Assurance in Education*, *3*(3), 10-21.

Hoyt, J., & Howell, S. (2012). Why students choose the branch campus of a large university. *The Journal of Continuing Higher Education*, *60*(2), 110-116. doi:10.1080/07377363.2012.687304

Hussel, E. (1983). *Ideas pertaining to a pure phenomenology and to a phenomenological philosophy* (F. Kersten, Trans.). Holland: Nijhoff.

Jenkins, S. J. & Downs, E. (2001). Relationship between faculty personality and student evaluation of courses. *College Student Journal*, *35*(4), 636.

Juillerat, S. L. (1995). *Investigating a two-dimensional approach to the assessment of student satisfaction: Validation of the student satisfaction inventory* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (Order No. 9527493)

Kelley, S. W., Donnelly, J. H., & Skinner, S. J. (1990). Customer participation in service production and delivery. *Journal of Retailing, 66*(3), 315-335.

Kim, Y. K., & Sax, L. J. (2014). The effects of student-faculty interaction on academic self-concept: Does academic major matter? *Research in Higher Education*, *55*(8), 780-809. doi:10.1007/s11162-014-9335-x

Klein, A. J. (1931). Survey of land-grant colleges. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *2*(4), 169-176.

Knapp, D. A., Roffman, D. S., & Cooper, W. J. (2009). Growth of a pharmacy school through planning, cooperation, and establishment of a satellite campus. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *73*(6), 102.

Lee, M. (2004) Red, white, and blues: Library services to a satellite campus. *Journal of Library & Information Services in Distant Learning 1*(3), 65-78. doi:10.1300/J192v01n03_05

Lenz, T. L., Monaghan, M. S., Wilson, A. F., Tilleman, J. A., Jones, R. M., & Hayes, M. M. (2006). Using performance-based assessments to evaluate parity between a campus and distance education pathway. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education*, *70*(4), 90.

Lesure-Lester, G. E. (2003). Effects of coping styles on college persistence decisions among latino students in two year colleges. *Journal of College Student Retention, 5*(1), 11-22.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Linker, A. (2008). UNC studying satellite campuses at community colleges. *Triangle Business Journal.* (1), 3-10.

Lufi, D., Parish-Plass, J., & Cohen, A. (2003). Persistence in higher education and its relationship to other personality variables. *College Student Journal*, *37*(1), 50-59.

Macdonald, I. (2006). *Offshore university campuses: Bonus or baggage?* Paper presented at the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Annual Conference, Perth, Western Australia.

Madsen, D. (1992). *Successful dissertations and theses: A guide to graduate student research from proposal to completion* (2ⁿᵈ ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mark, E. (2013). Student satisfaction and the customer focus in higher education. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 35*(1), 2-10. doi:10.1080/1360080X.2012.727703

Marx, S. (2005). Improving the use of technology in a small campus community. *Technology in Higher Education Journal, 32*(6), 21-23.

Maxwell, J.A. (2005). *Qualitative research design: An interactive approach*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

McClelland, E., & Daly, J. (1991). A comparison of selected demographic characteristics and academic performance of on-campus and satellite-center RNs: Implications for the curriculum. *Journal of Nursing Education*, *30*(6), 261-266.

McCollough, M. A., & Gremler, D. D. (1999). Guaranteeing student satisfaction: An exercise in treating students as customers. *Journal of Marketing Education*, *21*(2), 118-130.

Medsker, L. L. (1971). *Breaking the access barrier: A profile of two-year colleges.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Merzer, M. R. (2008). *Perceptions of inter-campus relations by branch campus and main campus student affairs administrators in multicampus public universities in Florida* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (Order No. 3302751)

Miller, R. (2003, May). *Student Satisfaction and Institutional Success*. Paper presented at the 43rd annual AIR Forum, Tampa, FL.

Mittal, V., & Kamakura, W.A. (2001). Satisfaction, repurchase intent, and repurchase behavior: Investigating the moderating effect of customer characteristics. *JMR, Journal of marketing research*, *38*(1), 131-142.

Moro-Egido, A. I., & Panades, J. (2010). An analysis of student satisfaction: Full-time vs. part-time students. *Social Indicators Research, 96*(2), 363-378. doi:10.1007/s11205-009 9482-1

Moustakas,C. E. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Newman, C. B. (2015). Rethinking race in student-faculty interactions and mentoring Relationships with undergraduate African American engineering and computer science majors. *Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering*, *21*(4), 323-346.

Oja, M. (2011). Student satisfaction and student performance. *Journal of Applied Research in the Community College*, *19*(1), 50-56.

Osborn, M., & Smith, J. (2008). The fearfulness of chronic pain and the centrality of the therapeutic relationship in containing it: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *5*(4), 276-288. doi:10.1080/14780880701826143

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (1991). *How college affects students: Findings and insights From twenty years of research*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Patterson, P. G., Johnson, L. W., & Spreng, R. A. (1997). Modeling the determinants of customer satisfaction for business-to-business professional services. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, *25*(1), 4-17. doi:10.1007/BF02894505

Peake, J., Par, B., & Roberts, J. (2013). College of agriculture satellite campus student demographics and alumni level of satisfaction. *NACTA Journal, 57*(3), 10-14.

Pennucci, A., & Mayfield, J. (2007). *Higher education branch campuses in Washington State.* (Document ID 02-12-2302). Olympia, WA: Washington State Institute for Public Policy.

Pietkiewicz, I., & Smith, J. A. (2012). A practical guide to using interpretative phenomenological analysis in qualitative research psychology. *Psychological Journal, 18*(2), 361-369.

Pipitone, B., & Poirer, W. (2011). Student services revitalization/transformation. *College Quarterly*, *14*(1), 1.

Poling, D. A., LoSchiavo, F. M., & Shatz, M. A. (2009). Regional campus success: Strategies for Psychology faculty. *Teaching of Psychology, 36*(3), 194-196.

Richard, D. (2006). On the road again: Taking bibliographic instruction off-campus. *Journal of Library Administration, 45*(3), 411-425. doi:10.1300/J111v45n03_07

Richardson, S., & Radloff, A. (2014). Allies in learning: Critical insights into the importance of staff-student interactions in university education. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *19*(6), 603-615. doi:10.1080/13562517.2014.901960

Roberts, C. (2010). *The dissertation journey. A practical and comprehensive guide to planning, writing and defending your dissertation* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Roberts, P. (2013). The role of an authentic curriculum and pedagogy for rural schools and the professional satisfaction of rural teachers. *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education*, *23*(2), 89-99.

Rudestam, K.E., & Newton, R.R. (1992). *Surviving your dissertation: A comprehensive guide to content and process.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Sanders, L., & Burton, J. (1996). From retention to satisfaction: New outcomes for assessing the freshman experience. *Research in Higher Education, 37*(5), 555-567.

Schroeder, C. (2005). *How to generate purposeful change on your campus: A realistic approach to institutional assessment.* Iowa City, IA: Noel-Levitz.

Schwandt, T.A. (1994). Constructivist, interpretivist approaches to human inquiry. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Scott, S. V. (1999). The academic as service provider: Is the customer 'always right'? *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, *21*(2), 193-202.

Shenton, A.K. 2004. Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. Education for Information, 22: 63-7.

Shinebourne, P. (2011). The theoretical underpinnings of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). *Existential Analysis: Journal of the Society for Existential Analysis, 22*(1), 16-32.

Sieber, J. E. (1992). *Planning ethically responsible research: A guide for students and internal review boards.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Sinclaire, J.K. (2011). Student satisfaction with online learning: Lessons from organizational behavior. Research in Higher Education Journal, 11.

Sirvanci, M. (1996). Are students the true customers of higher education? *Quality Progress, 29*(10), 99-102.

Sloan Consortium (2010). Retrieved October 26, 2012 from http://www.sloansconsortium.org.

Research in Higher Education Journal An empirical investigation, page 11

Sloan Consortium (n.d.). The 5 Pillars of Quality Online Education. The Sloan Consortium. Retrieved October 29, 2008 from http://www.sloan-c.org/5pillars

Smith, J. A., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research.* London: Sage.

Smith, J. A., Harre, R., & Van Langenhove, L. (1995). Idiography and the case-study. In J.A. Smith, R. Harre, & L.Van Langenhove (Eds.), *Rethinking Psychology,* (pp. 56-69). London: Sage.

Smith, J.A., & Osborn, M. (2008). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. In J.A. Smith (Eds.), Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods (2nd ed.). (53 80). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications

Snyder, T. D., & Dillow, S. A. (2012). *Digest of education statistics 2011*. National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2012/2012001.pdf

Sollitto, M., Johnson, Z. D., & Myers, S. A. (2013). Students' perceptions of college classroom connectedness, assimilation, and peer relationships. *Communication Education*, *62*(3), 318-331.

Stalnaker, L. R. (1994). *A study of student satisfaction with the college experience at Butler County Community College* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database (Order No. 9427275)

Starr, A., Betz, E. L., & Merme, J. (1972). Differences in college student satisfaction: Academic dropouts, nonacademic dropouts, and nondropouts. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 19*(4), 318-322.

Stillman, P., & Gillers, M. A. (2006). Clinical performance evaluations in medicine and law. In R. A. Berk (Ed.) *Performance Assessment: Methods and Applications*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Swan, J. E., Bowers, M. R., & Grover, R. (2002). Customer involvement in the selection of

Service specifications. *Journal of Services Marketing*, *16*(1), 88-103.

doi:10.1108/08876040210419433

Terenzin, P. T., & Pascarella, E. T. (1980). Toward the validation of Tinto's model of college student attrition: A review of recent studies. *Research in Higher Education*, *12*(3), 271282.

Thomas, E. H., & Galambos, N. (2004). What satisfies students? Mining student-opinion data with regression and decision tree analysis. *Research in Higher Education*, *45*(3), 251-269. doi:10.1023/B:RIHE.0000019589.79439.6e

Tinto, V. (1997). Classrooms as communities: Exploring the educational character of student persistence. *Journal of Higher Education*, *68*(6), 599-623.

Turpin, G., Barley, V., Beail, N., Scaife, J., Slade, P., Smith, J. A., & Walsh, S. (1997). Standards for research projects and theses involving qualitative methods: Suggested guidelines for trainees and courses. *Clinical Psychology Forum*, *108*, 3-7.

Ullah, H., & Wilson, M. A. (2007). Student academic success and its association to student involvement with learning and relationships with faculty and peers. *College Student Journal, 41*(4), 1192-1202.

Umbach, P. D., & Wawrzynski, M. R. (2005). Faculty do matter: The role of the college faculty in student learning and engagement. *Research in Higher Education, 46*(2), 153-184. doi:10.1007/s11162-004-1598-1

Vaughn, G. B. (2000). *The community college story.* Washington, D.C.: Community College Press.

Wagstaff, C., Jeong, H., Nolan, M., Wilson, T., Tweedlie, J., Phillips, E., . . . Holland, F. (2014). The accordion and the deep bowl of spaghetti: Eight researchers' experiences of using IPA as a methodology. *The Qualitative Report, 19*(47), 1-15.

Wieck, K. L., Alfred, D., Haas, B. K., & Yarbrough, S. (2014). Using a strengths model to build

    an on-line nursing education program. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, *30*(3), 233-242.

Wiers-Jenssen, J., Stensaker, B., & Grogaard, J. B. (2002). Student satisfaction: Towards an

    empirical deconstruction of the concept. *Quality in Higher Education*, *8*(2), 183-195.