

THE ROLE OF GENDER AND WORK EXPERIENCE ON
EXPECTATIONS OF CAREER CHARACTERISTICS
AND WORK FORCE DIVERSITY

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council
of Texas State University – San Marcos
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements

for the Degree

Master of BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

by

Lori J. Sallop, B.B.A

San Marcos, Texas
December 2005

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I realize that there are several individuals who helped me complete this project, and I take this opportunity to acknowledge their assistance. I need to thank the members of my thesis committee. I would like to thank Dr. Kay McGlashan Nicols for helping me realize my interest in diversity through her Human Resource Management course, as well as her amazing attention to detail. I have a great appreciation for Dr. Eric G. Kirby, who not only assisted in the data collection process, but also provided his expertise in analyzing the data. I owe the most overwhelming debt of gratitude to Dr. Susan L. Kirby, who served as my thesis committee chair. Her patience, knowledge, experience, and guidance have been imperative to the completion of this thesis.

It may have been my thesis committee that provided the technical knowledge to write this thesis, but it was the support of my friends and entire family who gave me the encouragement to complete it. I would like to thank my parents, Shelly and Marvin Sallop, for their continuous support, and my siblings, Ben and Mara, for reminding me that I am role model for their children. I am grateful to Dr. Brenda Joyner who is more than my mentor. I am indebted to all of my friends, particularly the ones from childhood and college, who remind me to dream and that strength comes from within. I appreciate the flexibility allowed by my employer, American Achievement Corporation, and Cindy Henneke, who was my manager for the majority of the time it took to write this thesis. This paper could not have been completed without the assistance of so many supporters.

This manuscript was submitted on October 26, 2005.

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ABSTRACT

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LORI J. SALLOP, B.B.A

Texas State University – San Marcos

December 2005

SUPERVISING PROFESSOR: SUSAN L. KIRBY

One hundred and eighty-seven graduating business students at a large public university in the southwest participated in a gender diversity study by completing a voluntary questionnaire. The study was designed to gain greater insight about the effects of gender and work experience on the expectations of career characteristics and work force diversity. In particular, the study examined salary expectations, career characteristics, job search methods and intensity, internship participation, expected hours required and willing to work, and sensitivity to gender issues. The career characteristics that were examined include social aspects of work, work life balance, cultural fit and pay. The study revealed that graduating business students with more work experience while in college place greater importance on higher compensation than students with less work experience. The study also supports that female graduating business students place significantly greater importance on work life balance and culture fit within the organization than their male peers. Additionally, female graduating business students were significantly more aware and sensitive to gender issues than their male peers.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Over the years, several state and federal laws have been enacted to ensure gender pay equity for jobs requiring equivalent skills, effort, and/or responsibility; nonetheless, a gender pay gap still exists in which women are paid less than men for comparable positions. Several careers tend to attract a larger percentage of men; these include business, finance, investment, law and engineering. Likewise, several careers tend to attract a larger percentage of women; these include teaching, nursing, home health care, child care, and social work (Murrell, Frieze, and Frost, 1991). It is notable that these gender career draws have a significant pay disparity. Simply put, many women choose careers that pay less than the careers predominately filled by men.

However, research has demonstrated that when women do select careers predominately populated by men, they are compensated at a lesser level for comparable skills, effort and/or responsibility (Roth, 2003). This paper explores the attitudes of undergraduate business students at a southwest university to determine if gender, type of prior work experience, and the amount of prior work experience influence their salary expectations, career characteristics, job search methods and intensity, internship participation, expected hours required and willingness to work, and sensitivity to gender issues.

CHAPTER 2

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

This study will examine the different work experiences and gender expectations of graduating business students in terms of pay expectations, the importance of various career characteristics, job search methods used and intensity, internship experiences, hours expected and willing to work, and sex-role expectations and sensitivity to gender issues. Appendix A provides a summary of relevant past studies exploring gender and work related expectations.

Pay Expectations

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 made it illegal to discriminate in pay on the basis of gender when jobs require equivalent skills, effort and/or responsibility and are performed within the same working conditions (Dessler, 2004). Despite the intervening forty years since the passage of the act, certain professions tend to be male or female-dominated, and the male-dominated careers are typically higher paying (Murrell, Frieze, and Frost, 1991). For example, engineering which has a higher percentage of men, is higher paying than teaching, which is more female dominated (Murrell, Frieze, and Frost, 1991). Alsop (2005) claims that many stereotypes are still common in the workplace. A key stereotype is that men are stronger analytically, while women are stronger in communication and

strategy. Many of the male-dominated professions, like engineering, are associated with analytical skills, while the female-dominated careers like teaching, require strong communication skills. However, Roth (2003) conducted a study and determined that women were paid significantly less when compared to men when both held similar Wall Street professions, such as financial analysts. This indicates that the pay difference exists even within the same profession requiring similar skills. Loury (1997), on the other hand, found that while there is a pay gap, this gap is beginning to narrow.

The research of Keaveny and Inderriedan (2000) and Abbott (1993) indicate that women tend to be more satisfied than men with their given level of compensation, even though women are usually paid less. However, Chapple (2001) found that women with higher education value the type of work they do and will not sacrifice career goals or pay for conveniences such as a work location closer to home. Yet Alsop (2005) contradicts Chapple when he discusses women with Master of Business Administration (MBA) degrees and states that in general, women will forgo monetary gain to advance the common good by exceeding the ethical and corporate social responsibility standards. However, Alsop (2005) notes that thirty percent is the average female MBA enrollment percentage, and Mavin and Bryans (1999) believe that business schools should alter existing management theory to increase this percentage.

As Keaveny and Inderriedan (2000) point out, pay satisfaction is dependent on whether the pay received by an individual equals the amount of pay expected; therefore, if women have lower pay expectations, then they will be satisfied with, and accept, lower pay. Alsop (2005) also found that men with MBAs were accepting positions with salaries averaging around \$93,066, while women with MBAs were averaging around

\$84,356 which supports Keaveny and Inderriedan's lower pay expectation theory. The average salary information of graduating MBA students found by Alsop (2005) contradicts Loury (1997) who found that the pay gap narrows particularly for educated women. This study explores pay expectations of undergraduates by examining the salary expectations of graduating business students as they prepare to enter the professional work world.

H1: Male graduating business students will have higher salary expectations than female graduating business students.

In addition to exploring the differences in salary expectations for men and women, this study will also examine the stated desires of graduating business students in terms of the importance of various career characteristics and the use of differing job search strategies.

Career Characteristics

Murrell, Frieze, and Frost (1991) suggest that women are more concerned with the social aspects of a job while men focus more on the economic conditions. Female students were more inclined to select part-time jobs for the additional benefits associated with the job, such as store discounts and flexibility around studying (Ruscoe and Morgan, 1996). In addition to the pay associated to the job, women tend to choose jobs based on their interest in the job, the ability to work with other people, and the cultural fit between their needs and goals and those of the organization (Murrell, Frieze, and Frost, 1991).

Murrell, Frieze, and Frost (1991) point out that women and men look for different aspects in selecting jobs, such as their interest in the work content and the people they work with. Chapple (2001) explains that working women with children, particularly women with lesser education, prefer to work closer to home. Likewise, married women are less likely to relocate for a career opportunity than men or single women (Duncan, 1996). Additionally, women are more likely to reject an employment offer if it conflicts with family or if they perceive unsuitable job characteristics, such as a perceived culture clash (Kulik, 2000). Men are more likely to quit a job than women, particularly to receive large increases in compensation (Keaveny and Inderrieden, 2000).

Heckert, Droste, Farmer, Adams, Bradley, and Bonness (2002) agree that female students will consider multiple job characteristics in addition to salary before selecting which job offer to accept. These characteristics include family life accommodations, pleasant working conditions, travel, interpersonal relations, benefits, and societal contributions. Heckert et al. (2002) indicate that women rate most of these characteristics as being very important, thereby having difficulty prioritizing them.

Heckert et al. (2002) explored whether work experience and gender made a difference on the job characteristics important to current seniors and alumni; however, their study did not take into account the work experience of seniors. Their research did reveal that alumni with less work experience prioritized interpersonal relations and higher pay as being more important than did alumni with more years of work experience.

This study will examine if men and women view and rate the importance of job characteristics such as the social aspects of work, work life balance, and culture fit

differently. The study will also determine if work experience gained throughout college impacts these values.

H2a: Female graduating business students will put greater importance on the social aspects of work than male graduating business students.

H2b: Female graduating business students will put greater importance on work life balance than male graduating business students.

H2c: Female graduating business students will put greater importance on the culture fit of the organization than male graduating business students.

H2d: Female and male graduating business students with more work experience throughout college will put less importance on pay.

Job Search Methods and Intensity

While in the past, university students have relied heavily on informal networks for position openings and for seeking employment, unemployment for more recent graduates has been increasing and possession of degrees is no longer a guarantee for professional employment positions (Villar, Juan, Corominas, and Campell, 2000).

Villar et al. (2000) focused on students about to graduate and again a year after their graduation to examine job search methods, strategies and intensity. Informal job search strategies rely on gathering information about employment opportunities from social networks, including friends and family, while formal job search strategies include several methods such as newspaper ads, career fairs, internet websites, and career centers to gain information about potential employment. Informal methods are known to allow applicants to learn about potential employment opportunities before these positions are

posted, and then to ensure that the employment application or resume is given to key personnel within the organization. Formal search strategies rely on searching for positions that have already been posted and sending out resumes. Job search intensity refers to the time and energy a job seeker spends on securing employment. Villar et al. (2000) concluded that half of their respondents had secured their employment positions through formal channels and that gender did not have a relationship in the way graduates found employment.

Villar et al. (2000) found that students utilizing formal search strategies did not have confidence in their social contacts and that these students had greater job search intensity than their peers relying on informal search strategies. Villar et al. (2000) suggests that it could be a challenge for students to gain entry into professional networks, and Chapple (2001) found that minorities, including women, have a strong disadvantage when using informal networks because they are underrepresented in the work place. DelVecchio and Honeycutt (2002) found that campus career centers were often understaffed and underused by employers, which is another disadvantage to students using formal networks. However, Chapple (2001) reports that women who do use social networking contacts found higher paying positions and had higher job satisfaction than those who did not use or have access to social networks.

Kulik (2000) conducted a study comparing the job search intensity of unemployed men and women at different levels of education. Unlike Villar et al. (2000), Kulik's (2000) research indicates that gender did affect job search intensity and perceptions of unemployed men and women. Kulik determined that men spent more time searching for employment than women, and that women were more likely than men to perceive their

chances of landing a job were increased through more intensive job search efforts. Kulik (2000) also determined that while education did not affect job search intensity between men and women, education did affect whether women linked job search efforts to success in finding employment. Women with masters' degrees and above were more likely than women with high school educations to link job search efforts with successfully finding employment. Therefore, it is expected that there is a gender difference in the search for employment opportunities in the terms of methods utilized to gain employments as well as the time spent searching for employment.

H3a: Female graduating business students will utilize more job search strategies than male graduating business students.

H3b: Male graduating business students will spend more time searching for employment opportunities than female graduating business students.

Work Experience, Internships, and Expectations

Ruscoe and Morgan (1996) determined that on average, female high school students earn less per hour than their male working classmates. Ruscoe and Morgan (1996) also found in their study on high school students' work experience, that while girls work fewer hours per week on average than boys, both genders experience a large variety of job types including restaurant wait staff, store clerks and stockers, instructors, care providers, lifeguards, referees, disc jockeys, and farmers.

Some students gain work experience through internships. More and more companies are seeing the value of offering internships and are recruiting on college campuses, instead of relying solely on word of mouth (Curry, 2004). Harris, Tanner, and

Knouse (1996) discuss the importance of the role that internships done while still a student in college have for securing professional employment upon graduation. However, their study indicates that a small percentage of minority students participate in internships. Curry (2004) believes that internships help real estate companies, like home builders, secure talented, loyal employees who can hit the ground running after graduation, and White and Fuller (2002) suggest college internships as a strategy for finding internal auditors in a market where these skills are scarce. Yet, many of the available internships, like the internships discussed by Curry (2004) and White and Fuller (2002), are in the male-dominated fields of business and home building (Murrell, Frieze, and Frost, 1991).

H4a: Male graduating business students are more likely to have held an internship while in college than female college students.

Duncan (1996) suggests that market discrimination which limits the occupational choices of women has begun to erode, thereby opening more doors for women to experience a wider array of career opportunities. Murrell, Frieze, and Frost (1991) found that the majority of professional women work primarily in careers such as teaching, nursing, social work, office work, or librarianship; however, more women are entering professions that in the past had been traditionally male-dominated careers and require long working hours, such as business management and law. While Ruscoe and Morgan (1996) found that both male and female high school students worked a variety of jobs, they found that on average, high school boys worked more hours per week than girls. Duncan (1996) also concluded that white men work significantly more hours per week

then white women. These findings of Ruscoe and Morgan (1996) and Duncan (1996) suggests that this trend of males working more hours than females begins in adolescence and continues through one's adult work life. This information sets the expectation that business requires long hours and that male graduating business students are more cognizant of this expectation.

H4b: Male graduating business students expect to work more hours per week than female graduating business students upon graduation.

H4c: Male graduating business students will have a higher maximum number of hours per week that they will be willing to work than female graduating business students.

To this point, this study has been examining different work experiences and gender expectations of graduating business students in terms of pay expectations, the importance of various career characteristics, job search methods used and intensity, internship experiences, and hours expected and willing to work. This study will also explore the effect of gender and work experience on sex-role expectations and sensitivity among graduating business students.

Sex-Role Expectations and Sensitivity

Bem (1981) developed a sex-role inventory which looks at femininity, masculinity, androgyny and undifferentiated. Bem uses femininity to refer to characteristics that are stereotypically feminine such as affection, gentleness, understanding, and sensitivity to others. Masculinity describes characteristics that are

stereotypically masculine, such as ambitiousness, self-reliance, independence, and assertiveness. Androgyny is a term that integrates femininity and masculinity and describes an individual that processes high scores in having both feminine and masculine characteristics, and undifferentiated identifies individuals with low scores for both feminine and masculine characteristics and therefore have not yet developed their preference. Bem classifies individuals into two groups: those who restrict their behavior to act in accordance with sex stereotypes and those who do not. College students with similar career aspirations may have similar beliefs regarding sex roles (Bem, 1981). Sex roles also affect the career choices of women, in that the most traditional women stay home, somewhat traditional women enter women dominated fields, and non-traditional women choose male dominated careers (DeGregoria, 2001).

Murrell, Frieze, and Frost (1991) found that females with earlier work experience held less traditional sex-role attitudes and focused more on career plans. DeGregoria (2001) supports the findings of Murrell, Frieze, and Frost. DeGregoria found that both men and women acquire sex role identities based on gender typed behaviors experienced through adolescence. Sex role behaviors have been learned by either participating in specific situations or from generalizing these situations. What individuals have seen and have done helps them to determine how they will act, behave and respond to new and analogous situations. However, DeGregoria also shares that women are now gravitating towards the less traditional careers, particularly educated women, thereby broadening the range of professional opportunities and altering expectations about sex roles (DeGregoria, 2001).

In addition to sex role stereotypes, Duncan (1996) claims that educated women could be prevented from entering careers which offer greater on the job training and wage growth due to labor market discrimination. He also states that employers are seeking skilled employees, and these potential employees increase their skills through education and experience, and that reduced job training stunts this education and experience.

Hansman, Jackson, Grant, and Spencer (1999) assessed graduate students' sensitivity to sex and acknowledge that students have differing beliefs based on several criteria, including work backgrounds; yet men in general showed lower sensitivity to gender issues. Their research also indicates that exposure to diversity, especially racial and gender, through college discussions, presentations and readings, leads to increased sensitivity and awareness, which is the primary step toward change. Probst (2003) found that university students who took a diversity course were more likely to be aware that discrimination against African Americans is still present. Roper (2004) and Meacham, McClellan, Pearse, and Greene (2003) found that the majority of students recognize the importance of diversity on campus and feel that it broadens their education, cultural knowledge and awareness. Ponterotto and Pedersen (1993) look at the universal phenomenon of female and racial prejudice and point out that self awareness of prejudice is needed to prevent or eliminate it. In particular, Ponterotto and Pedersen (1993) look at measuring students' awareness and sensitivity to gender and multicultural issues, such as awareness of discrimination. Ponterotto and Pedersen (1993) believe that attitude formation is developed in the family, and then nourished through the school environment and throughout the world of work, which is similar to the findings of DeGregoria (2001).

H5a: Female graduating business students will have a greater sensitivity to gender issues than male graduating business students.

H5b: Graduating male and female business students who have more work experience will have a greater sensitivity to gender issues.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Data were collected through administering a questionnaire to 187 graduating students majoring in business at a large southwestern university. The original sample consisted of 110 male and 77 female subjects. Nine of the 187 questionnaires were discarded because they were incomplete, which left 105 males and 73 females in the final sample. The average age of the respondents was 23 and the ages ranged from 20 to 35. The ethnicities of the participants in this study were as follows: 127 Caucasians, 36 Hispanics, 5 Asians, 5 African-Americans, and 4 that describe themselves as other. The research instrument utilized was divided into five sections: demographic information; professional career plans; college work experience; social values and attitudes scales; and personal attitudes and traits. See Appendix B for the survey instrument used.

The demographic information included the students' age, gender, and ethnicity. Information was also gathered to determine if the students' intentions were to work full time in professional careers upon graduation.

The professional career plans section was completed by only 150 students who answered that they were going to work full time in a professional career after graduation. This section consisted of open-ended questions to gather information about the type of jobs students sought, expectations for salary, and maximum number of hours students

were willing to work. The 29 respondents who answered that they were not going to work full time in a professional career after graduation were asked to skip these questions and then to complete the remainder of the questionnaire.

The next part of the questionnaire asked respondents to categorize the importance of job characteristics including cultural fit, social aspects of work, co-workers, excellent pay, personal life prioritization, and career prioritization into one of four categories: very important, important, slightly important, or no importance. This section also explored job search intensity and preferred job search methods. In addition to asking the average amount of time per week students spent looking for career employment, this section adapted the scale used by Kulik (2000) in her study looking at the job search intensity. Students were asked how often they employed each job search method, using a scale consisting of never, very little, monthly, weekly, and almost daily. The job search strategies listed included newspaper ads, internet job search websites, job fairs, on campus career counseling centers, friends and networking opportunities, and approaching particular companies directly.

The college work experience section gathered information on whether students worked full time, part time, irregularly or not at all during the school year and the summer. It also inquired whether the student had held an internship and if it was a paid internship. This section asked students how many hours they worked for these various types of employment. Students were also asked the types of jobs that they held throughout their college experiences, and the total number of semesters that were worked, including the summer semesters.

The social values and attitudes scale section used The Quick Discrimination Index. The Quick Discrimination Index (QDI) was developed by Ponterotto and Pedersen (1993) to determine student's awareness and sensitivity to gender and multicultural issues. It consists of twenty-five statements about gender and race, and asks respondents to rate these statements on a scale of one to five on how strongly they disagree or agree with each statement.

The personal attitudes and traits section first asks respondents to categorize thirteen statements concerning personal attitudes and traits into true or false. These true/false statements are taken from Crowne and Marlowe (1964). This section of the questionnaire also uses the Bem sex-role inventory (Bem, 1981). The Bem sex-role inventory consists of thirty personality characteristics and asks students to use a scale of never or almost never true (1) to always or almost always true (7) on how each characteristic describes them.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The independent sample t-test compares means for two groups; therefore, t-tests were used to determine if the means of different variables were statically different looking at graduating college students as males and females. Regression analysis was used when using work experience as the independent variable because it is continuous and therefore does not have distinct groups. Regression analyses were able to access work experience and then predict the value of the different dependent variables.

Hypothesis H1, describing the relationship between gender and salary expectations, was not supported: $t = -0.889(144)$, $p = 0.376$. The data showed that there was no significant difference between the salary expectations between males and females. The mean salary expectation for graduating business students was \$37,116.44. The mean for female students was \$36,350.88 and the mean for male students was \$37,414.89.

This study found no support for hypothesis H2a which explored the impact of gender on the importance of the social aspects of work: $t = 0.080(149)$, $p = 0.937$. Hypothesis H2b was supported, revealing that there is a gender difference on the importance of work life balance. Female graduating business students place significantly greater importance on achieving work life balance (mean of 3.88) than male graduating business students (mean of 3.57): $t = 3.513(149)$, $p \leq 0.001$. This study found support for

hypothesis H2c which examined gender differences and the importance of cultural fit within an organization: $t = 2.201(149)$, $p = 0.029$. Female graduating business students report significantly greater importance on cultural fit (mean of 3.70) than male graduating business students (mean of 3.46). The data supported that there is a significant relationship between work experience and valuing pay: $t = -2.252(98)$, $p = 0.027$; however, the data supported the antithesis of hypothesis H2d. Hypothesis H2d predicted that students with more work experience will put less importance on pay, but the data revealed that students with more of work experience placed statistically more significance on excellent pay than graduating business students with less work experience.

Hypothesis H3a, measuring the relationship between gender and the number of job search strategies was not supported: $t = 0.571(148)$, $p = 0.569$. In addition to the relationship between the total number of strategies used, this study notes there was no significance between gender and preference for each of the various job search strategies. Refer to Table 1 for the results of the tests for each job search strategy. Both male and females on average will use a total of four of the job search strategies, but the preference of job search method varies by individual. Table 1 also shows the average frequency each gender uses the following strategies: Internet, networking, job fairs, college career centers, newspaper want ads, and contacting employers directly. Note that the Internet and networking were the strategies used the most often by both genders. No support was found for hypothesis H3b, which examined gender differences and the amount of time spent searching for employment: $t = -1.121(134)$, $p = 0.264$.

TABLE 1
GENDER AND PREFERRED JOB SEARCH STRATEGIES

Search Strategy	t	df	Significance	Mean Male Usage Frequency	Mean Female Usage Frequency
Internet	0.977	148	0.330	3.85	4.03
Networking	-0.235	148	0.814	4.00	3.97
Job Fairs	-0.239	148	0.812	2.80	2.76
Career Centers	0.826	148	0.410	2.59	2.74
Newspaper Ads	1.328	148	0.186	3.05	3.36
Contact Potential Employers	-1.047	148	0.297	3.41	3.20

Hypothesis H4a, describing the relationship between gender and internships while in college, was not supported: $t = -1.66(175)$, $p = 0.869$. Additionally, this study shows that there was no significance between gender and whether an internship is paid or non-paid. See Table 2 which reports a descriptive breakdown between paid and non-paid internships for students participating in this study. Some students held both a paid and a non-paid internship while in college and therefore are counted in the numbers for both paid internships and non-paid internship. The third section of this table counts students only once, even if they fall into both groups. Also note that there were twice as many students with paid internships as with non-paid internships. This study did not support hypothesis H4b measuring the effect gender has on expected number of hours worked per week after graduation: $t = -1.604(147)$, $p = 0.111$. Students expect to work 30 to 65 hours per week, with the mean of 44 hours per week. Male students expect to work an average 45 hours per week after graduation and female students expect to work an average of 43 hours per week after graduation. Hypothesis H4c, which examined gender

and the maximum number of hours willing to work after graduation, was also not supported: $t = -0.813(146)$, $p = 0.417$. Graduating students were willing to work a maximum of 55 hours per week on average, with a mean of 54.5 hours per week for female graduating business students and a mean of 55.6 for male graduating business students.

TABLE 2
STUDENTS WITH INTERNSHIPS

Internship	Total # of Students	Total # of Women	Total # of Men
Paid	26 of 178	10 of 73	16 of 105
Non-paid	11 of 178	5 of 73	6 of 105
Either Paid or Non-paid	33 of 178	13 of 73	20 of 105

This study supported hypothesis H5a, which explored the effect of gender on awareness and sensitivity to gender issues: $t = 3.620(176)$; $p \leq 0.001$. Female graduating business students had a greater awareness and sensitivity to gender issues with a mean of 77.9 than male graduating business students who had a mean of 71.1. Hypothesis H5b, describing the relationship between work experience and sensitivity to gender issues, was not supported: $t = -1.909(116)$, $p = 0.059$. Graduating business students with more semesters of work experience were not more aware or sensitive to gender issues than graduating business students less semesters of work experience.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The results of the data analysis reveal that graduating business students have similar salary expectations as they prepare to enter the professional working environment. Prior research indicates that men will be better compensated for equivalent positions; however, college men and women expect comparable compensation for their initial post-undergraduate career opportunities. This means that male and female graduating business students expect comparable compensation, but that men are more likely to achieve greater compensation even for careers that are equivalent. As more women continue to enter professions, such as business and law, which have traditionally been dominated by men, it is likely that this gap between the salary expected and the salary achieved will lead to salary dissatisfaction among women. Additionally, Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia, and Vanneman (2001) determined that the glass ceiling is still in effect and that gender disadvantages are worse at higher career levels than entry level position and that these disadvantages become worse as women progress in their careers. Organizational justice is a theory that examines the perceptions of fairness and considers elements such as satisfaction. In order to have organizational justice, a company must have processes in place that are consistent, bias free, and ethical (Leventhal, 1980), which means that

companies will need to eliminate this satisfaction gap from entry level positions through higher career level positions.

Gender does effect the expectations of the ranking of the importance of various job characteristics. Female graduating business students place greater importance on maintaining a work life balance as well as fitting in within the organization than male graduating business students. This information replicates the findings of Heckert et al. (2002), Murrell, Frieze, and Frost (1991), and Kulik (2000) that women of all ages and different stages in their lives select employment opportunities based on several factors in addition to compensation. While this study had respondents rate different job characteristics on importance, it neglected to have the respondents rank these characteristics in addition to rating them. If male and female respondents differ significantly in ranking these characteristics, it could offer an explanation as to the difference in pay between men and women. Perhaps while gender does not affect salary expectations, gender could play a factor causing women to settle for a lower salary with a company that offered a stronger cultural fit or work life balance for the employee, characteristics not as important to men.

The data contradict the hypothesis that students with more work experience would place less importance on pay, and instead show that students, both male and female, who worked more semesters during college place more importance on pay. This finding on the relationship between work experience and the importance of pay does not support Heckert et al. (2002) findings that higher pay is more important to those with more work experience. Instead the data show that more work experience increased the desire for higher pay.

This study reveals that male and female graduating students will pursue similar job search strategies with similar intensity. Not only do men and women spend similar amounts of time looking for full time employment, neither gender showed preference for particular search strategies. Male and female graduating business students use each of the listed job search strategies in equivalent proportions. Chapple (2001) discusses that women have a disadvantage in using formal networks, such as networking; yet, this study shows that male college students are not utilizing informal networks more than females. This could mean that neither male nor female college students have developed their networks yet, or that women are beginning to make inroads as more women take on leadership roles within organizations and enter male-dominated occupations thereby creating a stronger female network than in the past.

This study did not find a gender difference in graduating college students who had participated in an internship or received compensation for an internship for at least one semester. This finding supports Duncan (1996) that market discrimination has begun to erode and that women have many more opportunities than in the past, a time in which internships were much more common for white males. This study looks only at graduating students studying business, which is still considered to be a field that is more male oriented (Alsop, 2005). Over 60 percent of students in this study, whether male or female, were paid for their internship experience and there was no significant difference in the proportions of males and females with internship experience.

When comparing the findings of this study and the studies of Duncan (1996) and Ruscoe and Morgan (1996) there is a discrepancy on the expected number of hours worked and the actual number of hours worked by men and women. Duncan (1996) and

Ruscoe and Morgan (1996) found that both high school and adult males work significantly more hours per week than their female peers, yet this study found that graduating business men and women had similar expectations of how many hours per week they would work upon graduation. Additionally, both male and female graduating students had similar expectations on the maximum number of hours they would be willing to work per week. The contradicting results between how many hours students expect to work from this study and the gender difference in the amount of hours worked found in previous studies indicate that there is a gap between the expectations of students and the actual number of hours men and women work per week. This means that women will work fewer hours than men per week, even though both genders expect to work the same amount.

The findings of this study support that female graduating business students are more aware and sensitive to gender and racial issues than their male counterparts, which supports the findings of Hansman et al. (1999) who also found that men showed lower sensitivity to gender issues. However, this study did not find support for the belief that additional work experience would increase individuals' awareness and sensitivity to gender issues which conflicted with the beliefs of Ponterotto and Pedersen. Ponterotto and Pedersen (1993) believe that companies' philosophies regarding gender and racial diversity are passed to all employees through actions of tolerating inequality or promoting only white males to leadership positions. They believe that positive organizational behaviors influence what employees see as normal and acceptable behavior regarding racial and gender attitudes. One explanation to account for the difference in this belief of Ponterotto and Pedersen and lack of support from this study

could be that even though some students have had more work experience and therefore more exposure to the work world, it does not necessitate that this exposure has been with employers showing positive and sensitive behavior towards gender and race. Students with several semesters of work experience may have worked for companies that were complacent about or even promoted inequality and negative organizational behaviors.

CHAPTER 6

LIMITATIONS

Potential limitations may exist in the use of nonprobability convenience sampling and the use of a questionnaire to collect primary data. Nonprobability sampling techniques tend to have a higher rate of error in their representation of the target population (Cooper and Schindler, 2003). Respondents can interpret questionnaires differently than expected, and researchers were not present when the questionnaires were distributed and were therefore unable to answer clarifying questions.

In addition, the scope of the study was limited to graduating students majoring in business at a public university in the southwest which may limit the ability to generalize the findings to other geographic locations, students of different majors, or non-students. However, attempts have been made to minimize the effects of these limitations on the study by collecting data across all sections of the graduating business capstone course.

There were a limited number of respondents who had held a paid or non-paid internship for at least one semester. Future studies could examine a larger sample size of students with internships, possibly in multiple academic disciplines, to compare with the results of this study. This type of study would also determine if some disciplines are more likely to have internships or receive financial compensation.

Additional limitations may exist in using graduating undergraduate students because of their lack of knowledge about work itself. They know about entry-level employment to some extent, but may not have given much thought to other aspects of employment that they might prefer. Also, they have little need for work life balance at this point because they tend to be unmarried, with no children. Lastly, undergraduate students have not been out in the world work to be banged about enough yet by the unfairness that happens in workplaces.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Male and female graduating college students utilize similar methods with similar intensity as they search for their initial professional jobs. These individuals have similar expectations for salary and hours required to work. It appears that gender does not impact internship participation or whether the internship is paid or non-paid. However, gender differences do exist in how students rate the importance of specific career characteristics. In particular, female graduating students value cultural fit within the organization and work life balance more significantly than male graduating students. Female graduating students also have significantly greater awareness and sensitivity to gender issues. Regardless of gender, students who have more work experience place greater importance on selecting an organization with excellent pay.

While male and female college students have similar salary expectations, additional research could be done to see when salary expectations begin to differ between men and women. This further research could examine if the salary gap between men and women emerges within the first career position past college, or if the gap is created and enlarged as individuals begin moving up the corporate ladder and become aware of the pay differential.

Lastly, knowing that female graduating students give greater importance to cultural fit and work life balance than males, additional research could be done to determine if gender differences exist, how these individuals prioritize specific career characteristics, and which characteristics they will forego for the characteristics they require. Some of the career characteristics that should be examined are social aspects, cultural fit, pay rate, work life balance, promotional opportunity, and flexibility.

In addition to this study recognizing future research opportunities, it determined that work experiences during college and gender can impact the expectations of graduating business students. It is imperative for companies in today's world to know and understand the expectations of potential employees because these employers are continuously faced with locating, attracting, and hiring the most qualified individuals and then retaining those employees and reducing turnover. Additionally, companies need to ensure that they have a diverse employee base because the economy is continuously becoming more global causing a greater need for understanding of the diverse markets which internal diversity can help alleviate. More or less, when an organization consists of a diverse staff, it better understands and can solve the needs of a diverse market. Realizing that females have a greater awareness and sensitivity to gender issues as well as placing greater value on culture fit and work life balance, and that individuals with more work experience place a greater importance on pay, can help employers alter their company policies and recruiting practices to locate, attract, hire and retain the most qualified women, thereby effectively diversifying their staff and gaining an advantage in the global economy.

APPENDIX A: SUMMARY OF RELEVANT STUDIES

Author(s)	Study	Methodology & Sample	Findings
Chapple (1993)	Examines the relationship between job search strategies and employment characteristics	In-depth interviews with 92 women on welfare	Uneducated women rely heavily on social networks to find employment close to home, women with higher education will not sacrifice career goals or pay
Duncan (1996)	Examines models to predict if the gender gap can be eliminated through increasing female skill and work effort	Questionnaire distributed to over 12000 black and white males and females	Evidence of discriminatory barriers against educated women perusing skill enhancements while working, women's' earnings rise as work experience increases, women are rewarded more for work experience than men
Hansman, Jackson, Grant, and Spencer (1999)	Accesses the existing level of awareness towards issues of race and gender in order to plan more effective programs and classes for graduate students	Questionnaire distributed to 73 graduate students at a rural mid-sized Southern university	Students are moderately aware but still lack basic understandings of issues concerning race and gender, people living in urban settings and greater day to day contacts are more accepting of racial diversity and women's' issues
Harris, Tanner, and Knouse (1996)	Explores women and blacks and their choices in jobs, graduate schools, types of jobs sought and qualifications	Questionnaire distributed to 398 recent business graduates at a Southern university	Salary was more important for older graduates, job qualifications are gained throughout college and students must get the right experience in undergrad and learn the job search process to be effective, internships are very effective for finding jobs
Heckert, Droste, Farmer, Adams, Bradley, and Bonness (2002)	Investigates gender differences and work experience on job characteristics	Questionnaire distributed to 102 graduating seniors and 504 alumni from a mid-sized Midwestern public university	Women gave higher importance to accommodations for family life, pleasant working conditions, travel, interpersonal relations, and societal contributions and gave lower for pay and promotional facets than men, overall, the importance of pay declined as work experience increased

Keaveny and Inderrieden (2000)	Examines pay satisfaction and expectations of male and female employees	Questionnaire distributed to 359 employed individuals with at least 12 months work experience since graduating from college	Gender differences in pay satisfaction and expectations exist, men expect greater salary increases than women and are therefore more likely to quit a job, women tend to be more satisfied with their compensation
Kulik (2000)	Examines gender differences in job search intensity, job search methods and attitudes towards unemployment	Questionnaire distributed to 594 unemployed individuals with various levels of education	Education did not have a differential impact on job search intensity, men spent more hours searching for jobs, women were more likely to link job search efforts with finding employment, women were more likely to reject job offers for extrinsic job characteristics while men's' main reason was for feminine-typed occupation
Murrell, Frieze, and Frost (1991)	Examines the career aspirations of college women in terms of occupational and educational plans	Questionnaire distributed to 631 students at Midwestern urban university through 23 classes in cross section of undergraduate departments	Overall, women are still entering female-dominated professions which pay less than male-dominated professions, men are more focused on economic considerations, work experience affected sex-role attitudes, women entering male-dominated professions have higher career goals and career motivation
Roth (2003)	Determines if gender inequality exists on Wall Street when comparing men and women with identical positions	In-depth interviews with 73 individuals working on Wall Street that had attended one of five selected graduate business schools	Women are compensated less than men even with similar education, background and family status characteristics,
Ruscoe and Morgan (1996)	Addresses potential advantages and disadvantages of students working and affect on academics	Questionnaire distributed to 1800 high school students in 17 high schools in Kentucky	Students hold wide variety of jobs, girls enjoyed benefits of job other than pay, earlier work history can impact later work expectations
Villar, Juan, Corominas, and Capell (2000)	Explores relationship between social networking and job placement and looked at job search strategies and methods	Two part questionnaire distributed to 218 students at university in Spain during senior year and one year after graduation	Unemployment for recent graduates has been increasing, students using formal search strategies lacked confidence in their social contacts and had greater job search intensity

APPENDIX B: WORK EXPERIENCE AND CAREER QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. This study asks you to think about your current work experiences as well as your expectations for your professional career. It will take approximately 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you choose to participate, please be sure to answer all of the questions, and remember there are no right or wrong answers.

SECTION 1 – Demographic Information

1. What is your sex? Female _____ Male _____
2. What is your age? _____
3. What is your major? Mkt _____ Mgt _____ CIS _____ Fin _____ Econ _____ Acct _____
4. When do you expect to graduate? May 2005 _____ Aug 2005 _____ Dec 2005 _____ May 2006 _____
5. What is your ethnicity? Caucasian _____ Hispanic _____ Asian _____ African-American _____
Other _____
6. Are you going to work full time in a professional career after you graduate? Yes or No
If you answered no, please skip to #11 . If you answered yes, please continue to #7.

SECTION 2 – Professional Career Plans

7. What type of job are you seeking after graduation? _____
8. How many hours do you expect to work per week on average? _____
9. What do you expect your salary to be? _____
10. What is the maximum number of hours per week would you be willing to work on average? _____

11. Rate the following statements from 1 to 4 on their importance to you when you are working in a fulltime professional career. For this scale, 4 means this is very important (VI), 3 means that it is important (I), 2 means that it is slightly important (SI), and 1 means that it has no importance (NI) at all.

	VI	I	SI	NI
How important is it for you to prioritize your career first in your life?	4	3	2	1
How important is it for you to prioritize your personal life first in your life?	4	3	2	1
How important is it for you to have a work / life balance?	4	3	2	1
How important is it that your pay is excellent?	4	3	2	1
How important to you are the people you will work with?	4	3	2	1
How important are the social aspects of work to you?	4	3	2	1
How important is it that your personality fits with the culture of the organization you will work for?	4	3	2	1

12. For the following statements, please rate each of them from a scale of 1 to 5 on how often you use (will use) the particular job search strategy for finding a professional job. For this scale, 5 means you do this almost every day (D), 4 means you do this weekly (W), 3 means you do this monthly (M), 2 means you do this very little (L), and 1 means that you never (N) do this.

	D	W	M	L	N
I look (will look) through the newspaper want ads when looking for a job.	5	4	3	2	1
I use (will use) internet job search websites like Monster.com and email out resumes	5	4	3	2	1
I participate (will participate) in job fairs when looking for employment.	5	4	3	2	1
I work (will work) with the on campus Career Counseling Center.	5	4	3	2	1
I ask (will ask) friends and network with people to find employment opportunities	5	4	3	2	1
I determine (will determine) which employers I want to work for and send letter directly to the company.	5	4	3	2	1

13. When looking for career employment, how much time on average have you spent this semester looking per week? _____

SECTION 3 – College Work Experiences

14. Please check the statement(s) that describes your work experiences during college. You may check more than one statement. Fill in the blank with how many hours per week you worked on average.

_____ I work full time during the school year. On average, I worked _____ hours per week.
 _____ I work part time during the school year. On average, I worked _____ hours per week.

- ☐ I work full time in the summer. On average, I worked _____ hours per week.
☐ I work part time in the summer. On average, I worked _____ hours per week.
☐ I work irregular periods of time during the year. On average, I worked _____ hours per week.
☐ I had at least 1 paid internship while in college. On average, I worked _____ hours per week.
☐ I had at least 1 non-paid internship while in college. On average, I worked _____ hours per week.
☐ I did not work at all while in college.

15. Please check the type of job(s) that you have had while in college. You may check more than one type of job.

- ☐ Fast Food / Restaurant
☐ Retail / Sales Associate
☐ Clerical / Office
☐ Lifeguard
☐ Day Care / Nursing Home
☐ Instructor / Coach / Referee / Umpire
☐ On campus / Residential Life / Work Study / Teaching Assistant / Tutor
☐ Accounting / Finance / Economics job
☐ Marketing / Management job
☐ Computer Science job
☐ Other: Specify _____

16. Including summer time, how many semesters total did you work while in college? ____

SECTION 4 – Social Values and Attitudes Scales

17. For the following statements, please rate each of them from a scale of 1 to 5 on how strongly you agree or disagree. For this scale, 5 means you strongly agree (SA), 4 means that you agree (A), 3 means you are not sure (NS), 2 means you disagree (D), and 1 means that you strongly disagree (SD).

	SA	A	NS	D	SD
1. I think it is more appropriate for the mother of a newborn baby, rather than the father, to stay with the baby during the first year.	5	4	3	2	1
2. It is not as easy for women to succeed in business as it is for men.	5	4	3	2	1
3. I really think affirmative action programs on college campuses constitute reverse discrimination.	5	4	3	2	1
4. All Americans should learn to speak two languages.	5	4	3	2	1
5. It upsets (or angers) me that a woman has never been President of the United States.	5	4	3	2	1
6. Generally speaking, men work harder than women.	5	4	3	2	1
7. My friendship network is very racially mixed.	5	4	3	2	1
8. I am against affirmative action programs in business.	5	4	3	2	1

9. I would feel O.K. about my son or daughter dating someone from a different race.	5	4	3	2	1
10. It upsets (or angers) me that a racial minority person has never been President of the United States.	5	4	3	2	1
11. In the past few years there has been too much attention directed toward multicultural or minority issues in education.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I think feminist perspectives should be an integral part of the higher education curriculum.	5	4	3	2	1
13. Most of my close friends are from my own racial group.	5	4	3	2	1
14. I feel somewhat more secure that a man rather than a woman is currently President of the United States.	5	4	3	2	1
15. In the past few years there has been too much attention directed towards multicultural or minority issues in business.	5	4	3	2	1
16. Overall, I think racial minorities in America complain too much about racial discrimination.	5	4	3	2	1
17. I think the President of the United States should make a concerted effort to appoint more women and racial minorities to the country's Supreme Court.	5	4	3	2	1
18. I think white people's racism toward racial minority groups still constitutes a major problem in America.	5	4	3	2	1
19. I think the school system, from elementary school through college, should encourage minority and immigrant children to lean and fully adopt traditional American values.	5	4	3	2	1
20. I think there is as much female violence towards men as there is male violence toward women.	5	4	3	2	1
21. I think the school system, from elementary school through college, should promote traditional American values as well as the values representative of the culturally diverse students in the class.	5	4	3	2	1
22. I believe that reading the autobiography of Malcolm X would be a value.	5	4	3	2	1
23. I would enjoy living in a neighborhood consisting of a racially diverse population (i.e., Asian, Blacks, Hispanics, Whites).	5	4	3	2	1
24. I think it is better if people marry within their own race.	5	4	3	2	1
25. Women make too big of a deal out of sexual harassment issues in the workplace.	5	4	3	2	1

SECTION 5 – Personal Attitudes and Traits

18. Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item and decide whether the statement is *true* or *false* as it pertains to you personally.

- ☐ 1. It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.
- ☐ 2. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.
- ☐ 3. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.

- ___ 4. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
- ___ 5. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.
- ___ 6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.
- ___ 7. I'm always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.
- ___ 8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.
- ___ 9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
- ___ 10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.
- ___ 11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortunes of others.
- ___ 12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
- ___ 13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.

19. Below is a list of personality characteristics. On a scale from 1 to 7, indicate how the following characteristics describe you. Please do not leave any characteristic unmarked. For this scale, **1** means this characteristic is **never or almost never true** for you; **2** means it is **usually not true** in describing you; **3** means **sometimes but infrequently true**; **4** means **occasionally true**; **5** means that it is **often true**; **6** means that it is **usually true**; and **7** means that this characteristic is **always or almost always true** in describing you.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or almost never true	Usually not true	Sometimes but infrequently true	Occasionally true	Often true	Usually true	Always or almost always true

1. Defend my own beliefs	
2. Affectionate	
3. Conscientious	
4. Independent	
5. Sympathetic	
6. Moody	
7. Assertive	
8. Sensitive to needs of others	
9. Reliable	
10. Strong personality	
11. Understanding	
12. Jealous	
13. Forceful	
14. Compassionate	
15. Truthful	

16. Have leadership abilities	
17. Eager to soothe hurt feelings	
18. Secretive	
19. Willing to take risks	
20. Warm	
21. Adaptable	
22. Dominant	
23. Tender	
24. Conceited	
25. Willing to take a stand	
26. Love children	
27. Tactful	
28. Aggressive	
29. Gentle	
30. Conventional	

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VITA

Lori J. Sallop was born in Baton Rouge, LA on August 29, 1979. She is the daughter of Shelly and Marvin Sallop. While going to high school at Johnston Liberal Arts Academy in Austin, TX, she attended Austin Community College. She earned her Bachelor of Business Administration at Loyola University New Orleans where she double majored in Marketing and Management. Throughout college she held internships at companies including The Home Depot, Motorola, and Texas Department of Transportation during the summers, as well as worked a several jobs during the year. Lori was the Irving Foster Most Outstanding Management Major for 2001. She was then employed by NewellRubbermaid in Austin, TX as a Sales Representative and then promoted to a Channel Marketing Coordinator. In 2003, she become an Account Specialist for the ArtCarved division of American Achievement Corporation in Austin, TX and entered the McCoy School of Business at Texas State University – San Marcos to pursue a Master of Business Administration degree. In 2005, Lori was promoted to a Regional Manager, and she completed all requirements for the masters degree.

Permanent Address: 9005 Lodge Court
Austin, Texas 78758

Professional Conference:

Kirby, Susan L., Sallop, Lori, & Lam, Laura T. 2004. The Relationship Between Managing Emotions and Problem Focused and Emotion Focused Coping: Are They Related and What Does This Tell Us About Managing Stress? Presented at the annual meeting of the Southern Academy of Management. San Antonio, TX.

This thesis was typed by Lori J. Sallop.

