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## Occupational Experiences of Associate and Full Professors of Counselor Education

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## Occupational Experiences of Associate and Full Professors of Counselor Education

### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the worktime distributions, occupational satisfaction, and scholarly productivity of associate and full professors of counselor education ( $N = 230$ ). Worktime distributions varied based on academic rank and the presence of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit. Occupational satisfaction was lower among associate professors, faculty caring for dependent children, and faculty with greater mismatch between typical and preferred worktime distributions. Among associate professors, occupational satisfaction was also associated with having a mentor. Years of experience, teaching load, and a doctoral program in the academic unit predicted scholarly productivity, whereas academic rank, binary gender, marital status, and the presence of any dependent children did not make unique contributions to this outcome.

### Keywords

counselor education faculty, worktime distributions, occupational satisfaction, mentoring, scholarly productivity

Research on the career development of faculty in general (Baker et al., 2019) and counselor educators in particular (Hannon et al., 2018; Hatchett, 2020; Magnuson et al., 2009; Milsom & Moran, 2015) has been primarily directed toward understanding the experiences and challenges associated with the pre-tenure years. For example, researchers have used national surveys to investigate counselor educators' perceived expectations for attaining tenure and promotion (Davis et al., 2006; Hatchett, 2020, 2021; Ramsey et al., 2002) and qualitative research designs to better understand the experiences of counselor educators on the tenure-track (e.g., Hannon et al., 2018; Magnuson et al., 2009; Stinchfield & Trepal, 2010). In contrast, very little research has been conducted on the post-tenure experiences of counselor educators. As a result, there are many unanswered questions about the work experiences and productivity of counselor educators who have been promoted to the rank of associate or full professor.

One of those unanswered questions is how associate and full professors of counselor educators distribute their worktime among the three primary faculty responsibilities of teaching, research, and service. Though an important topic for counselor educators, only two studies in the counselor education literature have specifically addressed this issue. In the earliest study, Davis et al. (2006) reported that program liaisons to the Council of Accreditation and Related Education Programs (CACREP) perceived that the associate and full professors in their academic units spent a lower percentage of their worktime on teaching than did assistant professors. These liaisons also perceived that associate professors spent a higher proportion of their worktime on service than assistant professors, while full professors were perceived to spend a higher proportion of their worktime on service than either assistant or associate professors. A limitation to the Davis et al. study was that these work distributions were based on the *perceptions* of CACREP liaisons who may not have had direct knowledge as to how counselor educators of various ranks distributed

their time. In a more recent study, Hatchett (2021) found that worktime distributions of counselor educators varied based on the presence of a doctoral program in the academic unit. Counselor educators in master's-only programs at comprehensive universities reported spending a higher percentage of their worktime on teaching and administrative tasks and less time on research than counselor educators in programs that also included a doctoral degree program. Both groups of counselor educators reported spending a comparable percentage of their worktime on service. However, a limitation of this study was that worktime distributions were not disaggregated based on academic rank, so it is unknown if the worktime distributions of assistant professors differed from those of associate or full professors.

Additional ideas for investigating the worktime distributions of counselor educator faculty might be found in research conducted in other academic disciplines. In a multinational study of faculty across several disciplines, Bentley and Kyvik (2012) found that faculty reported devoting the largest percentage of their worktime to teaching. However, they also found that, at least in English-speaking countries, full professors allocated less time to teaching and more time to research and institutional service compared to faculty at lower ranks. Other studies have found that worktime distributions are related to gender, academic rank, and marital status. For example, Bellas and Toutkoushian (1999) found that full professor rank, being male, and being married were each associated with allocating a larger percentage of worktime to research activities. Female faculty have reported allocating fewer hours to research (French et al., 2020; Link et al., 2008; Misra et al., 2012) and more hours to service (Guarino & Borden, 2017; Link et al., 2008) compared to male faculty. In addition, married faculty have reported allocating less time to teaching and more time to research compared to unmarried faculty (Link et al., 2008). Not

surprisingly, time allocated to research activities predicts scholarly productivity (Bentley & Kyvik, 2012; Sax et al., 2002), though the causal relationship between these variables is unclear.

### **Occupational Satisfaction**

How faculty members distribute their work responsibilities has been found to be associated with their occupational satisfaction. Surveys of faculty at large public institutions in the U.S. have revealed that the amount of time allocated to research activities is positively correlated with occupational satisfaction, while the amount of time allocated to teaching activities is negatively correlated with occupational satisfaction (Dahm et al., 2015; French et al., 2020). Faculty in the sciences and the health fields who reported teaching as their primary work activity were less satisfied than faculty who reported research and development as their primary work activities (Sabharwal & Corley, 2009). Some studies have also found that the magnitude of the discrepancy between how faculty spend their worktime and how they would *prefer* to spend their worktime is associated with job dissatisfaction (Dahm et al., 2015; Hatchett & Fuegen, 2022).

Similar to research on worktime distributions, researchers have also found that gender, marital status, and rank predict occupational satisfaction among faculty. Sabharwal and Corley (2009) found that men reported greater occupational satisfaction than women, married faculty in science and health fields reported higher occupational satisfaction than unmarried faculty, and full professors reported higher occupational satisfaction than associate professors. Another demographic characteristic that may impact occupational satisfaction is the responsibility of caring for dependent children. Some studies have found that caring for dependent children has a negative association with occupational satisfaction, especially for female faculty (e.g., Carr et al., 1998), though other studies have failed to find such a relationship (e.g., Alexander & Hill, 2015; Simmons et al., 2021).

A work-related factor that seems to impact the occupational satisfaction of faculty is mentoring. Researchers have found that faculty who are mentored enjoy greater occupational satisfaction (Magnuson et al., 2009; Xu & Payne, 2014) and greater productivity (Mayer et al., 2014; Zellers et al., 2008) than unmentored faculty. For example, in a study of faculty in academic medicine, Mayer et al. (2014) found that the median number of peer-reviewed publications increased from zero to two among junior female faculty who enrolled in a peer mentoring program. Among counselor educators, approximately three-quarters of junior faculty in CACREP-accredited programs reported having a mentor (Briggs & Pehrsson, 2008), and mentored junior faculty in counselor education have reported that strong mentoring relationships contributed to their work satisfaction and success (Magnuson et al., 2009). However, the research conducted by Magnuson et al. with counselor educators was qualitative in nature and involved only a small sample of assistant professors.

Most of the research on mentoring faculty across higher education has been limited to the pre-tenure years. Few studies have examined mentoring for mid-career faculty, even though both faculty and department chairs report that mid-career faculty might benefit from mentoring (Baldwin et al., 2005). A study that included both assistant and associate professors showed that the promotion rate more than doubled following the introduction of peer mentoring programs (Prendergrast et al., 2019). Prior research by Hatchett and Fuegen (2022) revealed that fewer than 30% of associate professors of psychology reported having a mentor. The associate professors in this study who reported having a mentor had been in rank fewer years than those not mentored, though they were no more satisfied with their jobs.

### **Scholarly Productivity**

Occupational satisfaction has been found to be associated with higher levels of scholarly productivity (Sabharwal & Corley, 2009), though additional work-related and demographic variables matter as well. Across disciplines (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999) and within counselor education specifically (Brown et al., 2020; Hatchett, 2021), faculty at research-intensive and doctoral-granting institutions have been found to publish more than faculty at other types of institutions. Demographic factors including marital status and the presence of dependent children have also been found to predict scholarly productivity (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999), though the relationships may not be equally strong for women and men (Sax et al., 2002).

Considerable research indicates that faculty gender is associated with scholarly productivity. Several studies have found that male faculty produce more scholarship than female faculty (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999; Ceci et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2020; Odic & Wojcik, 2020; Sax et al., 2002), though the gender gap in scholarly productivity is most pronounced in the pre-tenure years (Grapin et al., 2013; Joy, 2006). In an archival study of psychology faculty, Joy (2006) found that men published more than women during the first eight years after earning a doctorate degree, but publication rates did not differ significantly thereafter. Huang et al. (2020) found that the gender difference in productivity was much smaller when productivity was measured annually rather than across the career span, presumably because men tend to have longer careers than women in the sciences. Indeed, studies have found null effects of gender when scholarly productivity has been annualized. Newhart et al. (2020) found that the *total* number of publications among counselor educators was predicted by gender, but the average publication rate *per year* was predicted by years of experience and the institution's Carnegie classification. Similarly, Hatchett and Fuegen (2022) found that gender no longer predicted post-tenure publications among associate

and full professors in psychology at public, regional universities after controlling for post-tenure years of experience.

### **Current Study**

As this review has confirmed, there has been very little research on the work experiences or productivity of counselor educators who have been promoted to the rank of associate or full professor. The limited research to date indicates that service responsibilities may increase for associate and full professors (Davis et al., 2006), and that work distributions may vary as a function of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit (Hatchett, 2021). Research in other academic disciplines suggests that gender, marital status, dependent children, academic rank, and the presence of a mentoring relationship may impact associate and full professors' work experiences and scholarly productivity. From this research, the primary purpose of our study was to evaluate whether these same variables might be useful in understanding variability in worktime distributions, occupational satisfaction, and scholarly productivity among counselor educators who held the rank of either associate or full professor. This study tested four specific associations: (1) whether the typical and preferred worktime distributions of associate and full professors of counselor educators varied based on the inclusion of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit, academic rank, and binary gender; (2) whether counselor educators' levels of occupational satisfaction varied based on several demographic and work-related variables; (3) whether a mentoring relationship was associated with higher levels of occupational satisfaction and scholarly productivity among the associate professors in the sample, and (4) whether demographic variables (binary gender, dependent children, marital status) and work variables (post-associate professor experience, academic rank, course load, the presence of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit) predicted scholarly productivity.



The data presented here are part of a larger project examining the experiences of counselor educators in CACREP-accredited universities in the United States. In another paper (Hatchett et al., 2022), data on faculty perceptions of the promotion process to full professor and factors that differentiated associate and full professors were presented. Data on counselor educators' worktime allocations, occupational satisfaction, experiences with mentoring, and scholarly productivity are presented in this paper. The data presented in both papers come from the same survey of 230 counselor educators.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

In this sample, 134 (59.6%) participants identified as female, 91 (40.4%) as male, two (0.8%) as genderqueer, and one (.4%) with an unspecified gender identity; also, two (0.9%) participants reported that their current gender identity did not match their natal sex. Most participants (76.0%,  $n = 174$ ) identified as White, followed in frequency by those who identified as Black/African American ( $n = 27$ , 11.8%), Asian ( $n = 12$ , 5.2%), multiple racial backgrounds ( $n = 9$ , 3.9%), American Indian/Alaskan Native ( $n = 2$ , 0.9%), and *other* ( $n = 5$ , 2.2%). Fourteen (6.2%) participants identified their ethnicity as Hispanic. Participants' median age was 53 ( $M = 53.29$ ,  $SD = 10.18$ ). Over two-thirds (69.0%,  $n = 158$ ) of the participants described themselves as married, 16 (7.0%) as being in a committed partnership, 28 (12.2%) as single/never married, 23 (10.0%) as divorced or separated, and four (1.7%) as widowed. Most (60.1%,  $n = 137$ ) participants reported having no children under the age of 18 under their care, 50 (21.9%) reported one child, 35 (15.4%) reported two children, four (1.8%) reported three children, one (0.4%) reported four children, and one (0.4%) reported five children.

The participants reported a median 16 years ( $M = 16.76$ ,  $SD = 8.19$ ) of full-time experience as counselor educators. Almost half of the participants held the rank of associate professor ( $n = 113$ , 49.3%), whereas the remainder ( $n = 116$ , 50.7%) held the rank of full professor. Nearly two-thirds ( $n = 150$ , 65.5%) reported their terminal degrees were from CACREP-accredited counselor education programs. Almost three-fourths ( $n = 169$ , 74.1%) of the participants were faculty at public universities; this was followed in frequency by faculty at private (religious) universities ( $n = 40$ , 17.5%), faculty at private (nonreligious), non-profit universities ( $n = 15$ , 6.6%), and faculty at private, for-profit universities ( $n = 4$ , 1.8%). Nearly a third ( $n = 75$ , 32.6%) of the participants worked in academic units that offered a CACREP-accredited doctoral program in counselor education and supervision.

### **Survey Instrument**

The survey used in this study was a modification of a survey developed by Hatchett and Fuegen (2022) who recently investigated the promotion process from associate to full professor among psychology faculty at public, regional universities. [The items on that survey were derived from earlier surveys constructed by Davis et al. (2006), Hatchett (2020, 2021), and Ramsey et al. (2002).] This survey by Hatchett and Fuegen (2022) was further modified to better match the work roles and experiences of counselor educators. Prior to survey distribution, the survey was evaluated by three counselor educators: a full professor, an associate professor who was currently in the process of applying for full professor, and a recently appointed associate professor. All three counselor educators reported that the survey adequately surveyed the content domains intended, and they did not make any significant suggestions for improvement.

The initial survey items inquired about demographic characteristics (9 items) and professional backgrounds (12 items). For the purposes of this study, additional survey items

inquired about experiences with mentoring (2 items), worktime distributions (8 items), occupational satisfaction and commitment (2 items), and scholarly productivity since being promoted to associate professor (4 items). Specifically, full professors were asked if they had received mentoring while at the rank of associate professor, and associate professors were asked if they currently had a mentor. Participants estimated the percentage of their worktime typically spent across four faculty activities: teaching/student mentoring, research/scholarship, service, and administration. They also indicated the percentage of their worktime they would *prefer* to spend in these same four activities (Dahm et al., 2015). Participants rated their current occupational satisfaction through two survey items. The first survey item asked participants to respond to the item, *I am satisfied with my current faculty position*. For the second item, participants were asked to estimate the likelihood they would seek another faculty position within the next five years. Both items used a 5-point Likert-type scale.

Regarding scholarly productivity, participants were asked to record the cumulative number of scholarly products they had accrued since being promoted to associate professor in the following domains: peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, edited or authored books, and national or international conference presentations. The cumulative number of products reported in each area was divided by the number of years of post-associate professor experience to calculate annual indices of scholarly productivity. Three of the four variables were substantially intercorrelated: annual journal articles and annual book chapters ( $r = .53, p < .001$ ), annual journal articles and annual conference presentations ( $r = .69, p < .001$ ), and annual book chapters and annual conference presentations ( $r = .47, p < .001$ ). The annual number of books was moderately correlated with annual book chapters ( $r = .28, p < .001$ ), but uncorrelated with annual journal articles ( $r = .08, p = .25$ ) and annual conference presentations ( $r = .13, p = .07$ ). The three annual

indices that were substantially intercorrelated—journal articles, book chapters, and conference presentations—were summed into a composite measure for subsequent analysis. The distribution of scores on this composite measure was positively skewed ( $Skewness = 2.67$ ;  $KS = 7.24$ ,  $p < .001$ ). After a logarithmic transformation [ $\log(10)+1$ ], the distribution of this composite variable approximated normality ( $Skewness = .39$ ;  $KS = .11$ ,  $p = .06$ ); therefore, this log transformation was used as the index of overall scholarly productivity in the subsequent analysis.

### **Procedure**

Prior to data collection, this research was approved by our internal IRB, and all study procedures complied with the *Code of Ethics* of the American Counseling Association (2014). All participants provided informed consent. In April 2021, a link to the Qualtrics survey was sent to all associate and full professors of counselor education ( $N = 1,135$ ) in programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP; <https://www.cacrep.org/directory>). A reminder email was sent approximately a week after the first email, a second reminder email was sent approximately a week after the first reminder email, and a final mail reminder was sent approximately a week after the second email reminder. Survey respondents had the opportunity to win one of four \$25 gift certificates.

### **Response Rate**

A total of 261 individuals began the Qualtrics survey. Twenty-four participants were deleted from the final sample because they failed to respond to at least 50% of the items, and seven more respondents were deleted because they did not express an identification with the discipline counselor education. This resulted in a final sample of 230 counselor educators, which when compared to the original population of associate and full professors of counselor education ( $N = 1,135$ ), represented a response rate of 20.3%.

## Results

Prior to conducting the main analyses, the dataset was screened for data entry errors and unusual survey responses. Four participants had scores on the scholarship composite variable that were greater than four standard deviations above the mean ( $z > 4.00$ ); these cases were deleted on a pairwise basis.

### Worktime Distributions

Counselor educators in master's-only programs reported spending a greater percentage of their typical worktime on teaching/student mentoring ( $U = 6737, z = 3.51, p < .001$ ) and less time on research/scholarship ( $U = 3562, z = -3.99, p < .001$ ) than counselor educators at programs that also offered doctoral degrees. The two groups of counselor educators did not differ in the percentage of worktime distributions typically spent on service ( $U = 5468, z = .68, p = .50$ ) or administration ( $U = 4894, z = -.55, p = .58$ ). Consistent with their typical worktime distributions, counselor educators at master's-only programs reported a preference for spending a higher percentage of their worktime on teaching/student mentoring ( $U = 6435, z = 2.80, p = .005$ ) and a lower percentage of their worktime on research/scholarship ( $U = 3590, z = -3.90, p < .001$ ) than their colleagues in doctoral-level programs. The two groups of counselor educators did not differ in their preferred time distributions for service ( $U = 5979, z = 1.76, p = .08$ ) or administration ( $U = 5157, z = -.22, p = .83$ ). Respondents' typical and preferred work distributions are presented in Table 1, disaggregated by the presence of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit.

**Table 1**

*Typical and Preferred Time Allocations Disaggregated by the Presence of a Doctoral Degree Program in the Academic Unit*

Activity	Typical Distribution				Preferred Distribution			
	Master's-Only		Doctoral		Master's-Only		Doctoral	
	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
Teaching	40.0	44.4 (19.9)	30.0	35.5 (17.6)	40.0	44.9 (21.4)	35.0	37.2 (17.2)
Research	10.0	15.0 (10.4)	20.0	23.3 (13.8)	25.0	25.0 (15.9)	35.0	34.0 (17.0)
Service	20.0	18.8 (10.8)	20.0	16.8 (8.8)	15.0	15.7 (10.6)	10.0	12.9 (8.3)
Administration	15.0	18.3 (17.4)	15.0	19.8 (18.8)	7.0	11.5 (16.5)	10.0	11.2 (15.0)

*Note.* Numerals represent percentages of worktime distributions. We created discrepancy scores for the entire sample by finding the absolute value of the difference between the typical and preferred worktime distributions for each of the four categories. We then created a composite discrepancy score by summing the discrepancy scores attained for each of the four categories.

Comparisons of typical and preferred worktime distributions across academic rank and binary gender are presented next. Associate professors of counselor education reported typically spending more time on teaching/student mentoring than full professors ( $U = 4528$ ,  $z = -2.04$ ,  $p = .04$ ). These two ranks of counselor educators did not differ in the percentage of their worktime typically spent on research/scholarship ( $U = 5855$ ,  $z = 1.05$ ,  $p = .30$ ), service ( $U = 4908$ ,  $z = -1.05$ ,  $p = .29$ ), or administration ( $U = 5407$ ,  $z = .25$ ,  $p = .81$ ). Associate and full professors of counselor

education did not differ in any of their preferred worktime distributions: teaching/student mentoring ( $U = 4563, z = -1.96, p = .05$ ), research/scholarship ( $U = 5581, z = .41, p = .69$ ), service ( $U = 5175, z = -.55, p = .59$ ), and administration ( $U = 5339, z = -.16, p = .87$ ). Male and female counselor educators did not differ in the percentages of their worktime typically spent teaching/student mentoring ( $U = 4846, z = -.51, p = .61$ ) research/scholarship ( $U = 5796, z = 1.80, p = .07$ ), service ( $U = 4765, z = -.58, p = .56$ ), or administration ( $U = 5067, z = .27, p = .79$ ) or the percentages of their worktime that they would prefer to spend on teaching/student mentoring ( $U = 5023, z = -.08, p = .93$ ), research/scholarship ( $U = 5380, z = .78, p = .44$ ), service ( $U = 4758, z = -.74, p = .46$ ), or administration ( $U = 5158, z = .25, p = .80$ ).

### **Occupational Satisfaction and Mentoring**

When asked if they were satisfied with their current faculty positions, 80 (38.6%) of the respondents *strongly agreed* with this statement, another 80 (38.6%) *agreed*, 23 (11.1%) *neither agreed nor disagreed*, 17 (8.2%) *disagreed*, and 7 (3.4%) *strongly disagreed*. When asked about the likelihood of seeking another faculty position in the next five years, 19 (9.1%) of the respondents reported *very likely*, 15 (7.2%) reported *likely*, 43 (20.7%) reported *neither likely nor unlikely*, 49 (23.6%) reported *unlikely*, and 82 (39.4%) reported *very unlikely*. Because the first item measured current occupational satisfaction and the second measured a behavioral intention indicative of occupational dissatisfaction, it was expected that the correlation between ratings on these two items would be negative and modest in magnitude. This was confirmed by our analysis ( $\tau = -.34, p < .001$ ). The associations between ratings on these two occupational satisfaction items were compared to several demographic and work-related variables (see Table 2).

**Table 2**

*Associations between Occupational Satisfaction, Intention to seek another Position, and other Variables*

	Occupational Satisfaction	Seek Another Position
	$z/\tau$	$z/\tau$
Binary Gender	1.24	-.16
Marital Status	1.00	-1.31
Dependent Children	-2.36*	2.43*
Presence of Doctoral Program	-.94	.26
% Time Teaching	-.05	-.02
% Time Research	.05	-.04
% Time Service	-.06	.05
% Time Administration	.01	-.02
Academic Rank	6.46**	-4.40*
Composite Discrepancy Index	-.18*	.10

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .001$ . Coding procedures: Binary Gender (1 = female, 2 = male); Marital Status (0 = not married, 1 = married); Dependent Children (0 = no, 1 = yes); Presence of Doctoral Program (0 = no, 1 = yes); I am satisfied with my current faculty position (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree); How likely are you to seek a faculty position at another university in the next five years? (1 = very unlikely to 5 = very likely); Academic rank (1 = associate professor, 2 = full professor).



The presence of dependent children was associated with lower occupational satisfaction and a greater intention to seek another faculty position. Full professors reported higher occupational satisfaction and a lesser intention to seek another position compared with associate professors. The magnitude of the discrepancy between typical and preferred worktime distribution was also associated with lower occupational satisfaction.

When asked if they had received any mentoring while serving at the rank of associate professor, very few (8.7%) of the full professors in our sample responded in the affirmative. However, 27.4% of the current associate professors reported that they currently had a mentor. Among associate professors, a current mentoring relationship was associated with higher levels of occupational satisfaction ( $U = 1421, z = 2.31, p = .02$ ), but was unrelated to the likelihood of seeking another faculty position in the next five years ( $U = 1089, z = -.21, p = .83$ ). The presence of a mentor among associate professors was unrelated to binary gender [ $\chi^2(1) = .79, p = .37, V = .08$ ], and associate professors with and without mentors did not differ on the composite index of scholarly productivity [ $t(93) = -1.61, p = .11, d = -.37, 95\% \text{ CI} = -.82, .08$ ].

### **Annual Scholarly Productivity**

We ran a multiple regression analysis to predict how well the log-transformed composite measure of scholarly productivity could be predicted from the following variables: number of years of post-associate professor experience, academic rank, binary gender, married (yes/no), any dependent children (yes/no), presence of a doctoral program in the academic unit (yes/no), and typical course load in the fall and spring semester. The overall regression model was statistically significant [ $F(7, 171) = 9.84, p < .001$ ], and the seven predictor variables collectively explained 28.7% of the variance in the criterion variable. Post-associate professor years of experience ( $\beta = -.39, p < .001, sr^2 = .09, r = -.26$ ), presence of a doctoral degree program ( $\beta = -.28, p < .001, sr^2 =$

.07,  $r_{pb} = -.32$ ) and typical course load ( $\beta = -.27$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $sr^2 = .06$ ,  $r = -.33$ ) all made unique contributions to the prediction of composite scholarly productivity; neither academic rank ( $\beta = .12$ ,  $p = .12$ ,  $sr^2 = .01$ ,  $r_{pb} = -.07$ ) nor any of the demographic variables [marital status ( $\beta = .06$ ,  $p = .42$ ,  $sr^2 = .00$ ,  $r_{pb} = .13$ ), binary gender ( $\beta = -.07$ ,  $p = .31$ ,  $sr^2 = .00$ ,  $r_{pb} = -.07$ ), any dependent children ( $\beta = .05$ ,  $p = .53$ ,  $sr^2 = .00$ ,  $r_{pb} = .16$ )] made unique contributions to predicting scholarly productivity.

## Discussion

Given the dearth of literature on the work experiences of midcareer counselor educators, insights into their experiences are particularly important. Our purpose was to examine the worktime distributions, occupational satisfaction, and scholarly productivity of associate and full professors of counselor education employed in CACREP-accredited programs throughout the United States. Our findings differ in many important ways from the extant literature.

### Worktime Distributions

Typical and preferred worktime distributions of counselor educators were assessed and evaluated for whether they varied based on the inclusion of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit, academic rank, and binary gender. Predictably, faculty in master's-only programs allocated more time to teaching and mentoring and less time to research than faculty in doctoral programs. This pattern aligned with preferred worktime distributions. The typical amount of time allocated to service and administrative activities did not differ between these groups, nor did their preferences for allocating time to service and administrative activities. These findings are consistent with those of Hatchett (2021) who also found that counselor educators in master's-only programs spent more time on teaching and less time on research than counselor educators whose academic units also included doctoral-level training. Across program type, faculty in our study

preferred to allocate a larger percentage of their work time to scholarship and a smaller percentage of their work time to service and administration than they typically allocated.

Academic rank and gender did not predict typical or preferred worktime distributions with one exception: associate professors reported allocating more time to teaching and mentoring than did full professors. These findings stand in contrast with those of previous studies examining the effect of rank (Davis et al., 2006) and gender (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999; Guarino & Borden, 2017; Link et al., 2008; Misra et al., 2012) on worktime allocation. One potential explanation for the non-significant effect of binary gender among counselor educators is the higher proportion of female faculty in counselor education compared to other academic disciplines. Guarino and Borden (2017) report that the proportion of women in an organizational unit may influence the amount of service women will be called upon to do. Nearly 60% of our respondents identified as female, a pattern that is consistent with the survey results of Hatchett (2020, 2021).

### **Occupational Satisfaction and Mentoring**

Another objective of this study was to explore whether occupational satisfaction varied based on demographic and work-related variables. More than three in four counselor educators indicated they were satisfied in their current position. Fewer than one in three indicated that they were likely to seek another position in the next five years. Consistent with previous research by Sabharwal and Corley (2009), we found that academic rank predicted job satisfaction: full professors reported higher job satisfaction and a lower intention to seek another position than associate professors. In contrast to previous research by Sabharwal and Corley (2009), there was no evidence that binary gender or marital status predicted job satisfaction. However, in our study, the presence of dependent children was associated with lower job satisfaction and a greater intention to seek another faculty position. Similar results have been reported for medical faculty

(Carr et al., 1998), though cross-disciplinary research shows that faculty parents and non-parents report comparable levels of job satisfaction (Jacobs & Winslow, 2004).

Greater discrepancies between typical and preferred worktime distributions have been associated with lower occupational satisfaction (Dahm et al., 2015), which was also true for participants of this study. However, there was not a significant association between the composite discrepancy scores and likelihood of seeking another position in the next five years. Though related, job satisfaction and intention to leave measure different constructs. Job satisfaction is an attitudinal variable, whereas seeking another position is a behavioral intention. Behavioral intentions depend not only on attitudes but also on subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991). More specifically, the intention to seek another faculty position item not only captured occupational satisfaction, but also some of the practical challenges associated with attaining another faculty position, such as the limited availability of open rank positions and the challenges associated with relocating.

How counselor educators distributed their worktime was unrelated to job satisfaction and intention to seek another position. These findings contrast with findings from previous survey research showing that the amount of time allocated to research activities is positively correlated with occupational satisfaction, while the amount of time allocated to teaching activities is negatively correlated with occupational satisfaction (Dahm et al., 2015; French et al., 2020). The difference in findings may reflect the fact that faculty in our survey distributed their time in ways that were generally consistent with their preferences.

Though mentoring for midcareer faculty is important (e.g., Zellers et al., 2008), barely one in four of the associate professors in our sample reported having a mentor. In comparison, Briggs and Pehrsson (2008) reported that nearly three times as many early-career counselor educators

reported having a mentor. In our study, mentoring was associated with greater occupational satisfaction but was unrelated to intention to seek another position or scholarly productivity. Our findings are somewhat consistent with Magnuson et al. (2009) who, in a small qualitative study, found that mentoring was valued by counselor educators and led to increased occupational satisfaction, though they are inconsistent with recent research conducted with psychology faculty (Hatchett & Fuegen, 2022).

### **Scholarly Productivity**

A third objective of our study was to explore how well demographic variables (binary gender, dependent children, marital status) and work variables (years of post-associate professor experience, academic rank, the presence of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit, typical course load) predicted scholarly productivity. None of the demographic variables predicted scholarly productivity. These findings contrast with those of other studies in which scholarly productivity had been found to be higher among men (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999; Ceci et al., 2014; Huang et al., 2020; Odic & Wojcik, 2020; Sax et al., 2002), married faculty, and faculty with dependent children (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999). Previous research examining the role of gender in predicting the scholarly productivity of counselor educators has resulted in inconsistent findings (Hatchett et al., 2020; Lambie et al., 2014; Ramsey et al., 2002). The null effect for binary gender found in our study may have resulted from how scholarly productivity was operationalized. Huang et al. (2020) documented an attenuation of the gender difference in scholarly productivity when productivity among scientists was annualized. Within counselor education, Newhart et al. (2020) found that annualized scholarly productivity was predicted only by years of experience and the institution's Carnegie classification. These findings are consistent with the finding by Hatchett

and Fuegen (2022) that gender did not predict post-tenure publications among associate and full professors in psychology after controlling for post-tenure years of experience.

Both typical teaching loads and the presence of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit uniquely predicted scholarly productivity as part of a multivariate analysis. Though teaching loads are typically lower in counselor education units that include doctoral-level training (Hatchett, 2021), these two predictor variables are distinct. For example, the point-biserial correlation between typical teaching load and the presence of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit was only .34 ( $p < .001$ ). These findings are consistent with other research in higher education. Across disciplines (Bellas & Toutkoushian, 1999) and within counselor education specifically (Brown et al., 2020; Hatchett, 2021; Ramsey et al., 2002), faculty at research-intensive and doctoral-granting institutions have been found to publish more than faculty at other institutions. In addition, years of experience predicted scholarly productivity. However, after controlling for the other variables in the model, the standardized beta coefficient for post-associate years of experience was negative, indicating that scholarly productivity slightly declines with each additional year of post-associate experience. Two other studies on the scholarly productivity of counselor educators (Hatchett et al., 2020; Lambie et al., 2014) reported declines in publication rates with the passage of time. Finally, in our sample, there was no difference in scholarly productivity between associate and full professors when the other predictor variables were included in the regression model. Other researchers who have examined the relationship between academic rank and scholarly productivity have produced mixed findings (Hatchett et al., 2020; Lambie et al., 2014; Ramsey et al., 2002). There are two characteristics of our study that may explain this non-significant result. One, we investigated scholarly productivity on an annual basis.

Second, we also included post-associate professor years of experience as a covariate in the regression analysis.

### **Limitations**

The most obvious limitation to our study was the relatively low response rate (20.3%). It is likely that respondents were more interested in the survey topic than non-respondents. Thus, this sample may not be representative of the population of associate and full professors of counselor education employed in CACREP-accredited programs throughout the U.S. Also, because of small cell sizes, we could not adequately evaluate the role of race in understanding counselor educators' worktime distributions, scholarly productivity, occupational satisfaction, and mentoring experiences. Race is an important variable that should be included in future studies if the number of minority faculty is sufficient for statistically powerful analyses. Another potential limitation of our study was our decision to adopt a traditional definition of marital status. We made this decision to facilitate comparisons with other research on scholarly productivity. However, since many of these older studies were published, there have been changes in marital relationships in the U.S. Not only have marriage rates declined (e.g., Schneider et al., 2018), but committed couples now have several legal and socially acceptable alternatives to traditional marriage (Dillender, 2014). Perhaps, future researchers should investigate whether the meaning of marriage has changed as an explanatory variable and compare the equivalence between married and committed partners. Lastly, due to the cross-sectional nature of the research design, we cannot draw conclusions about any causal relationships among the variables.

### **Implications and Recommendations for Future Research**

In recent years, the mid-career experiences of faculty have received increased attention in the higher education media (Blain, 2020; Dunn & Halonen, 2022). However, empirical research

on these experiences published in the professional literature is still lacking. In the current study, we investigated the career experiences of a specific group of faculty members, namely, associate and full professors of counselor education. In addition to filling a gap in the professional literature, the results from this study have implications for midcareer counselor educators as well as university administrators. For one, mid-career counselor educators can compare their typical and preferred worktime distributions to the results attained in this sample. This same information may also be useful for university administrators who are often responsible for assigning teaching loads and other work responsibilities on campus. Second, the results for occupational satisfaction and scholarly productivity may be informative to both counselor educators and university administrators in better understanding the factors that predict—and fail to predict—outcomes on these two variables. Additional supports (e.g., onsite childcare, part-time tenured appointments) for faculty parents may increase occupational satisfaction. Finally, we found that the presence of a mentoring relationship was associated with current occupational satisfaction, an association that suggests the potential value of mentoring for mid-career counselor educators.

Given the lack of information on mid-career counselor education faculty, there are several routes for future research. For example, it would be helpful to conduct research to better understand the work experiences of full and associate professors who are underrepresented minorities. Other counselor education literature has identified unique considerations for faculty of color during pre-tenure (Hannon et al., 2018), and it is necessary to continue this exploration for associate and full professors.

In addition, further exploration of the association between dependent children, lower job satisfaction and greater intention to seek another faculty position would be beneficial. A study of counselor educators by Stinchfield and Trepal (2010) on the impact of motherhood on the



academic pipeline found that those at lower ranks expressed less balance between personal and professional areas than those at higher rank. While previous counselor education research seems to corroborate the association, there remains a lack of detailed information on the factors that contribute to dissatisfaction and intention to leave; qualitative inquiry could be particularly helpful in gaining an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon. This information would be helpful for universities looking for ways to support faculty with children. Additionally, studies that include measures of the proportion of women in a department or school would improve understanding of how worktime decisions are made.

## **Conclusion**

There is a paucity of research on the mid-career experiences of counselor educators. This study fills a gap by investigating the worktime distributions, occupational satisfaction, and scholarly productivity of a sample of associate and full professors of counselor education at programs accredited by CACREP. The major findings from this research were as follows: worktime distributions varied based on academic rank and the presence of a doctoral degree program in the academic unit; occupational satisfaction was lower among associate professors both in general and associate professors who did not have mentors, counselor educators with dependent children, and counselor educators who reported a greater mismatch between their typical and preferred worktime distributions; and finally, years of experience, teaching loads, and the presence of a doctoral program in the academic unit predicted scholarly productivity, whereas academic rank, binary gender, marital status, and the presence of any dependent children did not make unique contributions in predicting scholarly productivity. Additional studies with this population may usefully advance initiatives to improve the satisfaction and productivity of mid-career faculty.

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