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**INTERNAL/EXTERNAL OCCUPATIONAL STATUS CONGRUENCE AND
LIFE/JOB SATISFACTION OF SOUTHERN LOW-INCOME YOUNG ADULTS**

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

PH.D. 1984

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INTERNAL/EXTERNAL OCCUPATIONAL STATUS CONGRUENCE
AND LIFE/JOB SATISFACTION
OF SOUTHERN LOW-INCOME YOUNG ADULTS

by

M. Cynthia Farris

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

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1984

Approved by


Dissertation Adviser

APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Dissertation Adviser Sarah M. Shoffner

Committee Members P. Scott Lawrence
Hyun W. Lee
Rebecca M. Smith

March 19, 1984
Date of Acceptance by Committee

March 19, 1984
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The present study investigated the relationship between occupational status congruence among Southern low-income young adults and their perceptions of their current lives and jobs. Occupational status congruence was investigated from two perspectives, internal occupational status congruence (consistency between the occupational aspirations and expectations of subjects) and external occupational congruence (consonance between subjects' own occupational status and their ascribed occupational status).

Subjects for the study consisted of 524 young adults, aged 21-22, from whom completed questionnaires were obtained during the third phase of data collection of the Southern Regional Research Project S-126. A two-way analysis of covariance, with race and sex as covariates, was used to test for differences in life satisfaction scores between groups who were internally congruent and internally incongruent, and between groups who were externally congruent and externally incongruent. An identical procedure was used to test for differences in levels of job satisfaction. A final two-way multiple analysis of covariance was used to assess multiple and overlapping effects of internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence on life and job satisfaction taken together.

Three hypotheses were tested. The first hypothesis, that there would be differences in life satisfaction mean scores between groups defined as internally occupationally congruent and incongruent, and those who were externally occupationally congruent or incongruent, was not supported. Significant interaction effects and covariate effects due to sex were detected. Hypothesis II, testing for differences in job satisfaction among groups defined according to the components of internal or external occupational congruence, was also rejected. No significant differences in job satisfaction mean scores were found in the main effects for internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence. The analysis of job satisfaction in relation to the covariates of race and sex showed no significant influence on the part of either variable. As in the first hypothesis, interaction effects between internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence were significant. The results of the MANOVA procedure, used in testing the third hypothesis, failed to provide any information substantially different from that yielded by the separate ANOVAS.

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Appreciation is expressed to the members of the advisory committee Dr. Sarah M. Shoffner, Dr. Hyman Rodman, Dr. Rebecca Smith and Dr. Scott Lawrence, for their support and encouragement during the course of this project. Special appreciation is expressed to Sarah M. Shoffner for all of her reassurance and guidance during the author's doctoral studies.

Acknowledgment is made to the 524 young adults who provided the information in 1975 and 1979 which became the basis of this study. Acknowledgment is also made to the members of the S-126 and S-171 regional committees for the use of the data base and encouraging the author's participation in the regional projects. The efforts of these regional committees and particularly the support provided by the North Carolina Agricultural Research Service that made this study possible are greatly appreciated.

Deepest gratitude is expressed to Judy Boyd, the author's collaborator in the conception and design of the total project of which this study is a part. Throughout the course of this project, Judy has encouraged and supported me immeasurably. In the two years in which we have been doing

research together, Judy has become more than a research partner; she has become a dear and wonderful friend.

Neither Kristen nor Timothy have known a time when "Mama" was not a student. To them, my special love and thanks for being their sweet and patient selves while I have been absorbed in my studies. And finally, to my husband, Keith, who has not only served as chief-cook-and-bottle washer, but has been a source of solace, loving support and encouragement during all of these years, goes my deepest love and gratitude.

PREFACE

Sections of this dissertation are part of a collaborative effort with Judith C. Boyd whose dissertation title is: Personal, Family, and Social Characteristics of Southern Low-Income Young Adults by Occupational Status/Status-Congruence Type. Both this dissertation and the Boyd dissertation utilized the same data base and had their conceptual origin in a number of collaborative research efforts cited within the text. Portions of Chapter I, describing the nature of the project, portions of Chapter II, the review of the literature, and of Chapter III, including descriptions of the sample, sampling methods, and data collection procedures, were written jointly and appear in this dissertation, as well as the Boyd dissertation. Instruments used for data collection, in 1975 and 1979, from which the variables used in the present study were taken may be obtained from Dr. Sarah M. Shoffner, School of Home Economics, The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina, 27412.

The author is currently a research assistant for Project S-171, which followed Project S-126. During her association with both projects S-126 and S-171, she has contributed to the tracking procedures for the 1979 wave of

data collection, participated in the editing of the final bulletin for the project, and co-authored two chapters for the bulletin, "Review of the Literature", and "Life Conditions at Young Adulthood". Currently, she is assisting in the design of the instruments and data collection procedures to be used in the S-171 data collection phase to be conducted during the Spring, 1984.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The overall purpose of this research was to amplify existing explanations of the connections between occupational choice and occupational attainment, and the consequences of this choice process for life and job satisfaction. The specific intention of this research was to explore the relationship between occupational status congruence among Southern low-income young adults and their perceptions of their current lives and jobs. In this study, occupational status congruence was investigated from two perspectives, internal occupational status congruence and external occupational status congruence.

The data base used for this study came from Southern Regional Research Projects 63 and 126, cooperative efforts among the Agricultural Experiment Stations in six Southern states to study longitudinally the occupational and educational goals of low-income youth. This data base forms an aggregate of information resulting from an investigation, over a period of ten years, of the occupational choice process of a group of low-income, Southern youth and the impact of this process on their evaluation of their life circumstances as young adults. Data were collected in 1969, 1975, and 1979, during time periods which corresponded to

preadolescent, adolescent and young adult developmental periods of the sample members.

Much has been written, within a wide range of disciplines, about the occupational choice process and those aspects of life which contribute to an individual's sense of security, confidence, and overall life satisfaction. The presence of societal pressure toward occupational status attainment, as a reflection of cultural values in the United States, was one of the major assumptions underlying the theoretical perspective cited in the baseline research report for Southern Regional Research Projects 63 and 126 (Butler & Baird, 1974). Furthermore, the long range objective of these projects was based on the assumption that the attainment of a higher quality of life was directly linked with educational and occupational achievement (Coleman, 1974).

This study investigated whether a conceptual perspective, within the cognitive dissonance framework, would yield a more informative explanation of the influence of occupation on quality of life. Some preliminary findings from the following projects, using this data base, provided evidence that status-attainment theory alone may not adequately explain variation in life or occupational satisfaction. In a comparison of the occupational aspirations and expectations of these youth over the three assessment periods outlined above, the sample was found to have consistently high aspirations and successively diminishing expectations

(Farris, Boyd & Shoffner, 1984). In a subsequent study, it was found that, despite the increasing gap between occupational aspirations and expectations, the young adults evaluated their futures much more optimistically than they viewed their present circumstances (Boyd, Farris & Shoffner, 1984). On superficial evaluation, these findings, placed in juxtaposition, appear contradictory to a simplistic explanation of the assumed strong positive correspondence between occupational status and life satisfaction. The alternative explanation of lower satisfaction levels as evidence of strain accompanying a situation of cognitive dissonance does not appear immediately applicable either. Based on these findings, an exploration was made in this study of the influence of the discrepancy between what these young people desired and what they expected to achieve on their evaluations of their current life situations.

The potential discrepancy between occupational aspirations and expectations formed the conceptual basis for what is termed "internal occupational incongruence" in this study. In research-based studies of status incongruence or status inconsistency, it is possible to conceptualize a number of different dimensions on which one could be "status inconsistent". Status inconsistency has been most commonly defined as occurring when an individual occupies different positions on two or more status indicators (Baer, Eitzen, Duprey, Thompson & Cole, 1976; Hartman, 1974; Reissman,

1967). There is a precedent, however, for the study of status congruence based on differing positions within the same status dimension (Nelson, 1973). In fact, the use of different indicators poses a difficult measurement problem (Hornung, 1980). Occupation was the main status indicator of interest in this study and the discrepancy in desires versus expectations represented a potential for attitudinal dissonance within that one dimension.

Occupational status has usually been studied as a structural variable rather than one based on attitudes or preferences. Structural incongruence in achieved occupational status would occur if a person occupied an occupational status position differing from that of his ascribed status based on the occupational position held by the head of household in his/her family of origin (Work in America, 1972). This structural occupational inconsistency or consistency is referred to in this study as "external occupational congruence".

Because the potential exists for multiple assessments of occupational congruence based on external and internal factors, there are likely to be a variety of outcomes in individual perspectives about life and work. For example, it is not inconceivable that individuals might have relatively high regard for how things are going in their lives based on external indicators (high external status congruence) and at the same time have lower assessments of their

occupational situations based on unfulfilled aspirations (low internal occupational status congruence). The investigation of the existence, nature and extent of the influence of internal (or psychological) and external (or structural) aspects of occupational congruence on the respondents' degree of satisfaction with both their lives and their jobs formed the major focus of this study.

Importance of the Study

The present study has the potential of providing an important conceptual addition to the literature on occupational development and occupational choice. Within the literature, the major emphasis has been and continues to be on occupational status and achievement as the primary occupational determinants assumed to be related to an individual's quality of life. This study was an attempt to demonstrate the importance of occupational status congruence as a significant issue, both subjectively and objectively. Validation of the importance of occupational status congruence would necessitate a new look at occupational study, particularly studies of individuals with low-income family backgrounds. Since the longitudinal study from which the data are taken is still in progress, the present study results may provide some important guidance in future research design choices.

A further contribution of this study is in the methodological approach used in researching the concept of status

inconsistency. Care has been taken to respond to a number of the methodological criticisms of prior studies, such as the failure to use both subjective and objective measures (Baer et al., 1976) and the lack of measurement clarity caused by using multiple status indicators (Blalock, 1967; Jackson & Curtis, 1972; Hornung, 1980).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The development of the concept of occupational status congruence and the study of the relationship of occupational status congruence to both job and life satisfaction are the major purposes of this research. In this chapter, a review of cognitive dissonance theory and research literature will be presented, followed by a review of pertinent literature on status inconsistency, and by a limited discussion of life satisfaction and job satisfaction examining their utility as dependent measures in the present study.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

The broad category of balance theories encompasses a wide variety of proposals which are based on the general assertion that inconsistent cognitions arouse an uncomfortable psychological state which in turn leads to behaviors directed toward achieving consistency, a psychologically pleasant state. Historically, Heider (1946) was the first to use the concept of cognitive inconsistency as part of a social-psychological theory. In Heider's theory, and those that followed, inconsistent relationships between cognitions have been variously identified as cognitive imbalance (Heider, 1946), asymmetry (Newcomb, 1953), incongruence (Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955), and dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Inconsistent relationships arouse either tension,

strain toward symmetry, pressure toward congruity, or psychological dissonance (Shaw & Costanzo, 1970).

Of all balance or consistency theories, Festinger's Theory of Cognitive Dissonance is the most extensive in scope dealing with behavior in general, both social and nonsocial. Cognitive dissonance theory also remains the most widely tested, questioned, applied, modified and accepted among the balance theories (Shaw & Costanzo, 1970). Although parallel to other theories, both in terms of chronology and basic theoretical underpinnings, cognitive dissonance theory can be differentiated from the other theories in a number of respects, most notably due to the inclusion of propositions about the resistance-to-change of cognitions, and about the proportion of cognitions that are dissonant (Wicklund & Brehm, 1976).

The core of cognitive dissonance theory, much to the distress of its critics, appears deceptively simple (Chapanis & Chapanis, 1964; Shaw and Costanzo, 1970; and Wicklund & Brehm, 1976). Dissonance Theory posits that the existence of inconsistency between cognitive elements is psychologically uncomfortable and that the individual is motivated to reduce any dissonance or to achieve consonance (Staw, 1974). The results of pressure to reduce dissonance or to avoid increases in dissonance are manifested by changes in cognitions, behavior changes, and selective exposure to new information and opinions (Shaw & Costanzo, 1970).

Dissonance and consonance were used by Festinger (1957) to refer to relations which exist between pairs of elements. A cognition or cognitive element is any bit of knowledge a person has about him or herself or the environment. These cognitive elements may be very specific pieces of information or they may be very general concepts and relations. They may fall on a continuum ranging from quite firm and clear to being vague (Wicklund & Brehm, 1976). Festinger raised two specific questions in relation to the notion of cognitive elements. First, when is a cognition identifiable as a single element and when is it a group of elements? Second, how are cognitive elements formed and what determines their content? The first question remains essentially unanswered. However, Festinger asserted that its lack of resolution posed no problem of measurement. In relation to the second issue, Festinger proposed that the most important determinant of cognitive elements is reality. In general, he viewed cognitive elements as corresponding to what actually exists in the environment and in the psychological world of the individual.

Relations between cognitive elements are classified as irrelevant, consonant or dissonant. An irrelevant relation exists between two cognitive elements if they have nothing to do with one another, that is, one cognitive element implies nothing about the other. If cognitions are related in such a way that one does imply something about the other,

the relation between them is both relevant and either consonant or dissonant (Shaw and Costanzo, 1970). The relationship between two elements is consonant if one implies the other in some psychological sense (having cognition A implies having cognition B). The relationship between two elements is dissonant if, when the two are considered alone, the obverse of one would follow from the other. It is not always easy to determine whether the obverse of one element follows from the other and in this respect the definitions of dissonance and consonance are ambiguous. The complexity of the situation is compounded by Festinger's assertion that motivations and desired consequences may be factors influencing the arousal of dissonance. Festinger suggested that dissonance could arise from one of several sources including logical inconsistency, cultural factors, opinion generality, or past experience (Shaw & Costanzo, 1970).

The amount of dissonance experienced is a direct function of how important cognitions are to the individual. Two elements that are of little consequence to the individual are not likely to arouse much dissonance regardless of how much inconsistency exists between them. Conversely, two very important elements are likely to arouse considerable dissonance. It should be noted that the definitions of consonance and dissonance have been discussed in relation to two elements taken alone. It is rare, however, that an

individual considers two elements in isolation. Any given element is relevant to many others and some of these relationships will inevitably be consonant while others will be dissonant. It would be unlikely for no dissonance at all to exist within a cluster of elements. In determining dissonance it is necessary to identify the total amount of dissonance between a specified cognitive element and other cognitive elements relevant to it. The total amount of dissonance depends upon the weighted proportion of relevant elements that are dissonant with the element in question. Festinger (1957) asserted that cognitive elements vary in the extent to which they are resistant to change, and that the maximum amount of dissonance possible was equal to the total resistance to change of the least resistant element.

Dissonant cognitions can be reduced in three ways: (a) by eliminating or reducing the importance of a cognitive element, (b) by changing an environmental cognitive element, or (c) by adding new cognitive elements. Cognitive dissonance theory does not assert that a person will be successful in reducing dissonance, simply that the existence of dissonance will motivate a person to reduce it (Wicklund & Brehm, 1976). The theory also does not propose that an individual is more prone to use one mode of reduction versus another or that they systematically try all methods of dissonance reduction. One weakness of the theory is that it

does not provide a way of predicting which method of dissonance reduction might be most appropriately chosen under a given set of circumstances (Shaw & Costanzo, 1970).

Implications of the Theory

According to Festinger (1957), cognitive dissonance theory has implications for many specific situations. However there appear to be three major ways in which dissonance is generated: (a) choice between alternatives, or decisions, (b) forced compliance, and (3) exposure to information. Nearly all of the research related to dissonance theory can be subsumed within these three categories (Shaw and Costanzo, 1970; Wicklund & Brehm, 1976).

Decisions. Dissonance is seen as an inevitable consequence of decision, and is based on the idea that an individual must be faced with a conflict situation before a decision must be made, that is, a decision between two polar alternatives, one that is completely good and one that is all bad, cannot be construed to be a decision. A choice between two alternatives creates dissonance to the extent that the alternatives are about equal in attractiveness and to the extent that the options involved offer different sets of consequences. When an alternative is selected, the positive aspects of the choice and the negative aspects of the rejected alternative are consonant with the cognition of choice. Conversely, the negative aspects of choice and the

positive aspects of the rejected alternative are dissonant with the cognition of choice. Since the resulting dissonance can be reduced by increasing the consonant cognitions and minimizing the dissonant cognitions it is expected that the perceived attractiveness of the chosen alternative will increase and the perceived attractiveness of the rejected alternative will decrease.

Forced compliance. Forced choice involves the use of force to induce a person to engage in a behavior which they have evaluated, based on prior experience, as negative. The source of the dissonance is the individual's awareness that he or she has acted publicly in a manner that is inconsistent with personal private opinion. The magnitude of dissonance is a function of the importance of private opinions and the magnitude of the rewards or punishments. The magnitude of the dissonance increases as the reward decreases. Dissonance can be reduced either by change of private opinion or by increasing the reward or punishment.

Included within the area of forced compliance is the idea that playing a role counter to one's beliefs may be an example of forced compliance. In this case overt behavior is contrary to personal attitudes. The theory predicts that the individual will eventually change opinions to bring them into agreement with the role he or she has played.

Exposure to information. Dissonance results in selective exposure to information. A person who is experiencing

Dissonance will be motivated to seek consonance-producing information and to avoid exposure to dissonance-producing information. Festinger hypothesized a curvilinear relationship between the amount of activity involved in information seeking and the degree of dissonance. In a situation of little or no dissonance, an individual will neither seek consonant nor avoid dissonant information. Moderate amounts of dissonance lead to maximum information seeking or avoidance behavior. Finally, there is a decrease in selective behavior with near maximum dissonance levels. In instances of extreme dissonance an individual may actually seek dissonance increasing information in order to increase dissonance to an intolerable level that will eventually force a change in some aspect of the situation and reduce dissonance (Shaw & Costanzo, 1970).

Critics of dissonance theory focus on two aspects of the research that has accompanied its development. First, the experimental manipulations are so complex and the crucial variables are so confounded that no valid conclusions can be drawn from the data. Second, a number of fundamental methodological inadequacies in the analysis of the results, for example, rejection of cases and faulty statistical analysis of data, have permeated studies and have negated the validity of findings (Shaw & Costanzo, 1970).

The most common type of research is that in which an individual evaluates two alternatives, chooses one and subsequently reevaluates the two options. Despite interpretation difficulties due to methodological problems created by procedures such as discarding subjects who choose the lower valued objects, results are generally in accord with the prediction that the evaluation of the chosen object increases, while the evaluation of the unchosen alternative decreases.

Research related to the second and third paradigms of forced compliance and exposure to information is also difficult to assess. Research related to forced compliance is difficult to evaluate primarily because of the difficulty of inducing compliance without, at the same time, inducing opinion change. Conclusions about forced compliance remain inconclusive and inconsistent. Having completed an exhaustive review of the literature related to exposure to information, Freedman and Sears (1965) reported that research relating to this paradigm does not, as a body, support dissonance theory predictions.

Generally, supportive evidence exists for the reevaluation of alternatives following a choice, and for the justification of previously unsuitable behavior in forced compliance studies. Evidence involving the effects of punishment and of choice in forced compliance studies is inconclusive, and the evidence regarding selective exposure to information

fails to support the theory. For an exhaustive review of the voluminous research related to cognitive dissonance theory the reader may refer to Chapanis and Chapanis (1964), and Freedman and Sears (1965).

A number of researchers have offered modifications to Festinger's theory. Brehm and Cohen (1962) emphasized the role of commitment and volition in the arousal of dissonance. First, it was their contention that whether or not one cognition is the obverse of another, or follows from another, depends upon the degree of a person's commitment. Firm commitment creates dissonance. Second, they suggested that a person making a choice must believe that they have acted voluntarily or they are unlikely to experience dissonance. As a follow-up to Brehm and Cohen, Linder, Cooper and Jones (1967) demonstrated the importance of volition in the arousal of dissonance by offering insufficient reward for compliance with a request to engage in behavior that had been negatively evaluated by the individual.

Aronson (1968) argued that dissonance theory as advanced by Festinger was remiss on a number of key issues in its exclusion of a number of crucial variables. Dissonance theory on the surface appears to assume that all people respond in the same way to dissonance and that no one has much tolerance for it. Aronson suggested that this may not be the case; that, in fact, dissonance not only can be tolerated but also, that individuals differ in the degree to

which it can be tolerated. Following Aronson's lead, Orpen (1974a) has continued to suggest that dissonance theory does not give sufficient weight to individual differences in degree of tolerance of dissonance.

Further, Aronson suggested that Festinger misplaced the source of dissonance which should properly be identified as the relation between cognitions and an individual's self concept. Aronson asserted that individuals typically regard themselves as sensible and that knowledge that they have acted in a non-sensible manner is inconsistent with this self image. For Aronson, expectancy plays an important part in the production of dissonance. Individuals expect that they will behave in certain ways and behavior that deviates from that expectancy creates dissonance. In a similar vein, Bramel (1969) suggested that dissonance arises when (a) individuals encounter information which disconfirm expectations and/or when (b) individuals discover that they have chosen incompetently or immorally.

Status Congruence

The concept of status inconsistency, although having prominence in social stratification literature (Geschwender, 1967), has been under increasing methodological and theoretical scrutiny (House & Harkins, 1975). Traditionally, status inconsistency is defined as the occupying of disparate ranks on various dimensions of status; that is, an individual's position on one social hierarchy does not match

his or her position on another (Baer et al., 1976; Hartman, 1974; Reissman, 1967).

Historically, the study of the phenomenon of status inconsistency can be traced theoretically to the Weberian notion that status is multidimensional and methodologically to Lenski's work related to status crystallization (Baer et al., 1976). Social scientists have been interested in social status and status inconsistency as both dependent and independent variables. Accepting the multidimensional nature of status, that any given individual may be ranked in many different systems of stratification, the traditional approach of study, as reflected in the early works of Weber (1953), Parsons (1949) and Lenski (1954), has focused on examining the relationships that exist between these disparate systems or dimensions, as well as second order relationships with numerous other social and psychological variables.

More recent approaches, such as Lenski's later work on status crystallization, have attempted to specify the consequences of an individual occupying differential statuses along various dimensions by utilizing an index of differential ranking as a major independent variable. Lenski (1954) related an index of status crystallization to an individual's political attitudes. Lenski used four status systems or hierarchies (income, occupation, education, and race or ethnic position), and computed an index of what he

termed crystallization across these four dimensions for a sample of 749 individuals. An individual occupying a similar position across dimensions was labelled as highly crystallized. An individual who occupied positions differentially, regardless of the pattern, was labelled as being low crystallized. Lenski then related this index to expressed political attitudes and behaviors, finding persons experiencing low crystallization across status ranks as being prone to liberal attitudes and behaviors directed toward social change. Goffman (1957) found similar results using an index comprised of income, education, and occupational prestige. He noted from his study that individuals experiencing high discrepancy between their statuses on the various hierarchies were prone to be advocates of social change.

Benoit-Smullyan (1944) asserted that inconsistency across status positions has consequences for behavior and that there is a tendency for a person's positions in one status hierarchy to match his or her position on another. Similarly, Hughes (1945) speculated that inconsistency results in a kind of marginality where an individual is confronted with conflicting expectations and ambiguity in social relationships.

Adams (1953), like Lenski, focused on the dissatisfaction and frustration of individuals in incongruent positions and the consequences of these feelings for small groups with

members who considered themselves inappropriately placed within the group. Adams computed an index of status congruence for members of air crews using age, military rank, amount of air time, and education as rank dimensions. Adams findings suggested that groups whose members were consistent or congruent across measures were happier, more productive, and shared greater degrees of intimacy. Similar findings for members of small discussion groups were reported by Exline and Ziller (1959).

Of particular interest to this study is an unpublished research note by Kleiner, Parker and Taylor of the University of Michigan, reported by Sampson (1963). Kleiner et al. hypothesized a relationship between aspiration and achievement, measured by educational rank and occupational rank, and the incidence of mental illness. They found that an increased incidence of mental illness was associated with high levels of discrepancy between individuals' aspiration levels and their achievement levels.

The implication drawn from these early works is that status consistency, congruence or equilibrium is the desired, pleasant and most nondisruptive state, both for the individual and for the group (Sampson, 1963). Theoretically, status inconsistency is assumed to have consequences for the individual, attitudinally and behaviorally, as a result of the dissonance created by differential status rankings (Baer et al., 1976).

Three theories of status inconsistency have been the focus of discussion and research over the past two decades: Zaleznick's Theory of Social Certitude, Homans' Theory of Distributive Justice, and Sampson's Principle of Expectancy Congruence. The Theory of Social Certitude (Zaleznick, Christenson, & Roethlisberger, 1958) and Sampson's (1963) Principle of Expectancy congruence are extremely similar. The major difference is that the latter is stated within the framework of a more general dissonance theory, whereas the former stands alone.

Stated briefly, the essence of each theory is the assumption that each status position is accompanied by a set of behavioral expectations regarding both the behavior of the occupant of the status position as well as expectations about the behaviors of all persons with whom interaction takes place. Each individual normally occupies several status positions and possesses several sets of behavioral expectations which either reinforce or contradict one another. When one set of expectations conflicts with another, a condition of social certitude does not exist and anxiety is produced for all concerned. Zaleznick et al. and Sampson asserted that when social certitude does not exist, social relations are hampered and unsatisfying, setting in motion forces tending toward the creation of status consistency which will, in turn, diminish anxiety.

Of the two frameworks, Geschwender (1967) suggested that Sampson's Principle of Expectancy Congruence has an advantage over Zaleznick's work in that its derivation from a more general theory of motivation makes it more easily related to findings in other areas. However, Geschwender also asserted that the ultimate test of any framework is how well it explains empirical findings. It was at this point that he contended that both frameworks are inadequate and, standing alone, break down.

Within Homans' (1961) Theory of Distributive Justice, certain status dimensions are viewed as investments into a social situation, whereas others are viewed as rewards received from the situation. A state of distributive justice exists when individuals who possess greater investments also possess greater rewards. Those whose investments are higher than rewards experience a felt injustice or anger. Persons whose investments are lower than rewards experience a felt injustice and feel guilty. As outlined by Homans, the theory of distributive justice is not inclusive enough to offer an explanation of the consequences of either investment or reward inconsistencies (Geschwender, 1967).

Despite extensive attention, status inconsistency has proven to be a problematic variable, and results from past studies exploring inconsistency effects have, at best, been mixed (Baer et al., 1967; Hornung, 1980; House & Harkins, 1975; Jackson & Curtis, 1972). Several studies have found

little or no evidence of inconsistency effects (Lauman & Segal, 1971; Olsen & Tully, 1972; Treiman, 1966). For example, a study by Parker (1963) failed to support the assumption that status inconsistency produces stress. Similar results were reported by House and Harkins (1975) who were unable to verify stress as the result of status inconsistency when controlling for age.

Jackson and Curtis (1972) in assessing past research suggested that evidence regarding status inconsistency effects has been inconclusive for at least three reasons. First, most studies have used only one form, or very limited forms, of inconsistency and may have missed a crucial index of inconsistency which may have impacted specific samples. Often, research has related inconsistency to a small number of dependent variables. However, there is no reason, according to Jackson and Curtis, to expect that inconsistency should affect every aspect of human attitudes and behaviors. Research failing to find inconsistency effects may have failed to focus on the correct variables. Finally, Jackson and Curtis cited the problem of limited sample size which seems to characterize many of the studies they reviewed. The limited samples involved have made conclusions from these studies both suspect and severely limited in terms of the breadth of their implications.

Hornung (1980), evaluating previous research related to status inconsistency, identified a number of issues related

to conceptualization and measurement. First, he suggested that earlier works have been characterized by simplifications in the conceptualization and measurement of inconsistency which have served to attenuate the correlation between inconsistency and the dependent variable or variables under study.

The most basic problems, Hornung further suggested, are related to two assumptions that underlie much of the research in the area of status inconsistency. The first assumption that Hornung found problematic is that each of the multiple statuses occupied by a person gives rise to symmetric expectations about his or her attributes. The second assumption questioned by Hornung is that statuses which are occupied concurrently are equally ranked in their respective consequences, that is, that each status is equally important in controlling expectations or that each status is equally central to an individual's identity. Both assumptions negate the possibility of individual variation in the evaluation and impact of status rankings and inconsistencies.

Offering another criticism, Blalock (1967) suggested that the manipulation of the objective measure of status inconsistency, as defined in most studies, failed to determine how much actual effect on the dependent variable was the result of status inconsistency. In addressing what he considered an identification problem, Blalock asserted that

studies have failed to demonstrate that presumed consistency effects are not due simply to the direct effects of the particular statuses occupied in or on another hierarchy.

Blalock stressed that there are too many unknowns in trying to separate the effects of status inconsistency from the effects of individual status variables to give much credence to findings that report inconsistency effects (Baer et al., 1976).

Although some researchers have concluded that problems related to methodological issues and the subsequent conflicting findings are unresolvable (Blalock, 1967; Kelly & Chambliss, 1966; Mitchell, 1964), others have offered alternatives for the resolution of these methodological difficulties in the study of status inconsistency. House and Harkins (1975), for example, in a study of men of various ages, demonstrated that status inconsistency has significant explanatory power when it is specified clearly under what conditions specific discrepancies involving particular status dimensions are prone to be stressful.

Nelson (1973) suggested that future research should examine the differential consequences of both objective and subjective inconsistency. He also proposed a four-part typology classifying individuals on the basis of objective/subjective consistency measures. Baer et al. (1976), applying Nelson's two suggestions to a sample of 234 graduates of a Western university, found differences between

consistents and inconsistent, confirming the importance of status inconsistency as an explanatory variable.

Baer et al. concluded that when interested in the effects of status inconsistency, logic demands that the respondents' perceptions of their own situations are vital and that a subjective measure of inconsistency should be incorporated into any analysis. The use of subjective measures, Baer et al. contended, minimizes the criticism that objective status inconsistency studies are unable to determine whether the effects are due to status inconsistencies or the effect of occupying a specific status position.

It has been suggested that theories of status consistency are intertwined with and not simply parallel to theories of cognitive consistency (Geschwender, 1967; Hornung, 1980; Hornung & McCullough 1977; House & Harkins, 1975). It is their contention that future empirical studies of status inconsistency should take cognitive dissonance into account.

Geschwender (1967) attempted to explain findings of earlier research within the framework of Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance. He cited, as the major weakness of earlier status inconsistency works, the use of inconsistency as a structural characteristic predicting behavioral consequences without an explicitly stated social-psychological theory of motivation to account for predictions. Drawing from the earlier cited theoretical approaches of Homans

(1961), Zaleznick et al. (1958), and Sampson (1963), Geschwender utilized status inconsistency as an independent variable to explain psychic stress which gives rise to a number of responses such as social isolation. In addition, Geschwender suggested that it is possible to incorporate the theory of distributive justice into Festinger's theory with the addition of a few assumptions. For example, every person has cognitions concerning their status level in a number of hierarchies including those of occupation, ethnic or race, and income. Further, each individual possesses cognitions defining investments and rewards and finally those which define the proper relation that should hold between investment and reward dimensions. Experiencing a state of felt injustice is reduced to experiencing cognitive dissonance resulting from inconsistency among the simultaneously held cognitions regarding investments and rewards. The empirical consequences of felt injustice may be seen as behavioral attempts to reduce dissonance.

Geschwender combined tenets from cognitive dissonance theory with Sampson's (1963) assumption that each status position carries with it expectations regarding behavior that should be demonstrated by the occupant of a status position or the behavior that should be directed toward them. Congruent sets of expectations facilitate the development of satisfying patterns of social interaction although incongruent sets impede the development of satisfying social

interaction. As a result, status inconsistency leads to the development of cognitive dissonance. Attempts to deal with inconsistency represent behavioral attempts to reduce dissonance. It was Geschwender's contention that the use of dissonance theory with specific theories of status inconsistency may enable explanation of the empirical consequences of status inconsistency which have been observed and to predict others not yet observed.

Life and Job Satisfaction

Life satisfaction, as a measure to reflect the effects of status congruence, was selected for use in this study in order to test the rationale that occupational status is a primary occupational indicator of individual well being. The importance of occupational status to individuals' assessments of their lives in general provided a foundation for the development and implementation of the longitudinal projects from which the data for this current study were drawn (Coleman, 1974).

The use of job satisfaction as a variable to measure differential internal and external occupational congruency effects follows as a direct and logical extension of the research problem. Although this measure has been used to test cognitive consistency (Orpen, 1974b), its use, in this context, was not found to be widespread in the literature. Since there appears to be no precedent for the measurement of status consistency strictly within different dimensions

of a single status indicator, occupation, the minimal use of occupational satisfaction as an outcome measure is not surprising.

The conceptualization of satisfaction has been a complicated issue. Although widely addressed in the literature, little, if any, consensus has emerged as to what the concept means or how, once defined, it should be measured (Burr, Leigh, Day, & Constantine, 1979).

Two points of view about the components of satisfaction appeared to dominate the literature. The first perspective suggested that definition and measurement of satisfaction should include not only an attitudinal or subjective component, but also an accompanying component which measures the congruence between an individual's expectations and levels of reward. Ascribing to this point of view, Porter and Lawler (1968) contended that instruments which only ask how satisfied an individual is with his or her life or job obscure the operation of these distinct components.

The second approach suggested that satisfaction is most appropriately viewed as a subjectively experienced phenomenon of pleasure versus displeasure and that satisfaction is most accurately assessed through subjective measures. This approach was typified by the work of Ivancevich and Donnelly (1968) who indicated that job satisfaction should be defined as a favorable viewpoint of the worker towards his or her job. Vroom (1968) suggested that satisfaction,

particularly job satisfaction, involved an affective orientation on the part of individuals.

In assessing the literature related to satisfaction, Burr et al. (1979) concluded that satisfaction is most appropriately understood as an intrapersonal phenomenon, and that the definition of satisfaction should be viewed as a subjective response. At the same time, Burr et al. believed, as did Vroom (1968), that congruence between identifiable expectations and rewards is correlated with an individual's sense of satisfaction. From this perspective, congruence between expectations and rewards should be viewed as one of the factors that influence, rather than define, satisfaction. Burr et al. further contended that the use of congruence as an empirical measure of satisfaction is a defensible research strategy. Such strategies, they pointed out, have been employed in family research by Blood and Wolfe (1960), and Christensen (1970). Burr et al. concluded that satisfaction should be defined in the tradition of Vroom and others, who viewed it as an individual, subjective response, and that attempts to operationalize the construct should involve its measurement as an ordinal level variable ranging from high levels of dissatisfaction to high levels of satisfaction.

Many of the issues which arose in relation to the conceptualization of satisfaction emerged in the literature related more specifically to job satisfaction. For example,

in spite of the large body of literature related to job satisfaction, there was little consensus about the nature of job satisfaction (Gruneberg, 1976). Traditional models of job satisfaction viewed it as the total body of feelings individuals have about their jobs. Where the total influences were positive, job satisfaction arose, and inversely, where the total influences were negative, job dissatisfaction arose. More recent literature suggested that job satisfaction must not only be viewed as an evaluation of aspects related to a job, but must also take into account, an individual's expectations and needs (Kasl, 1977; Kuhlen, 1976).

Kasl (1977) suggested that evaluations of job satisfaction should avoid interpretations which imply absolute rather than relative levels of satisfaction. It is possible, he asserted, to gain a better understanding of job satisfaction measures if they reflect what a person is used to and what his or her goals and hopes are for the job. Kasl further suggested that future work should focus on establishing the relationship of job satisfaction to life satisfaction. Most importantly, he contended, studies should also attempt to disentangle the influence of the multiple components which are incorporated into an individual's assessment of job satisfaction.

The Cantril ladder, the measurement of choice in this research, was developed by Cantril and Free, in connection

with a series of studies in 18 countries between 1958 and 1964 (Cantril, 1965). Individuals were asked to define, on the basis of their assumptions, perceptions, goals and values, the two extremes of an issue, such as good or bad, best or worst. Respondents were then shown a ladder, symbolic of what Cantril called the "ladder of life", and were asked to indicate where they stood on the ladder in relation to the issue in question. Although the data base from which this research was developed included a number of other satisfaction indices, the Cantril ladder evaluations were used because they appeared to resolve the methodological concern about placing assessments in the context of the respondents' own experiences.

Research Questions

The following research questions will be evaluated by the proposed study:

1. What is the effect of status congruence on job and life satisfaction perceptions of low-income Southern young adults?
2. Do these effects follow the pattern expected from a cognitive dissonance perspective; that is, are lower levels of life and job satisfaction associated with inconsistent or dissonant occupational aspirations and expectations? Further, does the cognitive dissonance perspective hold true for the discrepancies between respondents' ascribed status

levels and their achieved status levels; are lower levels of life and job satisfaction associated with discrepancies between ascribed and achieved status levels?

3. Are there differences in the manner in which internal and external occupational congruence affect job and life satisfaction? Do discrepancies in occupational aspirations and expectations affect life satisfaction differently than they do job satisfaction? Do discrepancies in ascribed and achieved status levels affect life satisfaction differently than they do job satisfaction?
4. What are the differential effects of race and sex on occupational congruence, and in turn on respondents' evaluations of their lives and jobs?

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Research Design

The present study involved post-hoc analyses of an existing longitudinal data base consisting of information collected during three waves over a period of ten years. A three-by-two factorial design was used in an attempt to differentiate the effects of internal and external occupational congruence on life and job satisfaction. This procedure was repeated three times; the first tested for effects on life satisfaction, the second on job satisfaction, and the third for the separate and combined effects on life and job satisfaction taken together.

Sampling Procedure

A stratified cluster purposive sampling procedure was utilized by each state in the regional project in an attempt to obtain a sample representative of the specific subcultural characteristics desired: Southern, low-income, rural and urban, black and white young people. First, sample communities were selected from rural and urban areas in seven Southeastern states (Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia). Rural subjects were selected who attended school in communities in counties or towns with populations of 2500 or less. Urban subjects

were selected from schools in cities of 50,000 or more population. Only economically depressed areas characterized by high unemployment and high levels of poverty were selected.

Stratification was accomplished through the selection of specific subpopulations (low-income, rural and urban, black and white). The cluster sample was drawn by selecting schools and then administering questionnaires to entire populations of fifth and sixth graders in those schools in 1969.

The purposive nature of the sampling procedure was justified by the Southern Regional Project S-63 in order to accomplish a first wave objective, that of comparing the occupational goals of young people from three Southern subcultures (Hall, 1979). Proctor (1974), the project statistician, explained the rationale for treating the above described sampling procedure as though it were random in order to meet requirements for statistical analysis as follows:

"A stratified sample design usually leads to greater internal diversity than a random sample, while clustering leads to the opposite. One could say that, in balance, the variance formulas for a simple random sample should thus be realistic."
(p.61)

Description of Respondents

Respondents for this study consisted of 524 young adults, ages 21-22, from whom completed questionnaires were obtained in 1979, during the third phase of data collection of the Southern Regional Research Project S-126. These young adults were originally selected from rural and urban

low-income subpopulations in the following six Southern states: Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. Of this 524, 181 were black, and 343 were white; 237 were male and 287 were female.

At the first contact, or baseline phase, data were collected from 1412 mother-child pairs. This study included only those subjects who were able to be recontacted and assessed both in 1975, and in 1979, and from whom complete information utilized in this study was obtained, a total of 524.

Nonrespondents

Over the course of this longitudinal effort there were inevitable losses of information due to subject attrition, that is, original subjects no longer in the study due to the inability to obtain completed questionnaires from them either in 1975, or in 1979. Turner (1983), whose study utilized the same data base as the present study, compared nonrespondents to respondents on several variables, assessed in 1969, to determine if there were significant differences between the study respondents and those who had been not been retained. Although no differences were found in occupational aspirations or occupational expectations, academic motivation, educational goals and significant other's influence, there were differences in family background and mental ability. Respondents' mean IQ score (91.85) was 6.8 points higher than nonrespondents' mean IQ score (85.05)

($p < .01$). In a similar direction, respondents' mean family background score (133.56) was 5.7 points higher than nonrespondents' mean family background score (127.82) ($p < .01$).

These differences between respondents and non-respondents have important implications for the present study. It is noteworthy that differences were found not in the attitudinal or psychological variables evaluated but in the structural or social variables. Since this study involved assessments of both components, caution was used in the interpretation of the influence of external occupational congruence because the sample may differ from the original subjects on the component variables. However, generalizations about findings on internal occupational congruence may be made with more confidence than can be placed in findings about external occupational congruence.

Data Collection Procedures

Assessments for the first two phases of this panel study were made using questionnaires which were administered in schools, in 1969, to entire classrooms of fifth and sixth graders, and in 1975, to the same young people who were then in eleventh and twelfth grades. Location procedures were used to find those who had dropped out of school by 1975, and interviews were conducted individually with those who were located. Mothers of the fifth and sixth graders were interviewed in their homes. In 1979, a mail questionnaire

method was used to recontact the original sample, who were, by then, 21 to 22 years of age.

Questionnaire construction and revision were completed jointly by the regional committee for all questionnaires. Pretesting, interviewer training and questionnaire administration procedures were designed and conducted to insure uniformity in data collection procedures across all states. Coding procedures were designed by the committee and coding was completed by each state. Subsamples were drawn and audits were made to assess coding accuracy. For each phase, coding of occupational aspirations and expectations was checked for uniformity, and in 1979, this occupational coding was completed at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Description of Variables

The two dependent variables to be examined in this study were life satisfaction and job satisfaction. The independent variables used were internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence. Control variables were race and sex.

Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction was measured as an ordinal level variable with ten possible ranks. This measure was a Cantril (1965) ladder in which the top position (9) represented the "best possible life for you" and the bottom position (0) represented the "worst possible life for you".

The respondents were asked to place themselves at the step on the ladder that represented their situation at that time.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction was measured identically to life satisfaction with a Cantril ladder in which the top position represented the best possible job for them and the bottom represented the worst possible job for them. The ladders were designed to measure the respondents' evaluations of their occupational positions or statuses, and current life situations at the time of the response. It differs from many measures of job and life satisfaction that assess respondents' current happiness with their present jobs or lives without the evaluative perspective enabled by the referent points of "best" and "worst".

Internal Occupational Congruence

Internal occupational congruence was a dichotomous variable based on the presence or absence of discrepancy between occupational aspiration scores and occupational expectation scores. To measure aspirations, young adult respondents were asked: "If you could choose any job you wanted, what kind of job would you really like to have in the future?" To measure expectations, they were asked: "What kind of job do you think you really will have in the future?" For both questions, they were prompted to describe clearly what they would do. The responses to both items were coded according to nine Bureau of the Census categories

of occupational prestige. These categories are as follows: (a) professional, technical, and kindred workers; (b) farmers (owners and tenants) and farm managers; (c) managers, officials, and proprietors except farm; (d) clerical, sales and kindred workers; (e) craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers; (f) operatives and kindred workers; (g) service and private household workers; (h) farm laborers and foremen; (i) laborers. These categories were collapsed and recoded into three status levels: high (a,b,c), moderate (d,e,f), and low (g,h,i).

Using 1979 data, respondents were classified as internally congruent with respect to occupational status if their aspired and expected occupational status levels, evaluated as low, moderate and high were identical. If their occupational status evaluations were discrepant, they were classified as status incongruent.

External Occupational Congruence

The variable of external occupational congruence was based on a comparison between the occupational status score of the head of household in the respondent's family of origin and his or her own expected occupational status score. The head of household scores utilized were obtained in the 1975 data collection phase by asking respondents, who were then 17 and 18 years of age, to describe their fathers' occupations. In the case of single parent families, mothers' occupational status scores were used.

The respondent's occupational status was measured by the Census coded representation of the job he or she expected to eventually have as assessed in 1979. This measure was believed to reflect a more accurate comparison measure of structural occupational congruence than would the respondents' occupational attainment level at age 21 or 22. At this stage of young adulthood, many were often either still in school or in some form of vocational training, and did not have an occupational status that would be a reflection of their current or future career paths. Because respondents could have had external occupational discrepancies in two directions, that is, they could have expected to attain either higher or lower occupational status levels than were their ascribed status levels, this variable was coded at three levels: own higher status, external congruence, and own lower status.

Control Variables

Two structural variables, race and sex, were used in this study as control variables because either of them could affect both independent and dependent measures. Race was measured as a nominal level variable with categories: black (1), and white (2). Sex was coded as follows: male (1), and female (2).

Hypotheses

Hypotheses developed on the basis of cognitive dissonance theory and research related to status inconsistency

were as follows:

Hypothesis 1. There will be significant differences in life satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence.

Hypothesis 2. There will be significant differences in job satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence.

Hypothesis 3. There will be significant differences in life and job satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence.

Analysis Procedures

A two-way analysis of covariance procedure was used to test for differences in life satisfaction scores between groups who were internally congruent and internally incongruent, and between groups who were externally congruent and externally incongruent. An identical procedure was used to test for differences in levels of job satisfaction. A final two-way multiple analysis of covariance was used to assess multiple and overlapping effects of internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence on job and life satisfaction taken together. In all analyses, the covariates used were race and sex. The .05 level of significance was used for testing hypotheses.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, results of the analyses used to test the relationships between internal occupational status congruence, external occupational status congruence, and life and job satisfaction among Southern low-income young adults are presented. The sample is described with respect to the variables used in this study, including the aforementioned independent and dependent measures, the components of these measures, and the control variables of sex and race.

Description of the SampleDemographic Information

There were 237 males and 287 females in this sample (Table 1). The majority of the sample were from a white, rural subculture (65.5 percent), and about 35 percent were black from both rural (19.8 percent) and urban (14.7 percent) regions. Over half of the members of this sample had ascribed occupational status levels which were moderate, in that the head of the household in their families of origin held moderate occupational status level jobs. Of the remaining members of the sample, 21.2 percent had high ascribed occupational status, and 23.3 percent had low ascribed occupational status. Because care was taken in the sampling procedure to obtain a low income population, the

Table 1
Description of the Sample

Variable	Value	N	%
Sex			
Male	1	237	45.2
Female	2	287	54.8
Total		524	100.0
Race			
Black	1	181	34.5
White	2	343	65.5
Total		524	100.0
Occupational Aspirations			
High	3	254	58.7
Moderate	2	128	29.6
Low	1	51	11.8
Total		433	100.0
Occupational Expectations			
High	3	136	37.0
Moderate	2	127	34.5
Low	1	105	28.5
Total		378	100.0
Ascribed Occupational Status			
High	3	83	21.2
Moderate	2	217	55.5
Low	1	91	23.3
Total		391	100.0
Internal Occupational Congruence			
Congruence	2	226	65.3
Incongruence	1	120	34.7
Total		346	100.0
External Occupational Congruence			
Own Higher Status	3	90	32.8
Congruence	2	112	40.9
Own Lower Status	1	72	26.3
Total		274	100.0
<hr/>			
Satisfaction Measures	Mean	Std Dev	N
Range: 0-9			
<hr/>			
Life Satisfaction	5.75	1.93	511
Job Satisfaction	4.42	2.20	511

high percentage of individuals with high ascribed occupational status levels might seem to be unusual. However, a check of the actual jobs of individuals with high occupational status indicated that farming, either as a manager or owner, was the occupation reported in almost every case.

Occupational Congruence

Almost 60 percent of the young adults in this sample aspired to high status level jobs (Table 1). About 30 percent of the respondents aspired to moderate level jobs and only 11.8 percent wanted jobs which were classified as low status. Generally, the occupational expectations of these young people were lower than their aspirations. Only 37 percent of this sample expected to attain high occupational status level jobs, with 34.5 percent expecting to hold moderate occupational status jobs, and 28.5 percent expecting to attain low status jobs.

Internal occupational congruence has been defined as consistency between occupational aspirations and expectations. Internal occupational incongruence refers to a discrepancy between occupational aspirations and expectations. Among this sample, almost two-thirds of the young adults were internally occupationally congruent; that is, they thought that they would attain jobs within the same broad occupational status level as the jobs they wanted. The remaining 35 percent of the sample were internally incongruent with respect to occupational status; that is, they did

not expect to attain jobs within the same status level of the job that they really wanted to have.

External occupational congruence was assessed as consistency between ascribed and expected occupational status. External occupational incongruence refers to a discrepancy between ascribed and predicted occupational status levels. Because respondents could have been discrepant in two directions, that is, they could have expected to attain either higher or lower occupational status levels than were their ascribed status levels, this variable was coded at three levels: own higher status, external congruence, and own lower status. Among this sample, 40.9 percent were externally congruent with respect to occupation. Among the remaining young adults, 32.8 percent expected higher and 26.3 percent expected lower occupational status attainment levels than their parents' occupational status levels, their ascribed status levels.

Satisfaction Measures

Both life and job satisfaction were measured using Cantril ladder scales with a ten-point range. The mean life satisfaction score, for this sample, was 5.75 which was slightly higher than mid-range (Table 1). The mean job satisfaction score, 4.42, was below the mid-point of the scale.

Occupational Congruence and Life Satisfaction

A two-way analysis of covariance was used to test Hypothesis 1: There will be significant differences in life satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence, and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence.

A classic ANOVA design was used with covariates, race and sex, entered first in the analysis. Group means for internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence are presented in Figure 1 and Table 2. No significant differences were found for the main effects of internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence (Table 3). Variation between levels of the independent variables, internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence, was not significantly different from variation within levels of these variables.

The combined and separate effects of covariates of race and sex were evaluated, with respect to the dependent variable of life satisfaction, before the main effects. Covariates, evaluated together, did not explain a significant amount of the variance in life satisfaction ($F=2.9$, $p=.06$). When evaluated separately, however, sex made a significant

Table 2
Life Satisfaction Mean Scores
by Internal and External Occupational Congruence

Occupational Congruence	Mean	N
Internal Occupational Congruence	5.90	164
Internal Occupational Incongruence	5.80	83
External Occupational Congruence	6.09	105
External Occupational Incongruence		
Own Higher Status	5.52	83
Own Lower Status	5.97	59

Internal Congruence by External Congruence

Occupational Congruence	<u>Internal Occupational Congruence</u>	
	Congruence Mean (N)	Incongruence Mean (N)
External Occupational Congruence		
Own Higher Status	5.31 (74)	7.22 (9)
Congruence	6.42 (64)	5.56 (41)
Own Lower Status	6.31 (26)	5.70 (33)

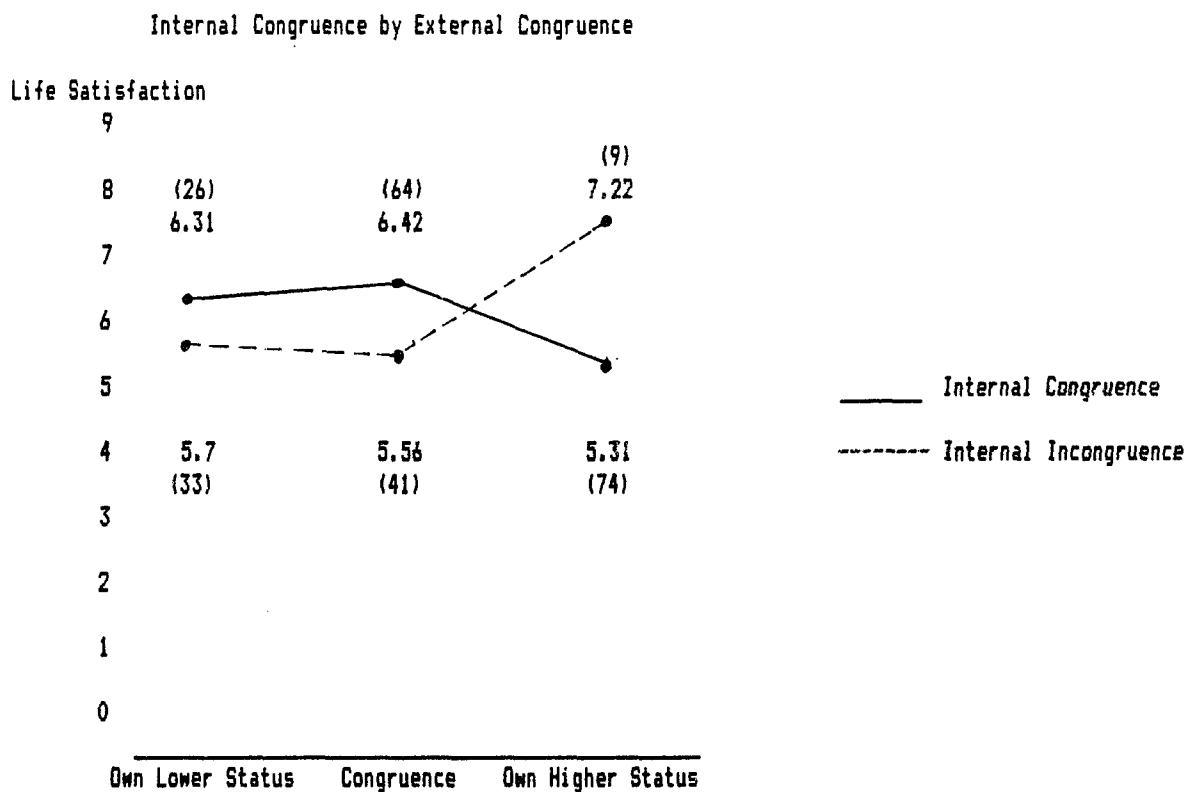
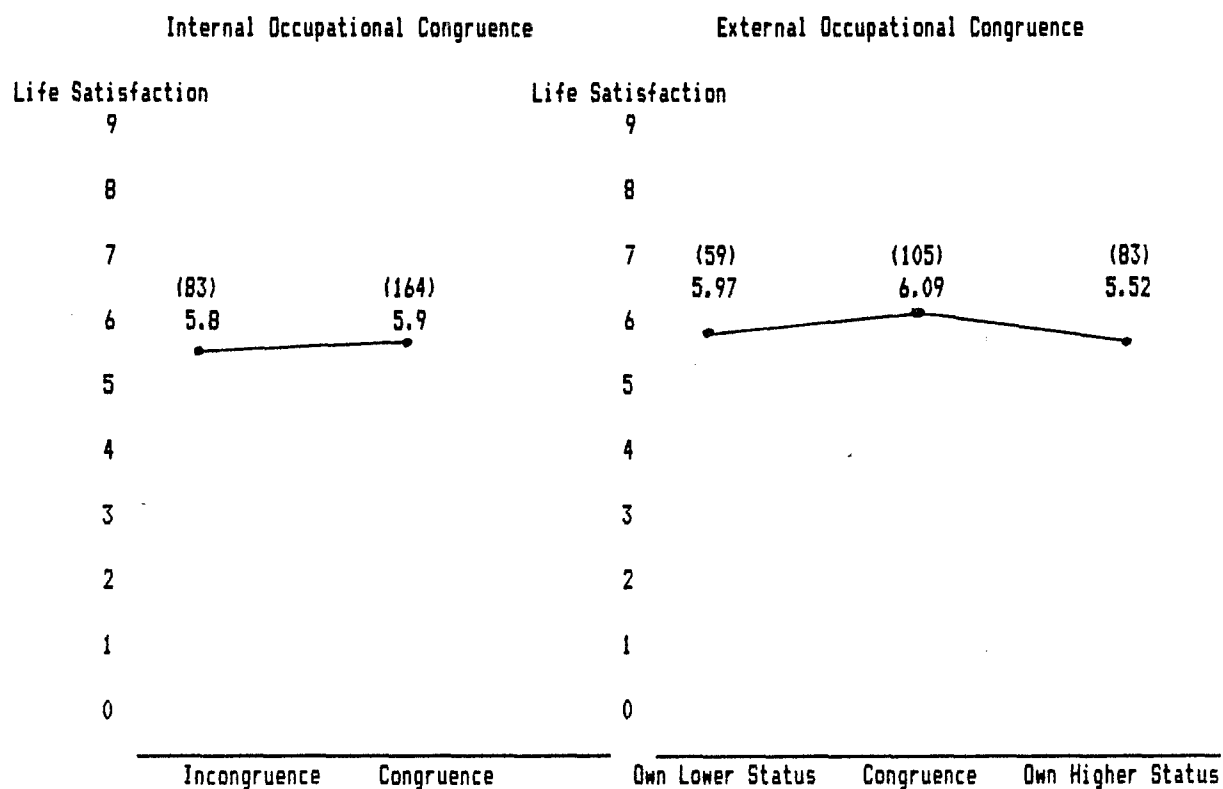


Figure 1. Group means of Life Satisfaction by Internal Occupational Congruence, External Occupational Congruence, and Internal Congruence by External Congruence

Table 3
 Analysis of Variance in Life Satisfaction
 by Internal and External Occupational Congruence
 with Sex and Race as Covariates

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Signif of F
Covariates	18.29	2	9.14	2.92	.06
Race	2.00	1	2.00	.64	.43
Sex	15.77	1	15.77	5.04	.03
Main Effects	19.44	3	6.48	2.07	.11
External Congruence	17.47	2	8.74	2.79	.06
Internal Congruence	6.58	1	6.58	2.10	.15
Interaction Effects	44.35	2	22.17	7.08	.001
External and Internal Congruence	44.35	2	22.17	7.08	.001
Explained Variance	82.08	7	11.73	3.74	.001
Residual Variance	748.52	239	3.13		
Total Variance	830.59	246	3.38		

Covariate Unstandardized Regression Coefficients

Race .15

Sex .51

contribution to the model ($p=.03$), but race did not. With a regression coefficient of .507, it is evident that the women in this sample had higher life satisfaction scores than did the men.

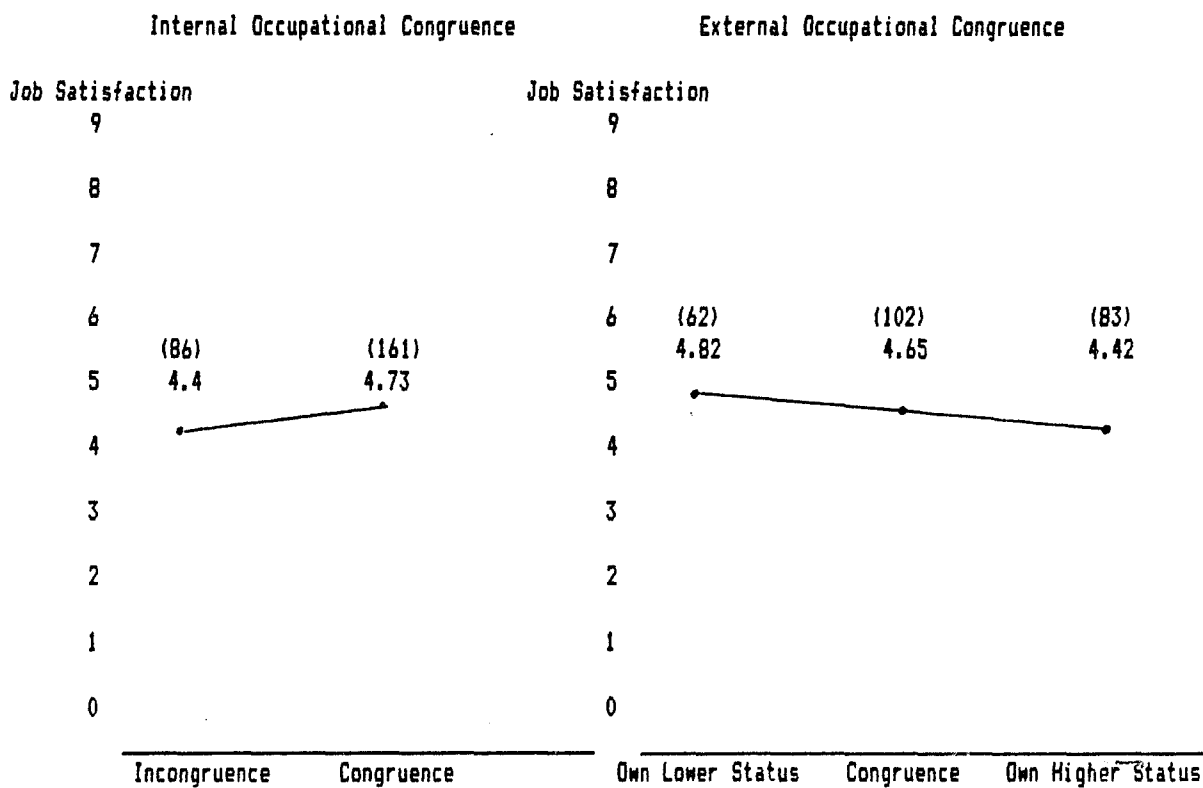
The interaction effects between internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence were statistically significant ($F=7.1$, $p=.001$). It was this interaction effect and the effect of the covariate, sex, which produced the overall significant F value for this model ($F=3.7$, $p=.001$). Even though there were significant interaction and covariate effects, Hypothesis 1 was rejected because it was not conclusively shown that the group means for either variable, internal occupational congruence or external occupational congruence, independently, were significantly different with respect to the dependent measure, life satisfaction.

In an examination of the interaction effects, the means for internal occupational congruence were higher than they were for internal occupational incongruence when they were combined with external occupational congruence or own lower status (Figure 1, Table 2). The mean for internal occupational congruence was lower than the mean for internal occupational incongruence when combined with external occupational incongruence which was due to own higher status.

Occupational Congruence and Job Satisfaction

A two-way analysis of covariance was used to test Hypothesis 2: There will be significant differences in job satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence.

As was the case with life satisfaction and occupational congruence, a classic ANOVA design was used with covariates, race and sex, entered first in the analysis. Group means for internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence, and interaction group means are presented in Figure 2 and Table 4. No significant differences in job satisfaction mean scores were found in the main effects for internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence ($F=1.44$, $p=.23$) (Table 5). The lack of significance in the main effects becomes obvious in examining Figure 2 in which the lines representing changes from one point, or condition, to another is almost horizontal to the x-axis, an indication of little difference between the two positions, and thus between the means of the two groups. The analysis of job satisfaction in relation to the covariates of race and sex showed no significant influence on the part



Internal Congruence by External Congruence

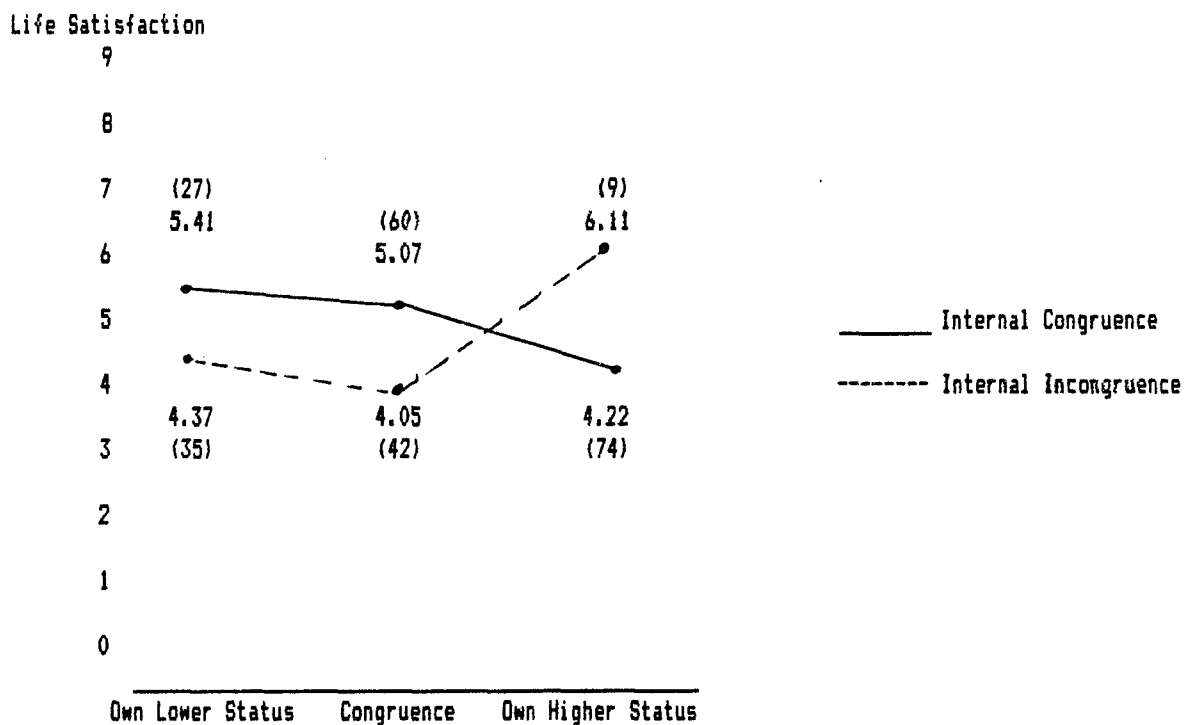


Figure 2. Group means of Job Satisfaction by Internal Occupational Congruence, External Occupational Congruence, and Internal Congruence by External Congruence

Table 4
 Job Satisfaction Mean Scores
 by Internal and External Occupational Congruence

Occupational Congruence	Mean	N
Internal Occupational Congruence	4.73	161
Internal Occupational Incongruence	4.40	86
External Occupational Congruence	4.65	102
External Occupational Incongruence		
Own Higher Status	4.42	83
Own Lower Status	4.82	62

Internal Congruence by External Congruence

Occupational Congruence	Internal Occupational Congruence	
	Congruence Mean (N)	Incongruence Mean (N)
External Occupational Congruence		
Own Higher Status	4.22 (74)	6.11 (9)
Congruence	5.07 (60)	4.05 (42)
Own Lower Status	5.41 (27)	4.37 (35)

Table 5
 Analysis of Variance in Job Satisfaction
 by Internal and External Occupational Congruence
 with Sex and Race as Covariates

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Signif of F
Covariates	5.17	2	2.59	.57	.57
Race	3.67	1	3.67	.81	.37
Sex	1.25	1	1.25	.28	.60
Main Effects	19.49	3	6.50	1.44	.23
External Congruence	10.55	2	5.28	1.17	.31
Internal Congruence	15.59	1	15.59	3.45	.07
Interaction Effects	54.79	2	27.40	6.06	.003
External and Internal Congruence	54.79	2	27.40	6.06	.003
Explained Variance	79.45	7	11.35	2.51	.002
Residual Variance	1081.01	239	4.52		
Total Variance	1160.46	246	4.72		

Covariate Unstandardized Regression Coefficients

Race	.21
Sex	.14

of either variable.

Even though the overall explained variance for this model was statistically significant ($p < .05$), due to the contribution of interaction effects, Hypothesis 2 was rejected because there was no conclusive evidence of differences in job satisfaction due to the independent influence of internal occupational congruence or external occupational congruence. The pattern of these interaction effects was similar to that found in the analysis of life satisfaction (Figure 2). Internal incongruence and respondent's own higher status had a higher mean score than did internal congruence and own higher status. A reversal of this condition occurred with respect to internal incongruence and respondent's own lower status, and internal incongruence and external congruence, whose means were lower than those for internal congruence and own lower status, and internal congruence and external congruence.

Occupational Congruence and Life and Job Satisfaction

A two-way multiple analysis of covariance was used to test Hypothesis 3:

There will be significant differences in life satisfaction and job satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who

have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence.

This analysis was performed in order to assess group differences which separate ANOVAs may have failed to detect due to overlapping influences of the dependent variables. MANOVA is a procedure used to analyze the relationships between a group of two or more dependent variables and a group of two or more independent variables (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Grablowsky, 1979). MANOVA allows for the simultaneous analysis of all variables under study, as well as for the analysis of the interrelationships among them. In this particular case, it allowed for the possibility that the previous ANOVAs failed to detect a relationship between the independent variables and job satisfaction or life satisfaction, separately, which may have been present when job satisfaction and life satisfaction were considered simultaneously. The inverse may also have been possible; that is, separate ANOVAs may have indicated significant differences, in this case interaction and covariate effects, which MANOVA procedures may not have substantiated as occurring when all variables were considered together.

The results of the MANOVA procedure failed to provide any information substantially different from that found in the results of the separate ANOVAs. Hypothesis 3, therefore, was rejected. Wilk's Lambda, the statistic of choice in this procedure, did not reach statistical significance in

the multivariate analysis of this model (Table 6). As was the case with the separate ANOVAs, interaction effects between internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence were statistically significant ($p=.002$). Unlike the ANOVA with respect to life satisfaction, the covariate of sex was not significant either in the total model or the separate multivariate analysis of sex in relationship to life satisfaction.

The pattern of interaction effect of internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence with respect to life satisfaction when using the ANOVA procedure was identical to the interaction effect related to job satisfaction. There was no rationale, therefore, for further investigation of the interaction effects found using the MANOVA procedure since the pattern of relationships had already been established.

Discussion of Results

The findings of no significant main effects using ANOVAs or MANOVA provide evidence that neither internal occupational congruence nor external occupational congruence was uniquely associated with life satisfaction or with job satisfaction. That is, there was as much variation within groups, or levels of the independent variables, as there was between groups. Significant differences in life satisfaction were found with respect to sex, used as a covariate, when life satisfaction was evaluated in a separate two-way

Table 6
Multiple Analysis of Variance in Life and Job Satisfaction
by Internal and External Occupational Congruence
with Sex and Race as Covariates

Source of Variation	Wilks Lambda	Multip. F	DF	Signif of F
Within Cells Regression	.98	.98	4	.42
External Congruence	.98	1.07	4	.37
Internal Congruence	.99	1.46	2	.23
External Congruence by Internal Congruence	.93	4.24	4	.002

MANOVA Regression Analysis

Source of Variation	Depend. Var.	B	T	Signif of T
Covariates	Life Sat			
Race		.06	.30	.76
Sex		.43	1.85	.07
Covariates	Job Sat			
Race		.16	.66	.51
Sex		.17	.60	.55
Independent Variables	Life Sat			
External Congruence				
Parameter 1		-.07	-.35	.72
Parameter 2		-.10	-.57	.57
Internal Congruence		.06	.40	.69
External Congruence by Internal Congruence				
Parameter 3		-.35	-1.79	.07
Parameter 4		-.49	-2.76	.006
Independent Variables	Job Sat			
External Congruence				
Parameter 1		-.00	-.01	.99
Parameter 2		-.33	-1.54	.13
Internal Congruence		-.02	-.12	.90
External Congruence by Internal Congruence				
Parameter 3		-.40	-1.67	.10
Parameter 4		-.51	-2.40	.02

analysis of covariance. Whereas it is not possible to identify reasons for these differences using the data in the current study, information examined in the Boyd (1984) study suggested that some of the females in this sample indeed had a very high assessment of their present lives but anticipated little change in the future. On the other hand, the males in this group did not follow this pattern; they were more likely to have expressed lower levels of present life satisfaction but anticipated increased levels of life satisfaction in the future. The findings of significant interaction effects in each of the three analyses, and the similar pattern of these interactions in the two ANOVAs, suggest that a further investigation of the interrelationships between the two variables of internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence would be useful in understanding their combined influence on assessments of life satisfaction as well as job satisfaction.

This research parallels the work of Nelson (1973) and Baer et al. (1976) in its use of both subjective and objective measures of status inconsistency. The findings of significant interaction effects, despite nonsignificant separate effects, support the utility of using subjective measures. In the case of the present research, it was the combination of the subjective measure, of internal occupational congruence, and the objective measure, of external occupational congruence, that produced variation between

groups with respect to life satisfaction and job satisfaction measures. For this sample, respondents' own higher status in combination with discrepancies in occupational aspirations and expectations was associated with higher levels of life satisfaction and job satisfaction than was any other combination of internal and external occupational congruence, or any single assessment of congruence. In contrast, respondents' own lower status in combination with congruence in occupational aspirations and expectations was also associated with higher levels of life satisfaction and job satisfaction. These findings are apparently contradictory, but without further investigation utilizing other potentially explanatory variables in combination with the ones used in this study, no explanation is obvious.

Methodological Considerations

There are several methodological issues which are pertinent to the discussion of the nonsignificant main effects of status congruence on life and job satisfaction. The selection of categorical measures for internal status congruence and incongruence, and external status congruence and incongruence, was made in connection with a larger collaborative effort of which this research is a part (Boyd, 1984). In these projects, the attempt was made, not only to investigate the importance of these two constructs, but to elaborate them, in conjunction with the variable of occupational status, as a status/status-congruence typology. The

typology was developed for the purpose of elaborating, through the extensive data base available, the associations between the combination of typology components and personal, family and environmental descriptors which reflected aspects related to the development of these young adults from preadolescence to young adulthood. Typological components necessarily derive from discrete categories, thereby imposing the prerequisite for a nominal type of measure on this research if cohesiveness between the two studies was to be maintained.

The result of using categorical measures for the two independent variables, internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence, was the inability to quantify congruence in terms of degree of discrepancy. In measuring occupational status, a component of both internal and external occupational congruence, arbitrary cut off points were designated determining category boundaries. Although these boundaries have conceptual integrity, they remained collapsed into three rather than nine or ninety ranks which would have allowed for greater variation. The variable could then have been measured in terms of degree of discrepancy between occupational status codes, rather than presence or absence of a condition. Analysis procedures, such as multiple regression, using rank level independent variables may have been a methodological improvement if a maximum degree of explained variance in the dependent variable had

been the primary research goal. In this project, however, explanation of variance was only part of the goal. Given the demonstration of the salience of the concepts of internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence, through this project and the Boyd project, an effort to refine measurement of the variables is a next step.

A related issue with respect to internal occupational incongruence, was the lack of information about what the respondent may have perceived to be discrepant with respect to his or her aspirations and expectations. Since this study was ex post facto in nature, respondents could not be asked if the difference between their aspirations and expectations produced a sense of inconsistency. It is conceivable that, even within the same occupational status level, a respondent could feel a sense of inconsistency, and therefore could be subjectively incongruent with respect to occupational status. It is also possible that a respondent, who was determined to be internally incongruent, would not perceive him or herself to be so. A perceptual measure of internal occupational congruence could account for perceived discrepancy and serve as an accompaniment to the objective measure of discrepancy.

One finding, related to the interaction effects, which may be suspect due to status classifications was the association of one's own lower status and internal occupational congruence with relatively high life and job satisfaction

levels. Being classified as externally incongruent on the basis of "own lower status" resulted from a family ascribed status level higher than the respondent's own status level. There are two possible interpretations of this finding. First, the ascribed status levels classified as high were examined to validate their inclusion in the sample, which purports to be a low income population. As has been mentioned, in almost every case these high ascribed statuses were assigned to jobs that were farm owner or farm manager. Therefore, it is possible that a respondent who expected to be a bricklayer or an electrician did not consider his or her status to be discrepant from family status. In this case, the respondent would not perceive himself or herself as being externally incongruent. It is possible that this external congruence in combination with internal congruence, indicating consistency between the respondent's own aspirations and expectations, was responsible for the findings of high life satisfaction and high job satisfaction. The addition of a subjective measure of external occupational congruence may provide yet another contribution to the model.

Although significant main effects were not found, the direction of influence was as expected and, given the measurement limitations, was substantial enough to warrant further consideration. The association of internal occupational congruence with job satisfaction, as well as that of

external occupational congruence with life satisfaction, at levels approaching statistical significance ($p=.06$, $p=.07$) (Tables 3 and 5), confirm the direction and nature of the influences anticipated. The possibility of an individual, whose profile was one of external occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, having high levels of life satisfaction and low job satisfaction was introduced earlier in this text. This finding is not inconceivable, given the results of this research which link, albeit weakly, external congruence with life satisfaction, but not associating it with job satisfaction, and at the same time link internal congruence with job satisfaction, but not with life satisfaction. Life satisfaction was found to have a moderate correlation with job satisfaction ($r=.46$). This relationship was substantial enough to account for similar patterns found in the interaction relationships, and the insignificant multivariate analysis of variance; and yet it was weak enough to allow for the separate associations between life satisfaction and external occupational congruence, and between job satisfaction and internal occupational congruence.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between occupational status congruence among Southern low-income young adults and their evaluations of their current lives and jobs. Status congruence was investigated from two perspectives, internal occupational status congruence and external occupational status congruence. External occupational status congruence referred to consonance between respondents' expected occupational status and their ascribed occupational status which was based on the occupational status of the respondents' fathers or mothers. Internal occupational status congruence was defined as consistency between respondents' occupational aspirations and expectations measured when they were 21 or 22 years of age.

The data for this study came from Southern Regional Research Projects 63 and 126, cooperative efforts among the Agricultural Experiment Stations in six Southern states. Data were gathered over a period of ten years, in three waves of collection, in 1969, 1975, and 1979. The sampling procedure was a stratified, cluster technique which yielded a purposive sample consisting of 524 young adults. The sample was composed of those young adults who had been able to be recontacted in each of the three time periods, and

from whom complete questionnaires were obtained.

An ex post facto, two by three, factorial design was utilized in order to differentiate the effects of internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, as well as external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence on life satisfaction. External occupational incongruence was operationalized as own higher status and own lower status. The analysis procedure used was a two-way analysis of covariance, with race and sex as covariates. A second analysis, identical to the first procedure, was completed utilizing job satisfaction as the dependent measure. A third and final analysis was conducted using a two-way multivariate analysis of covariance in order to assess the effects of the independent variables, and the covariates, on life and job satisfaction simultaneously.

Three hypotheses were tested using the analysis procedures outlined above. These hypotheses and their results are listed below:

1. There will be significant differences in life satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence. Hypothesis 1 was rejected because no significant main effects were found for

internal occupational congruence or external occupational congruence.

A significant covariate effect was found for sex in the direction of females having higher assessments of their lives than did the males in this sample. There were significant interaction effects between internal and external occupational congruence. Unexpected findings occurred with respect to the condition of own higher status when combined with internal occupational congruence or with internal occupational incongruence. For this sample, being internally congruent, that is, expecting to achieve one's own occupational goals, and being externally incongruent, in this case, having own higher status, was associated with the lowest life satisfaction mean score.

2. There will be significant differences in job satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence. Hypothesis 2 was rejected because no significant main effects were found for internal occupational congruence or external occupational congruence. Interaction effects, similar to those for life satisfaction, were found in the analysis of job satisfaction. However, in the case of job satisfaction there were no significant covariate effects.

3. There will be significant differences in life satisfaction and job satisfaction mean scores between groups who have been defined as having internal occupational congruence and internal occupational incongruence, and between groups who have been defined as having external occupational congruence and external occupational incongruence. Hypothesis 3 was rejected because no significant multivariate effects were found for the combination of life and job satisfaction with respect to internal occupational congruence, external occupational congruence, or with the covariates, race and sex.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are presented based on the findings from the present study:

1. The combination of internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence significantly affected respondents' evaluations of their lives at young adulthood.

2. The combination of internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence significantly affected respondents' evaluations of their jobs at young adulthood.

3. Neither internal occupational congruence nor external occupational congruence had significant independent influence on the assessments of life satisfaction by this sample of young adults.

4. Neither internal occupational congruence nor external occupational congruence had significant independent

influence on the assessments of job satisfaction by this sample of young adults.

5. The females in this sample had significantly higher evaluations of their lives at young adulthood than did the males.

6. The interaction effects of internal congruence with external occupational congruence with respect to life satisfaction and job satisfaction, although significant, were difficult to explain conceptually in that they did not follow hypothesized directions based on cognitive consistency literature, or cognitive dissonance theory.

7. The findings of this study, both in terms of main effects and interaction effects of the independent variables with respect to the dependent variables, provided no obvious confirmation of a cognitive dissonance perspective.

8. Confirmation of a combination of subjective and objective perspectives in measuring status consistency was provided by the significant interaction effects of the subjective and objective independent measures with respect to both dependent variables.

9. Methodological difficulties, reported by critics of research using status inconsistency as an independent variable, were also encountered in this study when discrepancies in occupational status, both subjective and objective, were operationalized.

10. The findings of significant contributions to both life satisfaction and job satisfaction by occupational congruence, when internal and external components were evaluated jointly, provided confirmation of an underlying objective of this research. This objective was to offer a conceptual perspective which would expand the predominant status-attainment approach to the study of occupation.

11. With consideration to the limitations imposed by the losses of information due to subject attrition, the findings of this study can be generalized to the population of Southern young adults from low-income backgrounds.

Recommendations

The major recommendation for further research efforts, based on the approach of this research and the subsequent findings, is for the expansion of the traditional, status-attainment approach to the study of occupation to include the concepts of internal occupational congruence and external occupational status congruence. Since occupational status-attainment study generally uses occupational status-attainment as a single outcome measure, it is suggested that a model including multiple dependent measures would increase both the quality, and usefulness, of the information obtained from the study of occupational development. Prior to the development of such a model, further understanding of the nature and importance of the variables of internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence

as independent measures is needed. This recommendation is based on the perspective that it is necessary in the development of a construct of occupational influence to include consideration of components which contribute to the overall satisfaction or well being of the population.

In developing future research in the area of status/status-congruence it is necessary to design a truly subjective measure of internal occupational congruence which would complement, as well as validate, existing measures of internal congruence. Although the present study used the best measure available given the ex post facto nature of the research, it was not possible to evaluate the respondents' perceptions about what constituted a discrepancy between their aspirations and expectations. In a study in which one of the specific purposes was to evaluate internal occupational congruence, it may be possible to directly assess the effects of a discrepancy between an individual's occupational aspirations and expectations, when present, as an intervening variable mediating the effects of discrepancies between aspirations and expectations on dependent measures such as life satisfaction and job satisfaction. In much the same manner, it may also be possible to supplement the information about the effects of external occupational congruence through the development of a subjective measure which would assess respondents' perceptions about the presence or absence of discomfort created by differences

between their achieved occupational statuses and their ascribed occupational statuses.

It is apparent from the difficulty in conceptualizing the pattern of interaction between internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence that further research is necessary to explicate these findings. A cognitive dissonance perspective cannot be ruled out as an explanatory source for the unusual pattern of responses to apparent consonance or dissonance between aspirations and expectations when they are combined with structural inconsistencies or consistencies. The pattern of responses may have been related to dissonance reduction or compensation, or conversely, they could have been associated with the inability to reduce tension created by discrepancies related to occupational status attainment.

An important step in resolving a number of issues related to the study of occupational influence using a perspective which includes occupational congruence as a component, would be to begin with a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of occupational congruence. This exploratory work is necessary in order to validate the usefulness of the concepts of internal occupational congruence and external occupational congruence either separately or jointly. The results of the present study suggest a joint influence, but do not rule out the potential for

separate influence given the differential, though nonsignificant, effects of occupational congruence on satisfaction measures.

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