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ADMINISTRATOR FRUSTRATION IN A COMMUNITY COLLEGE

by

© LYNELL O. KORELLA

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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ABSTRACT

A review of literature on frustration revealed a plethora of theories concentrating on a variety of behavioral outcomes. Frustration has been treated as a state of feeling within an individual, as a hypothetical construct, and as an intervening variable. Literature dealing with frustration in organizations has also tended to concentrate on behavioral outcomes resulting from goal blockages.

The major purpose of this study was to identify the sources, immediate effects, and consequences of administrator frustration in a community college in the Province of Alberta. The study, therefore, examined frustration in relation to various job functions administrators perform at a community college. The entire complement of twenty-two administrators at the college was surveyed by means of an interview guide and a questionnaire, both specifically designed for the present study. Faculty members were also surveyed by questionnaire to determine the extent of perceptual differences between administrators and faculty on the various aspects of frustration.

Data were collected in three areas corresponding to the major purposes of the study. First, data were collected on the sources of job related frustration for administrators. It was reported by administrators that most sources of frustration originated from the interpersonal relations

associated with the administrative role rather than being task, resources, or technology related. Further, the superordinate was identified as the most likely contributor to the interpersonal frustration experienced by the administrator.

Second, data were collected on immediate effects of administrator job related frustration. These effects were occasionally found to be negative, such as anger or withdrawal behavior, when the administrator experienced unanticipated blockage in attaining a desired goal or when the administrator experienced undue difficulty in resolving the blockage. When the blockage could be successfully resolved, however, the immediate effects of frustration for the administrator were found to be positive. These positive effects were reported to consist of more creative and increased energy directed to the task. Administrators at the college generally experienced successes in blockage resolution and were comfortable with the level of frustration in their jobs.

Finally, data were collected on the consequences of job related frustration for various individuals and groups within the college. Work group members were found to be very supportive of the administrator who was experiencing frustration, more so than were superordinates and significant others in the college. Work group members were also found to be more affected both negatively and positively by administrator frustration than were other individuals or groups within the college. The study determined that there was a need for a college-wide process to manage administrator frustration. Such a process might include provisions for more timely response by senior administration, better administrator support by the immediate superordinate, and more professional development for administrators.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Much of what has been written about the behavior of administrators in organizations is beset with controversy. Unfortunately, the relationships between theory and research, theory and practice, and research and practice are not clearly identified in the literature. Therefore, considerable latitude exists for those who wish to study the interaction among theory, research, and practice. Some of this latitude has been used by researchers in the field of education to deal with issues involving the individual in organizational settings. It is a truism that individuals have different needs, desires, and goals. Administrators are faced with having to integrate their own individual need characteristics with the needs and goals of the organization to ensure effective functioning. What makes the effecting of this integration particularly challenging is the range of difficult choices which the administrator must make between his own expectations and those expectations of his role arising from significant others. These choices impinge on the structures, technologies, and tasks needed to accomplish the mission of the organization. They also bring to light differences in the manner in which individual members and work units view the roles of management as well as the operations and goals of the organization. Frustrations seem a natural result of such processes.

Frustration in organizations seems to have become an inevitable feature of organizational life and has been viewed as a price administrators pay to obtain cooperation among various interest groups in order to achieve the complex goals which such cooperation engenders. The development of structures and policies which address the unintended consequences of frustration provide examples of a point of view which conceives of frustration as playing a dysfunctional role in an organization.

Perhaps less well-recognized are the benefits. Frustration may play a stimulating role in organizational life by maintaining an optimal level of arousal and activity among organizational members, thereby contributing to the innovative process. It may also serve to provoke feedback to the management about existing difficult relationships, needed changes, and other related issues that demand attention for effective functioning.

It is necessary then for the administrator to appreciate the functional as well as dysfunctional aspects of frustration and to become aware of how his/her job performance is affected by both.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to investigate the sources of job related frustration for administrators in a community college, the immediate effects of this frustration and the institutional consequences of the job related frustration. After a review of the literature pertaining to this problem was completed, a case study approach to the problem was used.

The basic assumptions underlying the case study design were that administrators experience job related frustration in response to frustrators from particular sources inside the college. These frustrators have some immediate effects on the administrator which, in turn, have consequences both for groups and for individuals within the college milieu. This rationale assumes that administrator behavior is changed when frustration is a part of any particular situation.

Objectives of the Study

The following statements describe more accurately the nature and objectives of the present study. The study was designed to:

1. determine the sources of administrator job related frustration as it applies to operations within a community college environment; this phase of the research focused on

    a. an identification of job areas where frustration had occurred,

    b. an identification of those job events causing the greatest amount of administrator frustration,

    c. the frequency of experienced frustration;

2. determine the immediate effects of experienced job related frustration for administrators within a community college environment; this phase of the study explored

    a. the types of immediate reactions by

administrators both to specific and general sources of frustration,

b. the relationships of job related frustration to administrator productivity,

c. the nature of administrator reactions to varying levels of frustration,

d. the perceptions of administrator comfort or discomfort when experiencing job related frustration,

e. the stability of administrator reactions to frustration over time;

3. determine the consequences of administrator job related frustration for various individuals and referent groups within the community college; this phase of the study examined

   a. administrator perceptions of the support received from their work groups, superordinates, and significant others in the college setting,

   b. the positive and negative consequences of administrator frustration for these cohort groups,

   c. the actions taken by the college in coming to grips with the problem of job related frustration affecting administrators,

   d. administrator perceptions of the actions which the college could ideally have taken to address administrator job related frustration.

In summary, the aim of the study was to explore the various sources, immediate effects, and consequences of administrator job related frustration in a community college setting.

Significance of the Study

Frustration appears to be a natural consequence of human activity.[5] When people are brought together in groups at work, their individual aspirations are put aside or submerged in the group will. When aspirations are set aside, the attainment of individual goals is delayed. This may engender a sense of frustration. The fabric of any organization is fraught with incidents of unmet personal aspirations which can in turn cause frustration in the organization. Job roles and their associated job descriptions are subject to varying interpretations and an administrator may feel the contradictions and pressures from the differing expectations that others have for the way his job is to be performed. These conflicting expectations may also produce incidents of frustration. Perhaps because frustration has been associated with constructs such as conflict and stress, a clear focus on frustration as a separate concept has not developed. As a result, frustration has tended to be ignored in the organization setting until recently, although the frustration construct was recognized and researched early in the century. The renewed interest in the effects of frustration, as it applies to organizations, is a recognition of the part it plays in work life.

Many individuals perceive frustration as playing an important part in organizational settings. Administrators have recognized its effects on the performance and job satisfaction of organizational members. The domino effect of frustration has also been recognized: some individuals experience frustration as a consequences of others' experiencing frustration and so on. In those situations where frustration has occurred, performance seems to change

(Spector 1975). This change may have important implications for an organization.

There is a need to examine more closely the antecedents and consequences of frustration in organizations, particularly at the middle administrative level where administrative and operational personnel interact. The middle level administrator is often caught between conflicting role expectations in the organization. Many times these expectations conflict merely as a result of the administrator's location in the organization. As a result, an examination of the consequences of the frustration caused by those conflicting expectations concerning the behavior of the administrator in performing his job would seem to be justified.

A study of frustration in organizations should serve to expand the rather limited research findings in the area. Using past research and theoretical constructs in this field as a starting point, an examination of frustration in organizations may make possible the practical application of some already established theories. In addition, it could serve to help determine the relationship of related constructs such as stress and conflict to frustration. Finally, research on administrators should yield insights into the unique nature of their tasks as these are affected by frustration.

Nature of the Study

The community college which served as a basis for this case study may not be regarded as a typical community college. The college had experienced some years of organizational disruption not unlike many other contemporary colleges. A series of changes among upper level administrative personnel culminating in the resignation of the college president together with protracted faculty-administration friction had created an organizational climate that seemed particularly appropriate for a study on administrator frustration.

Current upper level administrators at the college, eager to understand better some of the frustrators which contributed to past upheavals, recommended approval of the study to all concerned groups. In this participatory milieu approval was secured from the other administrators in the college and from faculty groups.

The data collection procedures endorsed by the participating college included an interview guide designed for use with all administrators and two questionnaires, one to be completed by the administrative personnel and the other by faculty members.

Two concerns seemed particularly important in relation to the nature of the study. The first was that the recollections by middle level administrators of events which had occurred during the tenure of the previous senior administrators might be less than complete and secondly, that a reluctance to share significant events with an uninvolved outsider researcher might yield data which were superficial in nature.

With respect to the first concern the following points are relevant.

1. Past events which were particularly frustrating would stand out, that is, they would become sharpened. Events which were less frustrating and therefore of less concern would not likely be addressed by the respondents.

2. The requested data collected from the administrators and members of faculty were limited to the previous academic year and should ostensibly be most fresh in the minds of participants.

The second concern was addressed in the following manner.

1. In the process of interviewing, the interviewer would probe the events sufficiently that administrators would become caught up in the process and reveal more than superficial data.

2. In the process of trying to make a non-participant understand their experiences, administrators would tend to unfold a greater portion of their private thoughts.

3. All administrators had been briefed in committee and willingly consented to participate in the study.

It is appropriate, with final regard to the nature of the case study, to identify some advantages inherent in the research design.

1. The nature of the decision making process at the college allowed for willing participation by all administrators. The researcher, therefore, had full access to each administrator during an appointed time.

2. Because the researcher was familiar with the Alberta college system, much of the internal organizational structure and policy implementation process in the college did not have to be learned in order to make data interpretation meaningful.

3. The change in administrative styles which

accompanied the recent change in upper level administrators gave participants a frame of reference against which to assess their experiences.

4. The fact that the events of concern in the present study were associated with the previous administrative structure was probably less threatening to respondents during data collection than it would otherwise have been.

Assumptions

This study is based on the following assumptions:

1. The perceptions and recollections of respondents associated with variables in the study area are valid means for measuring these variables.
2. Frustration in organizations can be treated, for research purposes, as situations which are perceived by individuals to impede or block goal attainment.

Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited in the following ways:

1. The study involved a community college in Alberta.
2. The study was delimited to the administrative and faculty groups at that college.
3. The study was delimited to sources, immediate effects, and consequences of job related frustration for administrators at the college.

Limitations of the Study

The following are limitations of the study:

1. The study was limited by the ability and willingness of the respondents to recall and report events accurately as well as their own reactions to these events.
2. The study was limited by the restricted amount of theory and research on frustration in organizations which influenced the preparation of the data gathering instruments used.
3. The study was limited by the questionnaire returns from the faculty group. Slightly over half of the faculty members (52.5%) returned completed

questionnaires.

4. The study was limited by the absence of non-academic staff member participation which resulted in the work group perception being limited to nine academic administrators.

5. The study was limited by its focus on a single community college.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

To facilitate the reading of this report of the study, definitions are presented in the first chapter. The following terms appear in the body of the study and were provided mainly from the work of Chaplin (1968).

Adaptation - A state of decreased sensitivity or the development of a level of tolerance.

Aggression - A hostile action directed against a person or a thing.

Conflict - The simultaneous occurrence of two or more mutually antagonistic or desirable motives, impulses, needs, roles, or expectations so as to require a choice. Conflict may be internal or external to the individual.

Dissatisfaction - The lack of congruence between individual needs and expectations, both internal and external to the individual.

Drive - An internal state said to initiate goal-seeking behavior.

Fixation - A persistent model of behavior which has become inappropriate.

Frustration - An intervening variable which relates the blocking or thwarting of goal-directed behaviors (frustrators), as an antecedent event, to a class of consequent behaviors such as aggression, regression, fixation and increased arousal.

Functional fixedness - A tendency toward inflexiblity in problem solving with an object being used in one way only.

Intermittent reinforcement - Any pattern of reinforcement which is not continuous.

Regression - A return to earlier levels of development.

Resignation -A state of passive acceptance or acquiescence.

Role - An individual's function in a group or institution.

Schedule of reinforcement - A program determining when a subject will be reinforced according to time or response number.

Stress - A state of physical or psychological strain.

Withdrawal - The abandonment of goal seeking behavior.

SUMMARY

The study essentially attempted to determine what the sources of frustration for administrators at a community college actually were as reported by administrators. Further, the study examined the immediate effects of these job related frustrators on the administrator and the consequences of administrator job related frustration for various individuals and groups within the college environment.

OVERVIEW OF THE REMAINING CHAPTERS

In Chapter 2, a review of literature pertinent to the development of a conceptual framework for the study and the research design are presented.

Chapter 3 details the conceptual framework underpinning the study together with the instrumentation and the specific data procedures utilized.

Chapter 4 presents the findings relating to the various sources of job related frustration affecting administrators in the community college.

Chapter 5 details the immediate effects of administrator job related frustration.

Chapter 6 presents the consequences of administrator job related frustration. The consequences of frustration are examined from the point of view of the various constituent groups within the college environment.

Chapter 7 summarizes the findings of the study and discusses their implications for administrative practice. Additionally, Chapter 7 discusses the implications for further research on organizational frustration.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purposes of Chapter 2 were to discuss some of the theories and research findings, first on the topic of frustration and then in the area of frustration as it relates to organizational life. This review was particularly useful as background for the development of the conceptual framework on frustration in organizations presented in Chapter 3. This conceptual framework guided the description and analysis of the case study detailed in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

FRUSTRATION THEORY

In this section, the literature on the various theories of frustration was reviewed in order to demonstrate the evolutionary nature of the frustration construct. The earliest theories had treated frustration as an entity, had concentrated on the behavior outcomes, and had defined frustration by a simple set of operations. The four major theories which develop this focus are: the heuristic theory, the frustration-aggression theory, the frustration-fixation theory, and the frustration-regression theory.

The next group of theories tended to view frustration in a more integrated manner. A unitary model or unique generic term for frustration, as demonstrated in the first four theories gave way to theories which attempt to show a relationship between frustration and behavior theory. These theories, which are more experimentally based, recognize the involvement of many independent variables in frustrating situations. The three major theories which develop this focus are: the Child and Waterhouse frustration-regression revision theory, the Brown and Farber frustration theory, and the Amsel frustration nonreward theory.

Finally, in certain theories (Getzels and Guba, 1957; Zald 1962; Thomas, 1976; Miles, 1980) frustration as a construct or intervening variable has become linked with other constructs. Constructs such as conflict and stress have been used at times as substitutes for frustration, and in some instances, as more precise, or as more global terms, depending on the nature of the theory. These terms and their relationship to frustration will be discussed.

Lawson suggests that theorizing about frustration has been widespread and has taken several forms (1965:4). Frustration has been treated as a state of feeling within an individual, and has, therefore, been viewed as inaccessible to direct observations. Frustration has also been treated as a hypothetical construct, relating antecedent and consequent events. Finally, frustration has been defined as an intervening variable in terms of operational relationships between events. Definitions which demonstrate each of these treatments appear in the following section.

Definitions

A major problem faced by those who wish to review the research on frustration has been the definition of frustration (Spector 1978:816). Two separate issues are involved in the problem; the nature of the antecedent conditions and the nature of the construct itself.

Spector defined frustration as an interference with goal maintenance as well as with goal oriented activity. This implies some sort of condition where the blocking of responses to goal achievement could result in goal interference and then lead to frustration. He further suggested that the removal of the means to goal satisfaction could also be expected to lead to frustration and result in some reaction. Spector, therefore, views frustration as a mediating event between goal interference and some form of behavior.

Weick (1964) linked the construct of cognitive dissonance to frustration. He suggested that individuals who experienced a measure of attitudinal-behavioral conflict also experienced frustration and would want to reduce both. This elaboration of the Festinger (1957) cognitive dissonance theory brings the notion of conflict into the frustration domain and operationalizes the events surrounding frustration. Young (1973:105) conceived of the effects of frustration as being similar to those of arousal. He viewed task performance, which had been related to arousal in a curvilinear function (Yerkes-Dodson 1908 as cited in Levitt 1967), as having some application to frustration induced situations. Generally, the relationship between frustration and performance with respect to the task was seen to vary depending on the nature of the task (Schmeck and Bruning 1968; Latane and Arrowood 1963 as cited in Spector 1978). In these definitions, frustration is treated as an intervening variable in terms of operations.

Unitary Theories of Frustration

Each of the following theories treats frustration as a goal/need interference to which certain reactions are attached. In this manner, frustration is treated as a self-contained concept, defined by a simple set of operations.

The Heuristic Theory of Frustration.

Frustration, according to Rosensweig (1934), is any obstacle which prevents the satisfaction of a need. He believed that an individual would manifest one of three reactions to this obstacle condition; extrapunitive, intropunitive, or impunitive. In other words, individuals may fix blame externally to a situation, internally to themselves, or not attach any blame respectively in accordance with the reactions. Each reaction was thought to be situationally as well as individually determined. A great deal of research attention has been focused on these aspects of Rosensweig's theory (Lawson 1965:12). In fact, frustration conceived of as a dimension of personality, formed the basis for further research with the Picture-Frustration Study serving as the instrument. As a result of his research, Rosensweig concluded that:

1. Frustration tolerance increases with age.
2. Maximum performance can occur only when optimum amounts of frustration are present.

He tended to deal with frustration as a broad aspect of personality and therefore said little about the specific nature of its antecedents and consequences.

<u>The Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis.</u> Dollard, Miller and colleagues (1939) proposed a theory based on two propositions:

1. Frustration naturally resulted in the tendency to respond in an aggressive manner.
2. The occurrence of aggression constituted evidence that frustration had been present.

These propositions tended to become clarified over time as first Miller (1941) and then a few notable others (Pastore 1952; Buss 1963) introduced other variables into the theory. The theory was known and expressed as the frustration-aggression hypothesis. The hypothesis, in its earliest form, included the following:

1. The greater the goal strength interfered with, the greater the tendency toward aggression.
2. The greater the amount of interference, the greater the tendency toward aggression.
3. The more frustrated sequences over time, the greater the tendency toward aggression.

(Lawson 1965:14)

Environmental conditions also found expression in this theory. Aggression was thought to occur overtly toward the perceived source as a first outlet. However, conditions of displaced aggression were later included in the theory to explain other behavioral manifestations especially when punishment or its threat served to inhibit aggressive responses.

<u>The Frustration-Regression Hypothesis.</u> Taking Freud's early writings as a basis, Barker, Dembo, and Lewin (1941) formulated the frustration-regression hypothesis. Their hypothesis described the behavioral characteristics of frustrating situations. They propose that frustration provokes a return to earlier developmental levels of behavior. These researchers do not make clear whether regression is the only or even the most salient outcome of frustration. The clarity of this theory suffers when it proposes a unitary explanation of frustration.

[illegible] <u>Frustration-Fixation Hypothesis.</u> In his study on [illegible]ion, Maier (1949) concluded that a basic behavioral [illegible]teristic of a truly frustrating situation was the [illegible]ion of responding. Maier claimed that no adaptive goal o[illegible]nted behavior could develop in the presence of f[illegible]tration. An individual would tend to respond in a s[illegible]reotypic manner. This response tendency was seen to be a[illegible] end in itself rather than a function of inappropriate p[illegible]blem solving behavior. The frustration-fixation hypothesis proposes that:

1. Fixation seems to be an all-or-none process, its development determined by observation.
2. Fixations can be broken only by the technique of

guidance or behavior shaping.

3. Fixations seem to be specific to certain situations.

While Maier recognized the occurrence of aggression, regression and resignation in addition to fixation as possible reactions to frustration, he tended to deal with the former three as special manifestations of fixation. This theory has proven to be difficult to translate from observable laboratory phenomena to an operational definition of a frustrating situation.

Integral Theories of Frustration

The foregoing theories present frustration as a unique concept existing in its own right. They report the consequences of a frustrating situation as having features which are both simple and unitary. The group of theories which follow are tied to a broader experimental base; they view frustration as an integral part of behavior theory and admit to more basic changes in behavior as outcomes to frustration (Lawson 1965).

__The Frustration-Regression Revision Theory.__ Child and Waterhouse (1952) as cited in Lawson (1965) devised an alternative to the frustration-regression hypothesis of Barker and colleagues. Child and Waterhouse suggested that when there is interference with goal seeking behavior, motivation is changed. In some manner, then, frustration causes a change in motivational state. The change in motivation is known only by examining a given individual in a given situation. Any prediction is only possible when there is knowledge of these conditions.

It is argued that frustration produces changes with respect to behavioral alternatives controlled by the environment; frustration, therefore, does not generate unique behaviors. These theorists believe that frustration produces interfering responses as well as changes in motivation or drive level.

Frustration as a higher order concept. Frustration according to Brown and Farber (1951) could be regarded as a higher-order hypothetical construct leading to several alternative response tendencies. In other words, these theorists view frustration as a conflict between two opposing response tendencies - one tendency originally evoked by the situation (presumably some kind of goal response), the other being some alternative interfering response aroused by the frustrating conditions.

The effects of these opposing tendencies act to increase drive level and produce internal stimuli (affect or emotion). Presumably, there is a choice of alternatives available in such a situation. Brown and Farber believed that a reduction of frustration should occur when a choice has been made and acted upon.

The frustration-nonreward theory. Amsel (1951) as cited in Lawson (1965), proposed a theory of frustration where unanticipated lack of reinforcement caused frustration reactions. This he labeled "fractional anticipatory frustration" and suggested that it could operate as an intervening variable to change the observable behavior of the individual. He used this construct to deal with the effects of intermittent reinforcement on resistance to extinction.

Amsel proposed that anticipatory frustration affects overt behavior in the following ways:

1. By motivating future behavior,
2. By allowing for reinforcement of the reduction of frustration, and
3. By possible supressing overt behavior.

The theories of Child and Waterhouse, Brown and Farber, and Amsel attempt to integrate frustration and general behavioral concepts. This reconceptualization of frustration from a unique generic topic to one involving many independent variables suggests the recognition of various possible outcomes to a frustrating situation.

Constructs Associated with Frustration

Lawson (1965:36) suggested "that the refinement of a vernacular concept into a scientific one sometimes leads to the disappearance of the original term." Such is the case when the original term describes a wide variety of possible situations. As those situations come to be known and identified in more isolated contexts, new terminology is substituted. Lawson further suggested that some of the situations described by theorists as frustrating can be described in other ways without reference to frustration.

However, the substitution of frustration by some of the other terms has led to confusion. Some examples of such terminology substitution and the confusion which can result follow.

<u>Frustration and conflict.</u> Perhaps because of the derivations resulting from the frustration-aggression hypothesis, conflict and frustration have been associated and even subject to substitution one for the other. In fact, many of the cause-effect problems associated with the definition of frustration also affect conflict. Conflict may be defined as the simultaneous occurrence of two or more mutually antagonistic impulses or motives and can occur as either an internal or external condition (Goldenson 1970:1264). As an internal condition, conflicting needs and goals have frequently been classified under four groupings: approach-approach, approach-avoidance, avoidance-avoidance, and double approach-avoidance. In each of these events, an individual is confronted with attractive and/or unattractive choices which involve foregoing one desirable alternative for another. Goldenson suggests that this internal tug-of-war proves to be frustrating until it becomes resolved. In this manner, conflict is a precursor to frustration.

External or environmental conflicts arise from situations in which individuals find themselves. Defining conflict as a condition external to the individual, Fink (1968:456) suggested that "any social situation or process in which two or more social entities are linked by at least one form of antagonistic ... interaction" produces conflict. Hurlbert (1973) also tended to view conflict as an external condition consisting of differences or disagreements between people. Competition, union-management difficulties, and problems associated with daily living are some situations where an individual might be at odds with the environment and with other people as attempts are made to meet needs. These situations can be frustrating when goal blocking is perceived. The frustration can result in conflicts as attempts are made to overcome the blockages. In summary then, conflict can arise where:

1. Choices between alternatives must be made. These alternatives may be goal decisions or means by which to achieve goals.

2. Individuals anticipate or experience others acting as goal blocking agents.

3. Individuals are in competition with others for need fulfillment.

In both the internal and external condition, a causal relationship between frustration and conflict seems to exist and it seems to be reciprocal. Frustration can be seen to provoke aggression and lead to conflict when goals are blocked or when an individual's tolerance level is lowered. Conflict may in turn produce frustration by providing alternative goal choices. This may lead to the blocking or delaying of some goals while meeting others.

<u>Motivation.</u> As in the case of frustration and conflict, the linking of frustration to motivation seems to have various interpretations. Sawrey (1969) suggested that

frustration can be considered to exist within the framework of a motive. Motivation acts as an energizer to goal-seeking and accomplishment. This goal seeking behavior suggests some sort of drive level or lack of satisfaction, a form of internal conflict manifest in a choice between appropriate goal directed behaviors, and some form of goal obstruction.

Yates (1962) in a slightly different context, believed that once frustration occurs, behavior instigated by motivation is different than that instigated by frustration. As an illustration of this belief, he suggests that:

1. Frustration instigated (FI) behavior seems characterized by fixation while motivation instigated (MI) behavior shows plasticity.

2. The effects of reward and punishment are different for the behaviors. Reward has no effect and punishment may actually intensify FI behavior.

3. The degree of frustration can be relieved by the expression of any response. MI behavior is only satisfying when the responses are adaptive.

4. FI behavior tends to be non constructive.

5. FI responses tend to be a function of availability. The selection tends to be determined by forces other than goals.

6. Guidance may destroy FI behavior but it will have no effect on MI behavior.

For Yates then, both frustration and motivation existed as separate instigators of behavior. However, where motivation produces functional behavior, frustration is conceptualized as a precusor of dysfunctional behavior.

<u>Frustration and stress</u>. The relationship of frustration to stress can be confusing. For example, the

following definitions of stress could also adequately describe frustration. McGrath (1970) considered stress to be an imbalance between the environmental demand an individual perceives and his ability to respond. Kahn and Quinn (1970:373) viewed stress as resulting from role ambiguity, role overload, and role conflict. Both definitions conceive of stress as largely an environmental condition.

Goldenson (1970) tended to take a global view when he considered stress to be an unpleasant side effect of much of human activity. He viewed it as a state of psychological or physiological strain, "a condition or situation, either internal or external, that imposes demands for adjustment on the organism" (Goldenson 1970:1263). He further suggested that stress can be produced by four events: deprivation, frustration, conflicts, and pressures. He viewed all of these as being related by the stress they produce.

Drawing on some of the aforementioned linkages between frustration, conflict, and motivation together with the above described relationship between stress and frustration, a conceptual model emerges as depicted in Figure 1.

In this model, the internal and external environment interact in a dynamic sense. In each environmental focus, stress exists as a by-product of the frustrations and conflicts which develop.

Internal to the individual, ~~deprivations~~ exist as a condition of need insufficiency. These can produce pressures which exist as attitudes driving individuals to seek goals which may not be achieved. The choices between the various goals available for satisfaction can produce conflict which in turn may lead to frustration. This, Goldenson viewed, was instrumental to the production of stress.

```
<=============== The External Environment ================>
  Internal to
 Individual
<------------->
                                                  ---
 -------------                                   |   |
| Frustration |                                  | B |
|  _________  |                                  |   |
| |Conflict | |     resolution of the            | L |    _____________
| |  _____  | |     internal decision            |   |   |             |
| | |Pres-| | |   <====================>         | O |   | Identified  |
| | |sure | | |     allows formulation           |   |   |    Goals    |
| | |  __ | | |     of external goal             | C |   |_____________|
| | || D*|| | |     direction. External          |   |
| | ||___|| | |     goal blockages               | K |
| | |_____| | |     cause internal               |   |  <-- Goal blocks
| |_________| |     dis-equilibrium              |___|   = Frustration
|_____________|                                             which may
Stress is a                                           produce Conflict
by-product

D* Deprivation
```

Figure 1
Model of Construct Relationships

Stress can be produced by frustrations and conflicts resulting from goal blockages external to the individual.

This model represents an attempt to clarify the role of frustration, as an intervening variable, in this study. Its application in organizational settings was the intent of the next section.

FRUSTRATION IN ORGANIZATIONS

The previous section has presented some definitions, theoretical orientations, and related concepts concerning the frustration construct. In this section two conceptual models of the sources and effects frustration in organizations were reviewed.

Models of Organizational Frustration

A model clarifies factors and relationships, defines what should be assessed, aids in generating a research hypothesis, suggests analytic techniques and helps organize data (Hauser 1980). Models also tend to be general expressions of overall functioning, which lose detail as a result of abstracting from reality. A smaller tableau is sometimes necessary to understand how parts interact. Nadler (1980) suggested that sub-models are needed to achieve greater perspective and understanding as to the relationships which exist in real organizational situations.

The Getzels and Guba (1957) social systems model. The social systems model proposed by Getzels and Guba is well known among scholars in the field of educational administration. As a result of their research in the field of education, these theorists postulated the existence of a number of components in any social system. Two of these components are relevant to a discussion of frustration in organizations. They are the role expectations of an institution, and the personality need-dispositions within the individual. These components, together with others, make up the dimensions Getzels and Guba believed were necessary for the analysis of a social system. The dimensions these authors identified were the nomothetic and the ideographic, the normative and the personal. Within each dimension greater specificity occurs when moving to the right of the model, that is, from the social system level to individual behaviors. In its most concise form, the model appears as Figure 2.

The Normative Dimension

--> Institution --> Role ----> Expectation ---

Social System ↕ ↕ ↕ Social Behavior

-->Individual -->Personality --> Need Disposition

The Personal Dimension

(Getzels Guba 1957:429)

Figure 2
Social Systems Model

Getzels and Guba claimed that any form of behavior in an organization is a function of the interaction between role and personality. Thus, an individual attempts to cope with environmental expectations consistent with his needs. This coping behavior suggests that certain goals, at either the normative or the personal dimension or even between dimensions, could be blocked or thwarted, resulting in frustration and conflict. In fact, the authors saw the problems of congruence or fit within and between levels as precursors for conflict. They defined conflict as "the mutual interference of parts, actions, and reactions in a social system" (Getzels et al 1968:108). An individual can experience conflict between the various expectations of the role and the various need-dispositions he has. Getzels and Guba suggested that additional forms of conflict can arise when there is disagreement within a reference group about a role definition, disagreement among several groups regarding a role, and contradictions between several roles an individual occupies at the same time. The authors also identified a form of conflict concerning the perception of role expectations which occurs internally and prevents an individual from adapting to the environment.

Getzels and Guba suggested that an ideal condition would occur when role adaptation (performing as expected) and self-actualizing (performing in accordance with needs) can be integrated. The authors detailed three effects of this integration. They are summarized as follows:

1. When the needs of individual and goals of the system are congruent, identification is the result.

2. When expectations of roles and goals have fit, there is a feeling of rationality.

3. When needs and roles fit there is a sense of satisfaction and belongingness.

The authors admitted, however, that congruence or fit between expectations and needs, among expectations in a role set, and among needs within a personality, is not realistic. As a result, some conflict is bound to remain and the individual is faced with a choice between three modes of behavior: To adapt to the role, to express his needs, or to compromise. These choices are precursors to frustration in much the same fashion as those discussed in the section dealing with frustration and conflict.

The Spector Model of organizational frustration. Many theorists, among them Vroom (1964), Locke (1969), and Alderfer (1972), have proposed sub-models of motivation and satisfaction dealing with the individual. While these may be helpful in achieving some perspective in the study of organizational frustration, they fail to focus entirely on the frustration construct. Spector (1978) is one theorist who has concentrated on frustration in organizations at the individual level. He has proposed a model for organizational frustration based on the works of Krech and Crutchfield (1948), Eaton (1952), and Argyris (1957). Basic to this model is the notion that personal needs (motives) can be blocked or delayed by job conditions, thus allowing personal and organizational goals to conflict. He has identified sources of frustration such as: lack of promotion, role ambiguity, change, isolation, security, and the nature of the job itself, however, Spector concludes that this list is by no means exhaustive.

To understand the role Spector believed frustration plays in any organization, it is most helpful to conceive of a sub-model which draws on the Katz and Kahn (1966) model of organizations as open systems and the Nadler and Tushman (1977) organization model which emphasizes the transformation process of tasks, individuals, and formal and informal arrangements. When these are integrated with the views Spector held on organizational frustration, the model outlined in Figure 3 emerges.

```
            ENVIRONMENT                          PERFORMANCE/
     ______________________________________  SATISFACTION OUTCOMES
     |                                     |   Task Performance
     |       ----> FORMAL <---             |  (Inhibit/Facilitate)
     |      |     ARRANGEMENTS |           |           /\
     |      |                  |           |           ||
     |      |     Conflicting  |           |           ||
   I |      |                  |           |           ||
   N |      V                  V           |           ||
   P | INDIVIDUAL<--->  TASK   = TRANSACTIONAL (frustration/
   U-----> NEEDS     REQUIREMENTS  RESULTS     task performance)
   T |      ^                  ^           |           ||
   S |      |                  |           |           ||
     |      |      Elements    |           |           ||
     |      |                  |           |           ||
     |      |                  |           |           ||
     |      --->INFORMAL <---              |           ||
     |        ARRANGEMENTS                 |           ||
     |_____________________________________|           ||
                                                       ||
                           =========================/
                           ||
                           \/
   mild frustration ------------- severe frustration
```

Figure 3
Process Model of Frustration in Organizations

In this sub-model describing the frustration process, inputs of energy from the environment (consisting of turbulence, uncertainty, change, prevailing attitudes, role expectancy and models, economic realities, etc.) influence how the transformation process will occur. Individual needs (money, security, achievement, recognition, etc.) are met, conflict, or are blocked as tasks are addressed within the formal and informal arrangements that make up the internal organizational environment. Thus, individuals work with superiors, co-workers, and subordinates to try and achieve both [illegible] goals and those of the organization within the rul[illegible]dures, and realities that exist. Within this con[illegible]k performance may be either facilitated or inhibited.

While the Getzel-Guba social systems model is not a specific model of organizational frustration, it does address issues similar to those described by Argyris (1957) and Spector (1975). Conflict produced when there is lack of congruence between role and need-disposition relates closely to Spector's conceptualization of organizational frustration arising from the delay or blocking of personal needs by job conditions.

Both models generate a series of questions about the notion of frustration in organizations. Some of these are as follows:

1. What is the nature of frustration in organizations?
2. Where are the sources of frustration in an organization?
3. What range of frustration do different individuals perceive?
4. When does frustration enhance or decrease task performance?

Attempts to discover answers to these questions have come from both the laboratory and the organization. The next section dealt with both areas in turn.

FRUSTRATION RESEARCH

An important result of any set of theories is the research that is stimulated. While early research tends to be heuristic by nature and thereby stimulate further exploration, the attempt to resolve and clarify theoretical points of view by specifying operations yields data necessary for building and refining models. Such is the case with research into the nature of frustration.

The research has tended to be experimental and has taken the form of a manipulation of independent variables. The manipulation of these variables in research on frustration has been interpreted as "frustrating an organism". According to Lawson (1965:41) this can be done in several ways:

1. Nonreinforcement after a history of reinforcement - interfering with the maintenance of a goal.
2. Preventing completion of a reinforced response sequence - stopping short of goal acquisition.
3. Preventing a response aroused by goal stimuli - blocking goal behavior.
4. Changes in incentive conditions - arbitrarily varying the payoff for goal attainment.
5. Failure - inability to achieve goal.
6. Use of hypothetical situations - simulations to produce frustration.
7. Use of punishment and conflict as antecedent conditions to frustration.

Where the construct of frustration has been characterized as an intervening variable, Lawson viewed the various behavioral manifestations as the dependent variables in frustration research. These include:

1. Changes in the frustrated response itself - the stronger responding to begin with may have something to say about the state of motivation and frustration.

2. Resumption, memory and attractiveness of frustrated behavior - which addresses the issue of tolerance to frustration.

3. Effects of frustration on non-frustrated behavior - this deals with other non-attached behavior.

4. Fantasy behavior following frustration - dealing with aggressive fantasy or punishment expectancy.

5. Emotionality - the degree to which the presence of other adaptive behavior can be substituted.

While it is true that researchers do not literally examine frustration but rather the effects of antecedents, such as delay, blocking, and incentive change on behavior, it is helpful to conceptualize these under the construct of frustration. This same pattern will serve as a conceptual underpinning for the study which attempt to identify the sources, immediate effects and consequences of administrator job related frustration in a college environment.

Responses to Frustration

A certain amount of research has led to the classification of behavioral responses to frustration. Generally, four main classes have been identified -- fixation, aggression, regression and resignation. Since most research effort has been expended on the former two response classes, they deserve most attention.

Fixation. Hamilton (1916) first examined fixated behavior under conditions of high emotionality using animal subjects. Patrick (1934) used human subjects to demonstrate the same effect. Maier and Klee (1953) investigated the effects of various schedules of reinforcement on behavioral fixations. They concluded that fixation is actually a form of compulsion which can be overcome with guidance or response shaping. They further found that fixation in one frustrating situation does not seem to spread to new situations. As a result, Maier and Klee postulated that fixation acts as a substitute response pattern, used when goals seem blocked. In his research, Maier (1949) found fixation to be a retardent to discrimination, that is, it interfered with learning. It would seem that some research demonstrates that one reaction to frustration consists of responding in stereotypic and compulsive ways.

Aggression. The research on aggression, as a response to frustration, first occurred with the Yale studies by Dollard and Miller (1939). This behavioral class has now become the most studied of all classes. In general, the following findings have emerged (Yates 1962, Berkowitz 1960, Pastore 1952):

1. The stronger the motivation to reach a goal, the greater the chance of aggression.

2. The greater the degree of goal interference the stronger the chance of aggression.

3. Aggression as a reward occurs more frequently with permissiveness.

4. As status increases for the frustrators, there is less chance of aggression.

5. The presence of groups increase the likelihood of member aggression.

6. The anticipation of punishment is a factor in aggression, inhibiting overt expression.

7. Aggression may be displaced to another object if the original is perceived as powerful and able to retaliate.

8. Self aggression is generally greater when the source of frustration is perceived to be the self.

9. Overt aggression as well as fantasy aggression may be drive reducing.

10. Arbitrary situations rather than non arbitrary situations increase feelings of aggression.

11. Aggression tends to occur less often when frustration is expected.

Certain theorists felt too much attention had been given to the relationship between aggression and frustration. Buss (1963), for example, believed that while frustration may be an antecedent to aggression, it is not the only nor the most potent one. He further concluded that feeling frustrated means different things to different people.

While the above two categories represented the most researched responses to frustration, other responses have been noted. A summary of research into the various behavioral effects of frustration follows.

Consequences of Frustration

The effects of frustration on individual behavior are varied depending on experience and situational factors. Past research indicated the following to be the principal results:

1. Frustration can be energizing - it may increase the general drive level and provide a certain internal stimulus (Brown and Farber 1951). The responses closely following delay are increasingly vigorous (Hilgard and Marquis 1935, Hovland 1936, Finch 1942, Skinner 1932, Brown and Gentry 1948 as cited in Yates 1962).

2. Frustration may produce aggression - both overt and covert (extrapunitive, intropunitive, impunitive) (Rosensweig 1934, Miller 1941 as cited in Sawrey 1969).

3. Frustration may result in regression - a movement to a more primitive developmental level (Levin 1937 as cited in Lawson 1965).

4. Frustration may produce fixation - the adopting of stereotypic responses to a variety of stimuli (Maier 1949).

5. Frustration may result in withdrawal or resignation (a refusal to perform a positive action) or lack of attachment. This process is seen as a response to repeated and prolonged frustration (Maier 1949). After the initial energising effect following frustration, subsequent episodes seem to produce a lowered responding level (learned frustration or conditioned helplessness) (Willis and Sawrey 1968, Wist 1962, Amsel and Ward 1965, Sears 1940 as cited in Sawrey 1969).

6. Frustration may result in adaptation - Jones (1954) claims that under conditions of prolonged frustration individuals may adapt to the situation and develop a level of tolerance or experience with thwarting situations.

The above represents some general research findings with respect to the various behavioral consequences of frustration. Research into the nature of frustration in organizations is discussed in the next section.

Effects of Frustration in Organizations

Figure 3 shows some possible reactions to frustration produced in organizations. In a very general sense, frustration can be seen to increase physiological arousal and, as such, may affect task performance (Yerkes and Dodson 1908). These researchers stated that task performance could be facilitated or increased when the level of arousal (frustration) is optimal and decreased when the level of arousal is minimal or debilitating. An inverted U-shaped curve describes this relationship.

Spector (1978:820) claimed that "to the extent that it interferes with or blocks task performance, frustration can be directly harmful to organizations." He also claimed that frustration, producing withdrawal or aggression, can also have detrimental effects on an organization. Similarly, the extent to which frustration induces fixated behavior as opposed to innovative or flexible behavior, may also lead to damaging effects to the organization.

__Aggression.__ Anger or severe frustration may provoke aggression. Graham et al (1951) found that where there is frustration and little expectation of punishment, the chance for overt hostility increases. Pastore (1952) found that where frustration tends to be arbitrary, aggression increases. In organizations, aggression can take two paths: against people or against the organization. When it is directed against people, it can take both overt and covert forms: verbal or physical acts, or secretive harmful behaviors. When aggression is directed against organizations, overt behaviors might include strikes, slowdowns, or grievances. Covert behaviors might include sabotage, stealing, and withholding. Spector (1978), referring to past research in the area, felt that the choice between overt and covert expressions depended on the expectation of punishment.

Withdrawal. Prolonged and severe frustration may also produce withdrawal responses or the abandonment of goal behavior by an individual in an organization. Generally, this behavior seems to result from a threat of punishment where other courses of action and expression are not available to an individual in the organization. Spector (1975) found that these escape responses are usually manifest in turnover, absenteeism, or by otherwise avoiding the work situation. Where frustration is situation specific, an avoidance response might be expected only in that situation. However, where there is a general feeling of frustration, then pervasive observable escape behavior might be expected.

Research findings alluded to earlier (Lewin 1937; Maier 1949) suggested that resignation and regression might also be responses to frustration. Resignation might be included, within the context of withdrawal, as a form of mental withdrawal or a type of detatchment from the goals and expectation of the organization. This lack of commitment might be judged as a covert response in contrast to the overt responses of turnover and absenteeism. Regression or the movement to earlier levels of developmental behavior could be manifest in the many seemingly childish ways by which individuals avoid work. Long unproductive periods of conversation, coffee breaks, late lunches, tardiness, early ending, personal errands, and over-indulgence in nonproductive routines are some examples of regressive behavior.

Task Performance. As mentioned before (Yerkes-Dodson 1908), under certain levels of frustration, task performance can be enhanced; other levels inhibit functional task achievement. The effects of punitive and close supervision styles have been studied by Day and Hamblin (1964). They concluded that a natural result of this style of supervision is feelings of frustration and the direct blocking of task performance by the lowering of self-esteem. Verbal aggression directed toward the supervisor also resulted. Katz et al (1951) found that supervision style was related to productivity in much the same fashion.

In conclusion, the manner by which managers attempt solutions to difficult problems has a bearing on task performance. Prolonged frustration may produce withdrawal but it may also produce functional fixedness or the inability to perceive new and innovating solutions in response to goal blocks. Kahn and Quinn (1970:373) studied employee withdrawal and concluded that role ambiguity, role overload, and role conflict produced enough stress to cause withdrawal behavior. Brown (1954) in his study of functional fixedness, found that common symptoms of fixation in industry were expressed as an inability to accept change and new facts when experience showed that old behavior made things worse. Repetition and submergence in routine can result in decreased performance.

Generally, research findings in organizations tend to reaffirm earlier psychological research on frustration. The consequences of frustration usually tended to be found as dysfunctional in organizations with little research oriented toward the functional aspects.

A Conceptual Model

A model to guide research into the nature of the sources and effects of frustration should contain elements of both past research and theorizing. The social systems model of Getzels and Guba as well as the individual goals model of Spector contain elements which are of relevance to this study. The notion of frustration acting as an intervening variable linking sources and behavioral effects is one which has been used in this study. The model is elaborated in the next chapter and was used as a guide for the present study.

SUMMARY

From the review of the theoretical literature and the research findings, it seems clear that there are many ways of conceptualizing frustration. Many different models exist to describe the effects of frustration on individuals and in organizations. The associations between frustration and behavior have been well documented in the literature. However, little field testing has occurred (Spector

1978:826). Based on recent application to organizations, there is some hope that the frustration construct can help explain some of the vagaries of organizational behavior.

Certain behavioral effects of frustration are also well documented in the literature. Aggression, regression, fixation, emotional displays, behavioral retreat, stress reactions, role conflicts, and innovative behavior have all been demonstrated by various theorists in the area to be viable consequences. The concommitant effects on organizational life are now beginning to be realized.

The findings on tolerance to frustration, optimal levels of arousal, and frustration as a positive motivational force have some important implications for organizational life. While much of the previous research has tended to focus on the negative aspects of frustration, the positive aspects could receive more attention. This promises to be an area of fruitful inquiry.

For the purposes of this study on the sources, immediate effects and consequences of frustration in a college environment, a conceptual model primarily based on the theories of Spector and of Getzels and Guba was suggested. This model treats the construct of frustration as an intervening variable, linking the various sources of frustration to the many potential administrator behaviors. The model also recognizes the concommitant effects on the organization and was useful in the design and analysis described in Chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter outlines the research design and methodology associated with the investigation reported in the study. The conceptual framework upon which the study was based is presented along with a description of the instrumentation used, the interviewing and questionnaire process followed, and the nature of the respondent groups.

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Prout (1977:44) suggested that a conceptual framework operates to give direction to a study by linking a number of concepts which interrelate to explain a particular theory. The conceptual framework providing direction in this study was constructed from the review of literature appearing in Chapter 2.

There is no integrated conceptual model which encompasses sources, immediate effects, and consequences of administrator job related frustration; however, conceptual frameworks including applications for various aspects of frustration and conflict have been presented in the review of literature. Various components of these models have been combined to construct a general model which guided the study into the nature of administrator job related frustration.

This model specifically combined the elements of the social systems model of Getzels and Guba (1957) together with the individual goals model of Spector (1978). As a summary, the derivations of the conceptual model used in this study follow.

The Getzels and Guba (1957) Model

The Getzels and Guba model portrays conflicts and hence frustrations as being the result of a lack of congruence or fit between the normative dimension in an organization and, in this case, the individual administrator's personal dimension. The interaction between the individual and the institution, personality and role, and need disposition and expectation identified by the model is said to be a function of behavior in an organization and was illustrated in Figure 2 in the previous chapter.

This model identifies conflict and hence frustration as arising from a lack of congruence between the normative and the personal dimensions. It is useful in describing potential sources of conflict and, by extension, sources of frustration. However, this model does not go beyond this description to deal with the effects or consequences of frustration. A conceptual model which addresses both the sources and immediate effects of frustration was formulated by Spector (1978).

The Spector (1978) Model

Spector identified specific sources of frustration such as lack of promotion, change, isolation, security concerns, and other individuals. In addition, Spector has identified some of the immediate effects of these frustrators on individuals.

To encompass these sources and immediate effects of frustration in a conceptual model, it is most helpful to draw on the Katz and Kahn (1966) model of organizations that treats them as open systems and the Nadler and Tushman (1977) organization model that emphasizes the role of transformation processes such as tasks, individuals, technologies, and resources. When these models are integrated with the views Spector has on frustration in organizations a process model of frustration emerges, which has been presented earlier in Chapter 2 by Figure 3.

This model has particular strength in depicting both the sources and the immediate effects of frustration. It indicates that sources of frustration can arise from conflicting elements which impinge upon the individual and his/her needs as well as from elements such as other individuals, tasks, technologies, and resources. This model suggests that administrators working within formal and informal arrangements with peers, superordinates, and subordinates attempt to meet their own needs as well as perform necessary tasks. The immediate effects of these sources of potential frustration may be changes in task performance and administrator affect.

The consequences of such frustration and changes in task performance and administrator affect are not directly addressed by this model.

In order to include these consequences of frustration, an integrated conceptual framework was formulated for use in this study. This framework, depicted in Figure 4, encompasses those elements which had been identified in the Getzels and Guba and the Spector models and by extension includes the consequences of frustration as a final element.

The Conceptual Model

In order to provide a perspective on the nature of administrator job related frustration in a college, including the sources, immediate effects, and consequences of such frustration, the conceptual framework pictorially represented in Figure 4 is helpful.

The notion of frustration acting as an intervening variable linking sources and immediate effects is portrayed in the model. Administrator behaviors appear as the immediate effects of the job related sources of frustration that in turn have various consequences for individuals and groups in the college.

Questions Arising from the Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework served to identify the objectives of the study that are detailed in Chapter 1. The following questions generally reflect these objectives.

1. What was the situation in an Albertan community college with respect to the various elements of the conceptual framework? What frustrators affected [illegible]rators as they enacted their role as academic

SOURCES OF FRUSTRATION
IN ORGANIZATIONS

goal blockage or thwarting
role conflict or
role/personality conflict

FRUSTRATIONS

acting as an
intervening variable
and
individually felt

IMMEDIATE EFFECTS

aggression, fixation,
resignation, regression,
withdrawal, innovation,
increased drive level

CONSEQUENCES

task performance: functional or dysfunctional

interpersonal relationships with work groups,
superordinates, peers, and others.

Figure 4
Sources and Effects
of Frustration in Organizations

leaders?

2. What were the immediate effects of these frustrators on the administrator?

3. What were the consequences of administrator job related frustration for the various individuals and groups within the college environment?

Following a delineation of how the general questions, the instruments used in the study were developed.

INSTRUMENTATION

In this study the interview schedule as well as the questionnaire method were considered as a means to collect data. Each approach will be discussed in turn.

The interview approach has, as a primary advantage, a higher percentage of respondent returns. These greater returns may result from the cooperation of persons who are reluctant to put things in writing. Gordon (1975:76-77) and Mouly (1970:265) outlined four other advantages of the interview as a data collection technique.

1. The interview provides the interviewer with opportunities to guide the respondent in the interpretation of questions.

2. The interview provides more complete and accurate information immediately.

3. The interview provides for greater control over the data collecting situation.

4. The interview provides for more flexibility in questioning the respondent.

Mouly (1970) and Gordon (1975) recognized the roles played in the use of both structured and unstructured interviews. Among other advantages, the use of a structured interview provides for a reliable comparison of respondent perceptions. The nonstructured interview guide, on the other hand, provides for greater flexibility in questioning the respondent. Selltiz, Jahoda, Deutsch, and Cook (1959:180) introduced and approved of a less structured, but not completely unstructured, type of interview. Gordon (1975:61) as well echoes certain advantages inherent in the semi structured interview.

> The semi structured interview gives the interviewer some choice as to the order of the questions, freedom to attempt alternative wordings of the same question, and the freedom to use neutral probes if the first response to a question is not clear, complete, or relevant.

Consideration of these advantages of the semi-structured interview guide led to a choice of this approach as the primary means by which data was obtained from administrators at the college.

During the initial stages of the study, consideration was given to the use of mailed questionnaires as the sole means of data collection. The advantages and disadvantages of questionnaires as data collection instruments have been well discussed in the literature (Bennett and Hill, 1964; Mouly, 1970). For example questionnaires permit wide coverage, both in sample size and geographic distribution, with reasonable investments in effort, time, and money.

Nevertheless, for this study the use of the questionnaire as the sole means of data collection was rejected. There were three reasons for this. One was the concern that the strong feelings held by many administrators for events which occurred during the previous academic year might be reflected in either erroneous or biased responses or in a high level of non-response. The second was a concern that many administrators might be defensive about events which directly involved them. Their responses might have tended to be biased or insufficient in number to present an adequate picture. Finally, there was a concern that busy administrators might procrastinate in responding to a questionnaire.

For these reasons, the interview technique of data collection was adopted as the major data collection procedure for the study. Questionnaires were also utilized but mainly to obtain frequency data and as a check on administrator perceptions.

The Interview Guide

The interview guide for this study was based on questionnaire material used by Spector (1978) in his study of organizational frustration and on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2. The interview guide developed was pilot-tested. Based on the results of the pilot test, the guide was revised and then used with the entire administrator group in the community college.

The interview guide, which appears in Appendix A, was comprised of three sections with a total of 16 questions. The first section was designed to discover the various sources within the college which acted as frustrators for the administrator in the performance of the job. The second section was designed to identify the immediate effects of the various sources of job related frustration. The third section attempted to determine the various consequences of administrator felt job related frustration for various individuals and groups within the college.

The Questionnaires

Two questionnaires were used in this study. At the conclusion of the interviewing session, administrators were given a short questionnaire which was designed to elicit a mixture of demographic and frequency data. This questionnaire was completed by all administrators and appears in Appendix B.

All faculty members received questionnaires distributed to their respective departments after consultation and agreement with the college faculty association and each department. These questionnaires were designed to elicit faculty perceptions of various administrator and department processes and served as a perceptual check for administrator responses. Eighty questionnaires were distributed and 42 were returned (52.5%). The questionnaire for faculty members appears in Appendix C.

Validity of the Instrumentation

Johnson (1977:108) determined that research activities in education may be described as valid if they appear either to be factually correct or to work successfully. Fox

(1969:367) proposed that validity occurs when a procedure accomplishes or measures what it originally sets out to accomplish or measure. In spite of these determinations, there are, however, certain sources of bias and error present in a data collection process.

Sources of instrument bias and error, as determined by Kahn and Cannell (1957), include the perceptions, attitudes, expectations, and background characteristics of both respondent and interviewer. Good (1972) added to this list the perceived intent of the questionnaire; the timing of the questionnaire request; nature of the interview setting; the favorable reputation, in terms of integrity and knowledge, of the researcher; and the adequacy and length of the instrument as additional factors affecting validity.

These possible sources of invalidity were recognized and became a consideration in the pilot-testing stage of the study. To increase the validity, all data collection in the study was conducted under conditions of confidentiality and during their interviews, administrators were asked to justify their responses. Each interview concluded with a brief summary, by the interviewer, of responses made to each question in order to provide a check on the perceptions of the interviewer. Any apparent discrepancies between interviewer and interviewee were resolved before the interviewing sessions was concluded.

Reliability in the Instrumentation

Mouly (1970:272) recognized that problems relating to the possible effect upon interview reliability of the use of a team of interviewers. Accordingly, the writer served as the sole interviewer in the data collection process. Good (1972) cautioned that the desire of many respondents to make a favorable impression and a reluctance to reveal self-damaging information may frequently affect the reliability of the instrument. These problems were also recognized in this study and addressed in three ways. First, the interview was selected as the primary method of data collection. Second, pilot-testing and refining of the questions designed to collect the data was done in order to improve reliability. Third, it is likely that the past experience and training of the interviewer in the interview technique, particularly in being sensitive to differences among respondents, contributed to interview reliability.

Pilot-testing Phase

A community college in Alberta was selected as a base for a case study on the sources of job related frustration on college administrators, their immediate effects, and long term consequences. Prior to the identification of the particular college for the case study, a pilot study was undertaken in order to refine the instrumentation used in the study. A sample of ten administrators, both academic and non academic, at Mount Royal College in Calgary was surveyed for the purpose of refining the questionnaire and interviewing procedure to be used in the main study. Additionally, a sample of five faculty members and five non-academic staff at Mount Royal College were used to pilot-test the questionnaire intended for use with faculty members at the target college.

A two stage pilot-testing process was used at Mount Royal College. First, a pilot-test was conducted with a group of administrators using instruments based on Spector's organizational frustration questionnaire. Responses from this first pilot were used to revise both the questionnaire and and interview guide. The instruments were then administered to a second pilot-test group and the second set of responses were used in preparing the final version of questionnaire and interview schedule.

The sample of faculty members and members of the non-academic staff at Mount Royal College was then presented with a questionnaire based on the administrator questionnaire. Their responses were then used to construct the revised questionnaire used with faculty members in departments headed by the responding administrators at the community college chosen for the main study. This pilot-testing was done during the 1982 fall semester.

Selection of the College for Study

The selection of the target college occurred about the time that the pilot-testing phase of the study was being completed. Tentative approval had been obtained to study two postsecondary institutions in Alberta. One of these, a community college was was selected in early December of 1982 and data collection commenced during the last weeks of the year. Collection of data continued through May of 1983.

Initial visits to the college were designed to accomplish two purposes: to collect data from all administrators on campus by means of interviews and the administrator questionnaire and to distribute questionnaires to members of the faculty and non-academic staff. However, access to the faculty and staff groups was not provided at first. As a result, data collection was delayed somewhat. After repeated effort an acceptable procedure to collect necessary data from faculty members was devised. The data, collected from faculty members by questionnaire, was completed by the end of May. Non-academic staff did not participate in the study, however, this was not considered to be a critical deterent to the study. In the interim period, information on the role the college played in the community and the role the administrators played in the college was obtained to supplement the other data collected for the study.

THE DATA COLLECTION PROGRAM

Prior to the commencement of the main study, the president of the target college was contacted for his approval. He agreed to take the proposal to his executive committee and to the various decision-making bodies within the college whose members would be affected by the study.

Written consent was subsequently given and the chairman of Learning Resources assigned as the formal contact with the college. The chairman subsequently arranged for the interviews that were conducted with all the college administrators.

All interview appointments were confirmed by telephone and a list of the interview questions provided each respondent prior to the interview. All interviews were held at their appointed times, with one exception. In this case, the administrator happened to be off campus unexpectedly. This interview was rescheduled and subsequently held. Each interview involved only one administrator and lasted between forty five and seventy five minutes, averaging about an hour. Each interview concluded with a review of the respondent's notes in order to provide a perceptual check. The administrator questionnaire was then completed by the respondent and the session concluded. Nine academic and 13 non-academic administrators participated in the study. This represented all college administrators except the president. The president, having arrived recently, did not have first hand knowledge of the previous academic year and was therefore omitted from the study. In all, twenty-two interviews were conducted in the college between December 14, 1982 and January 10, 1983.

On completion of the data gathering from the administrators, data collection from members of the faculty began. The president of the faculty association served as a contact person for this phase and distributed questionnaire forms to all faculty members. The last questionnaires were returned in May 1983. This concluded the data collection process.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter the research design and methodology of the study were detailed. The conceptual framework upon which the study was based was developed from the relevant literature reviewed in the preceding chapter. Particular reference was made in the present chapter to the instrumentation employed and to the nature of the respondent groups studied. In the following chapter, the first set of findings, associated with the sources of administrator job related frustration is presented.

CHAPTER 4

SOURCES OF FRUSTRATION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the nature of administrator frustration at a community college. More specifically, the study sought to determine the sources of administrator job related frustration, the immediate effects of this frustration for the administrator, and the consequences of job related frustration for the administrative work group, for superordinates, and for the college at large.

This study, involving a community college in Alberta, was undertaken during the 1982-83 academic year. Since the primary purpose of the study was to identify the sources, effects, and consequences of administrator frustration, all twenty-two administrators who held line or staff positions at the community college were included in the study. Data were collected from this group by means of structured interviews and questionnaires on job related frustrations. Questionnaires were also distributed to all members of faculty and non-academic staff in an effort to determine work group perceptions of administrator frustration.

In this chapter, the first purpose of the study is addressed: identifying the sources of administrator job related frustration. These sources are explored from three perspectives:

1. The areas where job frustration has occurred.
2. The job events causing the greatest amount of administrator frustration.
3. The frequency of the job related frustration experienced.

Sources of Frustration at the Community College

The administrator group at the community college was surveyed by means of interview in order to determine first, whether they experienced job related frustration and second, if they did, what was the nature of the sources of frustration.

Findings. Table 1 presents both the categories and the specific sources of administrator frustration reported by frequency of mention and by percentage of total.

Administrators at the college were asked to report on where they perceived obstacles and hence frustrators to their jobs. Responses from these administrators were grouped into four general frustrator categories: interpersonal, task related, resource related, and technology related . Within each category, certain specific sources of frustration were identified by the college administrators.

Administrator response to the determination of the sources of frustration at the community college indicated that interpersonal sources of frustration occurred with greatest frequency (41 of the 89 incidents). Within this category superordinates were identified most often (54%) as the specific sources of interpersonal frustration. Subordinates were next in frequency of mention (24%), followed by others in the college providing significant services to the administrator (12%) and administrative peers (10%). In all cases, individuals causing administrator frustration were perceived to interfere with the administrator in the accomplishment of the job.

Table 1

Areas Identified Where Job Related Frustration Occurred

Frustrator Category N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Interpersonal Frustrators	41	46.0
Involving superordinates	22	54.0
Involving subordinates	10	24.0
Involving significant others	5	12.0
Involving administrative peers	4	10.0
Task Related Frustrators	23	25.8
Obstacles to decision making	11	47.8
Lack of administrator preparation	7	30.4
Workload stress	3	13.0
Territoriality	1	4.4
Dealing with rumors	1	4.4
Resources Related Frustrators	20	22.5
Inadequate capital funding	16	80.0
Inflexible resource allocation	3	15.0
Inadequate remuneration	1	5.0
Technology Related Frustrators	5	5.7
Lack of available expertise	4	80.0
Inadequate information system	1	20.0

Task related sources of frustration, as a category, had the second highest frequency of mention (23 incidents) by administrators. Specifically, obstacles to decision making seemed to be the most frequently mentioned task related frustrator, accounting for slightly fewer than half (47.8%) of the total responses in this category. The self report of lack of preparation for the administrative job received 30.4% of the total task related responses. The stress caused by a heavy workload received the next most frequently mentioned responses (13%). Least frequently reported frustrators concerned the prevalence of unsubstantiated rumors and task interference caused by incursions of uninvolved others into the decision making process. These frustrators were each reported by only one administrator.

The number of resource related frustrators reported was close to the number of task related frustrators (20 incidents). The most frequently mentioned specific sources of frustration in this category concerned the inadequacy of capital funding (80%). Lack of flexibility in resource allocation was the next most frequently mentioned administrator response (15%). Inadequate remuneration for the nature of the job was reported only once.

Technology related frustrators, accounting for the fewest administrator responses, were mentioned by only five administrators. Of these responses, four (80%) dealt with lack of available expertise in problematic situations while only one concerned what was perceived to be an inadequate information system.

Discussion. Two types of frustrators appear to emerge from the data, those which may be expressed in a rather generic sense since they pertain to a variety of organizations, and those which appear specific to this college. Interpersonal sources of frustration fall into the former category while certain task and resource related frustrators seem to fall in the latter.

The frequency with which interpersonal frustration was reported is not surprising. Much of the administrative role in the college involves meeting and dealing with a variety of individuals in order to accomplish goals. When goals are identified, there may be various interpretations as to priorities and how they may be achieved by all concerned in the task environment. Conflicting views can result when more than one interpretation is involved in the decision making process. Frequently, the nature of conflict surrounding the administrative task can be the result of the diversity of individuals who are affected by decisions made in the accomplishment of the task. Interpersonal frustrators appears to be an inevitable part of any administrative job.

With specific reference to the college, there were resource related issues which provoke frustration. The current state of the physical plant and the almost universal perception by administrators of the need to update facilities, can be viewed as a resource related frustrator specific to this institution.

Task related frustrators specific to this college include the lack of a formal preparation process for new administrators and a recent history of senior level administrative delays in needed decision making. In general, though, there was a perception that a recent change in senior level administration resulted in new strategies being put into place to address these specific administrative frustrators.

While other colleges might have experienced similar administrator job related frustrators, perhaps the combination of administrator frustration with decision making delays and lack of formal administrator preparation for the nature of the job are unique in this environment.

Finally, the low frequency of technology related frustration reported could indicate a supportive state of technology at least adequate to meet administrator job related goals. Indeed, administrators commented positively on the availability of equipment and logistic support which enhanced goal achievement. This seems to be a legacy of the previous senior administration.

Sources Of Greatest Frustration

Following respondent identification of the sources of job related frustration, administrators at the college were asked which job related event caused them greatest frustration.

Findings. Each administrator reported the one job related event which caused the most frustration. Table 2 reports the results of this inquiry.

Table 2

Job Events Causing Greatest Frustration

Frustrator Category N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Interpersonal Frustrators	16	72.7
Involving superordinates	10	62.5
Involving subordinates	4	25.0
Involving others	2	12.5
Task Related Frustrators	4	18.2
Obstacles to decision making	2	50.0
Lack of administrator preparation	1	25.0
Workload stress	1	25.0
Resource Related Frustrators	2	9.1
Inadequate capital funding	2	100.0
Technology Related Frustrators	0	0.0

Consistent with the sources reported in Table 1, 16 administrators identified interpersonal frustrators as causing greatest frustration. Superordinates, as a group, were identified as the greatest contributors to administrator frustration. Ten administrators reported that superordinates caused them greatest frustration with their lack of support and their delays in decision making. Subordinates were identified by four administrators as causing the greatest frustration. Staff exceeding their authority, union-management conflicts, and staff productivity were mentioned as specific examples of subordinate caused frustration. Significant others who interacted with the administrator were mentioned by two administrators as the greatest frustrators. Frustrating events in these cases centered around the provision of services to the administrator by these individuals.

Task related frustrators were judged as causing administrators the next greatest amount of frustration with four administrators reporting these to be the major sources of frustration. Obstacles to decision making were reported as the greatest task related frustrators by two administrators. These included inadequacies in the communication flow and the planning process. Lack of preparation for the administrative job was reported as the greatest frustrator for one administrator as was the stress caused by a heavy workload.

Two administrators reported resource related frustration involving inadequate capital funding as the greatest source of frustration. This funding they contended was needed to update facilities.

Technology related frustrators were not identified as the greatest source of frustration by any administrator.

Table 2 presents findings similar to those detailed in Table 1. Specifically it shows that the college administrators found interpersonal events involving superordinates caused the greatest frustration, but there are some important differences. While both tables report that interpersonal frustrations equal or exceed any other specific source of frustration in either the task or technology categories, Table 2 identifies administrator interrelations with subordinates to be the second greatest frustrator (4 responses). This same source of frustration is ranked third in the number of reported incidents of frustration as indicated in Table 1.

Discussion. There is some value in determining the source of the most significant frustration felt by administrators. This may reveal where administrators expend most of their task energy. Organizational interest in addressing the most significant sources of frustration may increase if a consensus in administration perception occurred. This consensus would indicate a significant blockage in the organizational milieu which might be addressed in order to restore on-task energy.

Clearly, from these reports, interpersonal variables are the greatest source of frustration for the majority of administrators at the college.

It may be argued that when frustration arises in an unexpected manner, administrators may be unprepared to deal with the resultant goal blockage. This unpreparedness might result in a need for administrators to expend considerable energy, which results in greater feelings of frustration. Many interpersonal relationships seem fraught with a high level of uncertainty which requires an expenditure of administrative energy that was expected to be directed to the accomplishment of the task at hand. It therefore seems reasonable that frustrations of an interpersonal nature were the greatest in number and highest in intensity for these college administrators.

Frequency of Significant Frustration

In order to determine how often administrators at the college experienced significant job related frustration, all administrators were surveyed by questionnaire. In addition, as a method of comparison, the work group was also surveyed by questionnaire to determine the extent to which the immediate work group perceived similar occurrences of administrator frustration.

Findings. Table 3 summarizes the reports of the college's administrators with respect to frequency with which significant levels of job related frustration occur.

Table 3

Frequency of Occurrence of Significant Job Related Frustration

Occurrences N=22	Administrator Reports	% of Total
Once a day	2	9.0
Once a week	8	36.4
Once a month	6	27.3
Rarely or not at all	6	27.3
Occurrences N=42	**Work Group Reports**	**% of Total**
Once a day	2	9.5
Once a week	9	21.4
Once a month	14	33.3
Rarely or not at all	15	35.8

From these administrator reports it would seem that a slight minority of administrators at the college experience significant levels of frustration on a daily or weekly basis in the performance of their jobs (45.4%). Just over half (54.6%) experience monthly or less frequent occurrences of frustration. Among these, half (27.3% of all administrators surveyed) reported infrequent or no occurrences of job related frustration, while only 9% reported daily incidents of frustration.

The work group reported less frequent occurrences of daily or monthly frustration than did the administrators (30.9%). However, the work group reported more perceived incidents of monthly and less frequent periods of administrator frustration (69.1%).

<u>Discussion.</u> From the administrator response summarized in Table 3, it might be predicted that administrator perception of the frequency of experienced frustration was low at the college. For many administrators this seemed to be true. These administrators typically responded to questions about the sources of frustration with statements such as "the college is a very good place to work" and "frustrations are what I expected." Some of these administrators also pointed out that they chose, many times, not to react to frustrators. Many felt that by choosing to be administrators, they also consented to work in a more frustrating environment. Increased commitment to the administrative role, then, appeared to influence the administrators' perception of situational frustration.

While general agreement existed between administrators and their subordinates in their perceptions of administrator frustration which occurred daily, weekly, monthly and rarely or not at all, the work group tended to underestimate weekly occurrences of administrator frustration and overestimate frustration which occurred rarely or monthly. Work group underestimation of administrator frustration might be explained by a lack of full disclosure on the part of the administrator to the work group. In spite of these discrepancies in the reported incidents of administrator frustration, it may generally be said that reasonable agreement existed between administrator and work group perceptions as to the frequency of the occurrence of significant job related frustration.

SUMMARY

In this chapter the variety, intensity, and frequency of administrator job related sources of frustration were explored. Emphasis was placed on the identification of particular categories of frustration and particular sources of frustration. Additionally, the source of the greatest frustration for administrators at the college was examined.

Administrators at the college reported that most frequently experienced incidents of frustration were those related to interpersonal events and, more specifically, those involving their superordinates. In addition, these incidents were also the greatest sources of frustration for these administrators.

Task and resource related frustrators were reported next most frequently by administrators. While task related frustration as a category was a greater source of frustration than resource related frustration, two specific frustrators, one in each category, were mentioned as the greatest sources of frustration by equal numbers of administrators. These frustrators were inadequate capital funding at the college and obstacles to the decision making process.

Least frequently reported frustrators were technology related; these pertained to available expertise and information systems. Technology related frustrators were not reported by any administrator to be the greatest frustrator. On the contrary, many administrators reported that the available technology enhanced rather than detracted from their tasks.

Finally, a slight majority of administrators reported that they experienced significant levels of frustration no more often than at monthly intervals. A slightly larger majority of work group members perceived their administrators as experiencing this low frequency of job related frustration, suggesting a high level of agreement between these two groups in this respect.

CHAPTER 5

IMMEDIATE EFFECTS OF ADMINISTRATOR FRUSTRATION

Introduction

The reader is reminded that the purpose of this study was to examine the nature of administrator frustration at a community college. More specifically, the study sought to determine the sources, effects, and consequences of administrator job related frustration.

In the preceding chapter, sources of administrator frustration were examined in the college setting. Job areas were identified where frustration occurred. Particular job related events which caused greatest administrator frustration were also identified along with the periodic nature of experienced frustration.

In this chapter, the second purpose of the study will be addressed; the immediate effects of job related frustration to the administrator. The immediate effects of administrator job related frustration will be explored from the following perspectives:

1. The type of immediate reactions to both specific and general frustrations.
2. Frustration and administrator productivity.
3. The nature of administrator reactions to varying levels of frustration.
4. The level of administrator comfort in response to experienced frustration.

5. The stability of administrator reaction to frustration over time.

Immediate Reactions to Frustration

In order to determine the immediate effects of administrator job related frustration, college administrators were asked just to describe a situation which stood out as a significant frustrator to them and then to describe their reactions to the reported situation.

Findings. Each administrator described one situation which involved a significant level of frustration and reported their immediate reactions to the situation. Table 4 illustrates these specific reactions.

Table 4

Immediate Reactions by Administrators to Frustration

Type of Reaction	N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Annoyance and anger		12	54.6
Confused and off balance		7	31.9
Anxious		2	9.0
Acceptance		1	4.5

All but one administrator reported experiencing negative feelings arising from the described situation. Additionally, all but one administrator reported experiencing very high levels of frustration in the particular situation. Annoyance and anger were reported as the most frequently occurring negative reactions (12) while administrator anxiety was least often reported (2).

Discussion. Consistent with the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard and Miller 1939) most administrators at the college responded to specific frustration with annoyance and anger. Other responses, however, did occur. Those administrators reporting immediate reactions of confusion in the frustrating situation tended to persist in those behaviors which had, in the past, allowed them to better clarify the situation. The aim of these administrators was to reduce the confusion surrounding the frustrating situation rather than to immediately deal with the blockage. This level of response seems consistent with the fixation hypothesis (Maier 1949) which suggests that behaviors, unrelated to the overcoming of the blockage but available during the frustrating episode, are repeatedly expressed and by their expression may reduce tension. This may reinforce their use in subsequent frustrating events.

The administrator reporting the acceptance of the frustrating event indicated the futility of allowing the situation to affect him negatively. This may suggest a certain tolerance for frustration.

Administrator Reaction to Specific Frustration

The described situations involving frustration were analysed and arbitrarily divided into two types of administrator reactions: those involving some type of external expression which others in contact with the administrator might notice, and those limited to internal reactions only which were not noticed by others.

<u>Findings.</u> Fifteen administrators reported some outward expression and all tended to report a lack of anticipation that the blockage could have contributed to the intensity of their experienced frustration. Of these fifteen administrators, twelve reported that the blocked goal was significantly important to them.

The remaining seven administrators reported no external expression of their experienced frustration. Lack of blockage anticipation together with reported goal desirability was reported by three and one administrator respectively.

Table 5 depicts these types of reactions.

Table 5

Type of Administrator Expression to Frustration

Type of Reaction	N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Externally Expressed		15	68.2
Those unable to predict blockage		15	100.0
Those reporting goal desirability		12	80.0
Internally Expressed		7	31.8
Those unable to predict blockage		3	42.8
Those reporting goal desirability		1	14.2

<u>Discussion.</u> An important issue which seems to be related to the externalized expression of frustration concerns both the ability to predict a goal blockage and the desirability of attaining the goal. This seems consistent

with the positions advanced by Berkowitz (1960) and Yates (1962). They posit that individual reactions to frustration tend to become more extreme when the desire to accomplish the goal increases and the ability to predict the onset of a goal blockage decreases. It should then follow that the more extreme the administrator reaction to frustration the more likely behavior would be externalized. This trend seems to be reflected in the responses administrators made to express their job related frustrations.

Change in Administrator Reactions

Administrators were next asked to report any changes in their immediate reactions as they began dealing with the particular frustrating situation.

Findings. Eleven administrators reported moderating behaviors as they began to deal with the frustrating situation. These administrators claimed success in quickly resolving the problem which enabled them to turn their energy back to the task at hand. The administrators also experienced some degree of success in resolving the blockage; as a result, saw themselves as more productive.

The nine administrators who perceived little possibility for blockage resolution or for the protracted effort needed to resolve the frustrating situation, tended to stay angry or become more angry. Administrators who reported remaining anxious as they tried to deal with the frustrating situation tended to perceive virtually no possible resolution to the frustrating situation and seemed unhappily to accept the situation.

Table 6 summarizes the administrative responses to the question of a change in the reactions to frustration.

Table 6

Change in Administrator Reactions to Frustration

Type of Reaction	N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Moderated actions - more productivity		11	50.0
Stayed angry or became more angry		9	40.9
No change in actions - stayed anxious		2	9.1

<u>Discussion.</u> Pastore (1952) indicated that protracted resolution of goal blockages should result in continued high levels of stress and the externalization of such frustration. It should follow that, as resolution of the goal blockage begins to occur, administrative reactions to frustration would become less extreme and outward expression could moderate.

It would appear that the anticipated degree of success in problem solving resolution related to changes in administrator reaction as the frustrating situation was addressed.

Individuals perceiving rapid problem resolution seem motivated to overcome the blockage, while those who perceive long and arduous problem solving activities tend to express anger, perhaps as a tension release. Those administrators who perceived little success in resolving the frustrating situation were also those who tended to remain anxious as they addressed the problem.

What is of some interest concerns those who felt anger. These nine administrators tended to externalize their feelings and to continue to hold hostile feelings for a period of time, even after the situation had been addressed. Administrators who experienced this gave two general explanations for this effect:

a. The frustrating situation constituted a perceived personal attack on the administrator with resulting loss of esteem.

b. The resolution of the situation was not to the liking of the administrator. There was still feelings of powerlessness or inequity in the decision exercise.

Typical Reactions to High Levels of Frustration

Most administrators at the college were able to report on their feelings during the recounting of the specific situation which caused them high levels of frustration. The next interesting problem was to determine if these feelings were typical of administrator reactions to high levels of frustration in general.

In an effort to determine if the specific significant situation, as reported by the administrators at the college, represented a typical way of responding, each administrator was asked to report on general reactions to highly frustrating situations.

Findings. Administrator reports indicated that the types of response in general situations involving high levels of frustration was consistent with those reported in the specific situation. In fact, only one reaction, that of denying the situation, was not reported to occur in the specific situation. Table 7 illustrates these reactions.

Table 7

Immediate Reactions to High Levels of Administrator Frustration in General Situations

Types of Reactions N=22	Frequency	% of Total	Change *
Became more productive	8	36.4	-3
Express anger	7	31.8	-2
Keep anxious feelings inside	6	27.3	+4
Deny the situation	1	4.5	+1

* number and direction of response change from the reported specific situation.

<u>Discussion</u>. When these administrator responses are matched to those reported by administrators for the specific situation the following comparisons can be made:

a. Fewer administrators became more productive in general highly frustrating situations than they did in the reported specific situation (eight as compared with 11).

b. Fewer administrators expressed anger in general highly frustrating situations than they did in the reported specific situation (seven as compared with nine).

c. More administrators kept anxious feelings inside in general situations involving high levels of frustration than they did in the reported specific situation (six as compared with two).

d. Seven administrators at the college reported confusion in the specific situation. This was not reported as a typical response to frustration generally.

Literature on frustration which deals specifically with arousal levels (Yerkes and Dodson 1908, Spector 1978) suggests that as levels of frustration increase past an optimum point for each individual, less productivity and greater task irrelevant behaviors such as hostility and anxiety seem to result. More of the individual's energy seems to be displaced from the task in an attempt to deal with the source of frustration. Maier and Verser (1982:81) suggest that

> one effect of frustration on behavior is to cause individual's to lose sight of a goal in favor of behavior that releases tension.

From the responses summarized by Table 6 and Table 7, it was discovered that administrators at the college generally seemed either to express anger more often or to become more productive when faced with high levels of frustration in the specific reported situation. This would indicate that for some administrators, frustration seemed to approach an optimum level and administrators felt more productive. For other administrators, however, the arousal level caused by frustration appeared to go beyond the optimal level and task energy was displaced to release tension.

Performance Change in Frustrating Situations

In order to better determine whether task productivity was modified by frustration, administrators at the college were asked to report on their ability to carry out their job while under a high level of frustration.

Findings. Exactly 50% of the administrators reported no change in performance in the specific frustrating situation as opposed to only 18.2% of the administrator group reporting no performance change as a result of generally high levels of job frustration. The reported general high levels of job frustration seemed, on the other hand, to exceed the specific reported frustrating situation in two dimensions: improved task performance (31.8% vs. 9.1%) and impaired task performance (50% vs. 40.9%). Table 8 compares administrator ability to carry out the job while experiencing specific as opposed to generally high levels of frustration.

Table 8

Comparison of Administrator Perceived Abilities to Perform their Jobs in Specific and General Situations

Specific Reactions	N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Impaired Performance		9	40.9
Improved Performance		2	9.1
No Change in Performance		11	50.0
General Reactions	**N=22**	**Frequency**	**% of Total**
Impaired Performance		11	50.0
Improved Performance		7	31.8
No Change in Performance		4	18.2

<u>Discussion.</u> The results summarized in Table 8 would seem to indicate that in general frustrating situations (as opposed to the reported specific situations) administrator job performance tends to polarize. Some administrators report increased performance while others report impaired performance. To those administrators reporting impaired

functioning, frustration was seen to consume task attention and time while operating as a detractor. Administrators reporting improved task functioning experienced an energizing effect as a result of the higher level of frustration. These individuals also reported being motivated by the challenging situation.

The tabled data also suggest that administrators did not perceive the reported specific situation as a typical case involving high levels of frustration. Rather, the data would indicate that many administrators perceived the specific situation to signify a high water mark in terms of experienced frustrations. The fact that there were fewer administrator reports of performance improvement along with the higher frequency of no performance change, as compared to generally high levels of frustration, would tend to lend some support to this contention. Using this argument then, the specific situation tends to exceed the optimum arousal level for all but 9.1% of administrators at the college.

Reactions to Less Frustration

To determine next if situations involving lower levels of frustration result in a change in the perceived level of task performance, administrators were asked to report any differences in their ability to do their administrative jobs when facing moderate levels of frustration.

Findings. Six administrators who reported impaired task performance under high levels of frustration perceived task improvement under lower levels of frustration. Three administrators reported being less motivated and experiencing impaired task performance under lower levels of frustration. Seven administrators perceived a slight moderation in task performance; two experienced less improved functioning, while five experienced less impaired functioning. Six administrators experienced no performance changes; four reported being unaffected by any level of frustration, while two reported continued improvement in task functioning.

Table 9 summarizes these administrator reactions to less frustrating situations.

Table 9

Administrator Task Behavior in Less Frustrating Situations

Reactions N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Similar but not as improved	2	9.1
Similar but not as impaired	5	22.7
Improved Performance - was impaired	6	27.3
No change - no reaction to frustration	4	18.2
No change - improvement remained	2	9.1
Less Motivated - Impaired Performance	3	13.6

<u>Discussion.</u> An assumption arising from the previous sections, dealing with administrator performance changes in both the specific and general situations, indicated that high levels of frustration resulted in impaired performance for some administrators, perhaps as a result of exceeding or falling short of an optimal arousal level. Other administrators' task performance seemingly improved when the

arousal level approached the optimal level. In order to examine this assumption further, task performance of all administrators was examined under conditions of less frustration. Situations involving less extreme levels of frustration should moderate administrator perception of both task impairment and improvement. Thus, administrators who reported being energized and challenged to improve task functioning under high levels of frustration should report less challenge and therefore less task enhanced behavior under less extreme conditions of frustration. Those administrators reporting debilitating levels of frustration on task performance should indicate an enhancement of task performance in less frustrating situations. The results of the data would seem to support this contention.

Generally, administrators at the college show support for arousal theory. Enhanced or impaired task performance at one level of frustration tended to show a predicted direction of change under another level of frustration. Only 27.3% show no significant change in task performance irrespective of the level of frustration.

Performance Changes Under Varying Conditions of Frustration

The issue of improved performance under certain levels of frustration is of some interest to organizations. Certain individuals would seem to function best when the level of arousal provided by frustration is matched to their needs.

Findings. At the college, administrators reported performance gains while experiencing a variety of levels of frustration. Table 10 summarizes the data regarding administrator perception of performance improvement while experiencing frustration. In particular, improvement in performance at three levels of frustration are charted.

Table 10

Levels of Frustration Leading to Performance Gains

Levels of Frustration N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Lower levels of frustration	6	27.3
High levels of frustration	7	31.8
Specific levels of frustration	2	9.1

From self-reports, 15 (68.2%) of the administrators at the college perceived improved functioning at some level of frustration. Six administrators felt they had achieved performance gains at lower level of frustration, while seven reported these gains to occur while experiencing high levels of frustration. Two administrators reported performance gains in task functioning during those specific frustrating situations reported earlier in this chapter. Seven administrators reported no performance gains while experiencing any level of frustration.

Coping with Frustration

In order to determine whether administrators experienced discomfort with actual job related frustration, a questionnaire was administrated to all administrators asking for an indication of the degree of comfort they had with their experience of job related frustration.

Findings. Table 11 details the administrators' feelings of the degree of comfort with job related frustration.

Table 11

Administrator Comfort with Job Related Frustration

Degree of Comfort N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Very comfortable	9	41.0
Somewhat comfortable	7	31.8
Neither comfortable or uncomfortable	1	4.5
Somewhat uncomfortable	4	18.2
Very uncomfortable	1	4.5

The reports made by administrators at the college suggested that 16 (72.7%) respondents experienced feelings of relative comfort. This matches well with those administrators who reported, in the previous section, that they had experienced performance gains while experiencing some level of frustration. All but one administrator reported performance gains along with feelings of comfort in relation to job related frustration.

Discussion. Improving administrator performance is of some considerable interest to an organization. What may be of more concern to the administrator, however, is the feelings of comfort or discomfort which result from job related frustration. While comfort may not directly indicate effective performance, it may have some influence on how administrators view future job blockages. Past unhappy experiences and failures in frustrating situations may produce avoidance behaviors for certain events which may subsequently generalize to the administrative task. Past successes, on the other hand, may increase motivation for future events, leading to performance gains (Vroom 1964).

From the data summarized by Table 11, it seems that the majority of administrators at the college experienced some degree of comfort with job related frustration. It would generally appear, then, that administrators at the college seemed to experience facilitating arousal levels of frustration for most job related tasks.

When administrators reported discomfort and hence impaired performance through the experiencing of job related frustration, three contributing factors were mentioned.

a. Superordinates were perceived as unsupportive.

b. Superordinates were perceived as the source of frustration.

c. Some or significant subordinates were perceived as the source of frustration.

The interpersonal dimension, once again, seemed to account for much of the job related frustration, particularly where the levels of frustration resulted in discomfort and impaired task functioning.

Typical Behaviors When Frustrated

In order to explore more fully the reactions administrators at the college typically have to high levels of job related frustration, administrators were surveyed as to the extent they experienced certain reactions to goal blockages.

Findings. Generally, administrators reported least frequent reactions which involve denial and physical disorders when experiencing frustration. These reactions seemed to occur, on the average, somewhere between seldom and never on a scale of values. Very closely related to these reactions was that of administrator depression as a response to frustration. On the other hand, persistence in overcoming the blockage was the most frequent administrator reaction; it occurred somewhere between frequently and sometimes on a scale of values. Administrator anxiety was the next most frequently occurring response to frustration. This reaction occurred, on the average, somewhere between seldom and never. Very closely related to these reactions was that of administrator depression. Table 12 summarizes these responses.

Discussion.

Maier (1949) has suggested four typical reactions to frustration:

1. Aggression which is frequently expressed by anger.
2. Regression which is manifest by childish behaviors such as anxiety, loss of emotional control and the need for affiliation.
3. Fixation which is characterized by persistent non adaptive behavior.
4. Resignation which occurs by task withdrawal or denial, feelings of hopelessness and depression.

Each reaction can occur separately as well as in combinations with others.

Table 12

Frequency of Typical Administrator Reactions to Frustration

N=22	Frequency of Responses					
Reactions	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	X̄
Anger	1	2	5	13	1	3.5
Depression	0	1	4	10	7	4.1
Anxiety	1	5	9	6	1	3.0
Persistence	6	7	3	4	1	2.3
Denial	0	1	3	8	10	4.2
Affiliation	2	3	6	6	5	3.4
Physical Disorders	1	0	3	7	11	4.2

1. ALWAYS 2. FREQUENTLY 3. SOMETIMES 4. SELDOM 5. NEVER

The summarized data as illustrated in Table 12, suggest that few administrators at the college consistently and typically tended to react to frustration with anger, depression, anxiety, denial, or manifest physical disorders. Administrators generally report turning their attention to a persistent attempt to deal with the frustrating situation. At certain times, however, all of the above reactions are expressed. According to administrator reports, when situations are perceived to involve high levels of frustration for an administrator, tension builds and can be expressed by one or a combination of these reactions.

Assigning Blame for Frustration

To determine whether administrators engage in projecting blame while experiencing frustration, administrators were surveyed in order to identify the frequency and direction in which they engaged in blaming behavior while addressing frustration.

Findings. On the average, administrators reported that they had projected blame in situations involving frustration between sometimes and seldom on a scale of values. Additionally, most administrators at the college tended to project blame in all three directions surveyed (to the self, to others, and to the situation) depending on the nature of the situation. Very few administrators projected no blame when experiencing frustration. Table 13 summarizes administrator responses to the projection of blame.

Table 13

Frequency and Type of Administrator Blaming Behavior

Direction of Blame	N=22		Frequency of Behavior			
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	$\bar{X}$
Blame self	0	1	13	7	1	3.4
Blame others	0	4	7	7	4	3.5
Blame situation	1	3	11	5	2	3.2

1. ALWAYS 2. FREQUENTLY 3. SOMETIMES 4. SELDOM 5. NEVER

Discussion. Yates, (1962) suggests that frustration can be alleviated by the expression of any response not just an adaptive response. Frequently, individuals who experience high levels of frustration turn to previously practiced responses in an effort to dissipate tensions produced by the frustration. Maier (1949) claims that these responses tend to be fixated since they appear the same from one situation to another. Maier goes one step further to suggest that no goal-oriented responses can occur while under high levels of frustration. Any response which an individual emits will be incidental to the goal.

Blaming or projecting blame on to a variety of other sources when experiencing frustration can be one goal incidental response to many situations where an individual's esteem is threatened. While the projection of blame may not be a productive process, it may be effective in relieving a degree of tension which allows the administrator to attend to the task more effectively.

Change in Reaction Over Time

Adaptation to aversive events can occur through repeated exposures to those events (Yates 1962). If frustration is perceived as aversive to administrators and task performance is initially affected by frustration, will repeated experience with frustrating situations result in less task disruption? To determine what changes in general administrative behavior have occurred as a result of experiencing frustration during the job tenure administrators held at the college, administrators responded to the inquiry dealing with their perception of behavior change.

Findings. Generally, administrators (63.6%) reported being able to use better coping mechanisms and adopt a more mellow approach to job goal disruptions. A small number of administrators (18.2%) indicated either adopting more assertive measures over time or not changing their behaviors at all. Table 14 details these changes.

Table 14

Change in Reaction to Administrator Frustration during Tenure

Type of Change N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Better coping/more mellow	14	63.6
More assertive and angry	4	18.2
No change over time	4	18.2

Discussion. Generally, in responding to the inquiry about behavior change, administrators described general reactions which typify growing feelings of detachment and a lessening of emotional involvement in the actual frustrating event. Those administrators who generally reported the use of better coping mechanisms during their time on the job, admitted to the experiencing of feelings of futility in being emotionally involved in frustrating situations. This response may be interpreted as a type of resignation to the inevitability of frustrating situations (reported by eight) or the development of certain coping mechanisms or behavioral fixations which seem to dissipate the tension (reported by six).

Administrators who reported that they now responded more assertively, had perceived their initial reaction to be one of holding back and being `nice' while suffering the resultant internal tension and anxiety. They reported futility in the use of these past behaviors and now expressed a certain degree of satisfaction with their present level of assertiveness. Those administrators who reported no change over time indicated satisfaction with their past as well as their present reactions to frustration. These administrators, however, tended to have spent a shorter period of time in their administrative positions at the college.

SUMMARY

Administrators at the college were all able to describe one specific frustrating situation which evoked negative feelings. The inability to predict the onslaught of the frustrating event coupled with the general desirability of the goal contributed to most administrators expressing these negative feelings by means of behaviors external to themselves. Where administrators kept their reactions to frustration internal to the self, more than half were able to predict the frustrating situation and less than 15% reported goal desirability.

Generally, administrators who perceived some success in resolving the goal blockage tended to moderate their earlier negative expressions and became more productive. Administrators who remained angry or became more angry in the face of the frustrating situation generally perceived a protracted resolution to the goal blockage. Administrators who became anxious tended to view the goal blockage as unsolvable.

When administrators reported on their reactions to general high levels of frustration, they more often kept anxious feelings inside and were less prone to express anger externally. Most administrators respond to high levels of frustration with either impaired or improved task performance behavior. Lower levels of frustration resulted in a modification of the direction of task performance: impaired performance is improved upon and improved performance deteriorates.

Most administrators at the college experienced feelings of relative comfort with daily levels of job related frustration and tend on the whole, to react by trying to deal with the goal blockage. Occasionally, under high levels of frustration, negative behaviors will occur. When administrators engage in this behavior, projecting blame to the situation or the self will more often occur than blaming other individuals.

Finally, most administrators at the college generally perceived themselves as being able to cope more effectively with their experience of frustration at present than when they first assumed their administrative duties.

CHAPTER 6

CONSEQUENCES OF FRUSTRATION

Introduction

The reader is reminded that the purpose of this study was to examine the nature of administrator frustration at a community college. More specifically, the study sought to determine the sources, effects, and consequences of administrator job related frustration.

In Chapter 4, sources of administrator frustration were examined in the college setting. Job areas were identified where frustration occurred. Particular job related events which caused greatest administrator frustration were also identified along with the periodic nature of experienced frustration.

In Chapter 5, the second purpose of the study was addressed, that of the immediate effects of job related frustration to the administrator. Administrator reactions to various levels of frustration, levels of comfort with frustration, productivity when experiencing frustration, and changing reactions to frustration over time were addressed.

In this chapter, the consequences of administrator frustration to the work group, the superordinates, and to the organization are explored. Particular emphasis is placed on the perception of support administrators at the college receive from their work groups, their superordinates, and significant others. Also to be explored are the positive and negative consequences of administrator frustration to these cohort groups. The last matter to be examined is the actions taken by the college to come to grips with administrator frustration, including administrator perception as to the various methods the college could employ to address job related frustration.

Awareness of Administrator Frustration

In Chapter 5, it was reported that the majority of administrators at the college had moderated their responses to frustration during the time they held their administrative positions. Those reporting a moderation of behavior as well as a lessening of overt expressions of frustration claim to be more satisfied now than in the past with their reactions to frustration as well as with their abilities to function while experiencing frustration. Presumably, part of the administrators' feelings of satisfaction should have been reflected in their abilities to function with others in the college environment.

Administrators at the college were surveyed in order to determine their perceptions of how others in their work groups became aware of their frustrations. Work group members were also surveyed to determine the extent to which agreement existed between the administrator's perceptions and those of the members of the work group.

Findings. The results indicated that administrators at the college generally perceived their work group to be aware of administrator frustration (90.9%). Two administrators (9.1%) reported no work group awareness. This was largely due to the loose interactions and sporadic contact between these administrators and their work groups. The responses indicated that administrators most often perceived work group awareness of administrative frustration to be based on non-verbal cues such as physical venting and facial expressions (59.1%) and, to a lesser degree, by verbal indications of frustration (18.2%). The manner by which administrators made or acted upon decisions was perceived to convey frustration to the work group by three administrators (13.6%).

Table 15

Administrator Method of Indicating Frustration to the Work Group

Work Group Awareness N=22	Administrator Reports	% of Total
Non-verbal actions	13	59.1
Verbal indication	4	18.2
Decisions made or acted upon	3	13.6
No awareness by work group	2	9.1
Work Group Awareness N=42	**Work Group Reports**	**% of Total**
Non-verbal actions	13	30.9
Verbal indication	26	61.9
Decisions made or acted upon	1	2.4
No awareness by work group	2	4.8

Work group members reported that they were generally aware of administrator frustration (95.2%). Most, however, reported that awareness came from administrator verbal indications (61.9%) while fewer reported that awareness of administrator frustration came from non-verbal indications (30.9%). Only one work group member reported that awareness resulted from administrator decisions (2.4%), while two work group members reported no awareness (4.8%).

Administrator and work group responses as to how the immediate work group became aware of administrator frustration is summarized in Table 15.

Discussion. The manner by which administrators show frustration to those in their environment should be a function of mutual expectations between the administrator and the work group. When frustration is perceived by the work group, the nature of its expression by the administrator may have some consequences for the continuing relationship between the administrator and the work group.

Administrators at the college generally perceived they used non-verbal means to convey frustration. These non-verbal behaviors were reported to precede verbal expressions of frustration. When verbal indications were used to vent feelings of frustration, they were most characteristically used by those administrators who had previously reported becoming more assertive and angry as a response to frustration during their job tenure. Those administrators reporting that their decisions or actions resulted in work group awareness, indicated that the actions taken (withdrawal or aggressive behavior) might be interpreted as non-verbal behavior by work group members. It would appear then, that most administrators perceived they gave off signals which work group members could identify.

While work group members indicated they could identify administrator frustration, they reported some differences from administrators with respect to the indicators used to convey frustration. Work group members generally perceived administrators to convey frustration by verbal as opposed to the non-verbal means. Either work group members tended to be less sensitive to administrator non-verbal cues or administrators overestimated the degree to which they non-verbally conveyed frustration.

Support for the Administrator

An examination of the supportive nature of the work group for the administrator experiencing frustration will be considered next. The manner by which the work group reacted to the administrator after frustration was conveyed may reveal whether the work group could function in a supportive role.

To determine the nature of work group support for administrators at the college, administrators were asked to report on the degree and type of their work group support when they experienced job related frustrations. In an effort to compare these reports with perceptions held by the work group, the work group was also surveyed as to the nature of department support for the administrator while experiencing frustration.

Findings Five administrators reported that they perceived their work groups to respond in a very positive manner to administrator frustration while 12 reported generally positive reactions by the work group to their frustration. The remaining five administrators indicated a neutral response on the part of the work group. No administrator reported negative reactions to their frustrations by the work group.

Table 16

Reaction by Work Group Members to Administrator Frustration

As Perceived By Administrators N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Very positively	5	22.7
Generally positively	12	54.6
In a neutral manner	5	22.7
Generally negatively	0	0.0
Very negatively	0	0.0
As Perceived By Work Group N=42	**Frequency**	**% of Total**
Very positively	3	7.1
Generally positively	21	50.0
In a neutral manner	14	33.3
Generally negatively	2	4.8
Very negatively	0	0.0
No awareness of frustration	2	4.8

Work group responses as to the nature of department support of the administrator experiencing frustration revealed that three members perceived that their departments responded in a very positive manner, while 21 members perceived their department's support to be generally positive. Fourteen work group members reported neutral support and two reported generally negative support for the administrator experiencing frustration. Two work group members had no awareness of administrator frustration and therefore had no opinion with respect to department support. Table 16 summarizes these perceptions.

Discussion. Administrators at the college generally tended to feel work group support when they experienced frustration. Administrators commented on the high level of understanding that work group members showed for the various blockages administrators encounter on the job. Work group members' responses generally showed agreement with administrator perception of department support in one category, (generally positive). However, a slightly greater proportion of work group members than administrators perceived neutral (33.3% to 22.7%) and generally negative department reactions (4.8 to 0.0). A lesser proportion of work group members perceived much more positive department reactions (7.1% to 22.7%) than did administrators.

A climate in which administrators are free to release pent-up feelings seems a necessary pre-requisite for dissipating emotional tensions. Maier and Verser (1982) suggest that frustration causes tensions and creates an irrational state within an individual. They further suggest that it becomes necessary to reverse or release these tension before an individual can behave in a rational manner. Sometimes in the process of releasing tensions, administrators may become angry, criticize others, and possibly engage in scapegoating behaviors. If these behaviors by the administrators are accepted and excused as being a natural reaction for frustrated individuals, a tense and unhappy situation may be averted. Maier and Verser (1982) further indicate that the ability of a work group to act supportively in the face of administrator frustration could be important for total group solidarity and future performance. In fact, the support available to the administrator from whatever direction could be construed as an aid to dissipate feelings of isolation when experiencing frustration. The support administrators perceived they got from work group members and the reactions of support work group members perceived departments gave to administrators seemed consistent. It would appear that reasonable support was available to the administrator experiencing frustration at the college.

__Type of Work Group Support__

Of further interest is the identification of those group behaviors which indicate support for the administrator. In order to determine how the support by the work group was expressed, administrators at the college were asked to report on the type of work group reaction they perceived when the administrator was experiencing frustration.

__Findings.__ 81.8% of administrators surveyed reported that support and empathy were shown either by the work group initiating approaching and nurturant gestures or through the work group's lessening demands for administrator contact.

Only two administrators reported mixed work group support where some group members were seen to be supportive while others were non-supportive. Two administrators reported their work groups to be unaware of their experienced frustration. Table 17 summarizes these responses.

Table 17

Type of Work Group Support to Administrators Experiencing Frustration

Type of Support N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Approach/support and empathy	9	40.9
Retire/support and empathy	9	40.9
Mixed group/some support only	2	9.1
Unaware	2	9.1

Discussion. These results suggest that administrators perceived a difference between those who showed empathy and support by their approach to the administrator during his/her experience with frustration, and those who showed support and empathy by their sensitivity in staying out of the administrator's way. This sensitivity for administrator frustration resulted in an increase of interpersonal space between administrators and work groups. During theses times, many work groups would take additional task responsibility, thereby freeing administrator problem solving energy. Many administrators reported that these differences in work group behaviors resulted from an administrator preference either to be left alone to deal with the situation or to invite work group contact which might aid in the debriefing of the problem situation.

Administrators and work groups interacted both formally and informally on a regular basis. Generally, administrators reported that the nature of the relationship between themselves and their work group was a closer knit one than any other within the college. While much of this may have been a result of the close physical proximity between the administrator and the work group, the continuation and effectiveness of this relationship seemed also to be dependent on the level of mutual support. Certainly the perception of support by the work group for the frustrated administrator seemed an important consideration for an effective relationship.

Type of Superordinate Support

The relationship administrators have with their superordinates seems to affect the degree and type of support they experience. With increased physical proximity between administrators, the nature of the support should also increase. To determine what perceptions administrators had of superordinates' support, administrators at the college were asked to report on the type of support they felt superordinates gave them.

Findings. One-half of the administrators felt generally supported by their superordinates. The other half perceived either a lack of support (31.8%) or no awareness (18.2%) by superordinates for their frustration. Table 18 summarizes the type of support administrators, who are experiencing frustration, perceived receiving from their superordinates.

Table 18

Type of Superordinate Support to Administrators Experiencing Frustration

Type of Support N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Approach/supportive and empathic	10	45.5
Retire/supportive and empathic	1	4.5
Insensitive and unsupportive	7	31.8
Unaware	4	18.2

Discussion. When these responses are compared to those made by administrators about their subordinates (work groups), certain differences in the type of support offered by each referent group is evident. These differences are apparent in the following areas:

a. The greater incident of perceived insensitivity and lack of support by the superordinate as compared to subordinates.

b. The greater ratio of approach gestures as opposed to retiring behaviors (when showing support) by superordinates as compared with subordinates.

c. The slightly greater incidence of superordinate as compared with subordinate unawareness of administrator frustration.

Those administrators reporting greater levels of superordinate insensitivity to frustration explained this occurrence to result from the generation of more frustration at the administrative, as opposed to the work group, level. This appeared to substantiate the administrators' contention in Chapter 4 that much of interpersonal frustration was generated at the superordinate level. It should be noted that administrators who reported unsupportive superordinates generally perceived their superordinates also to be the source of the frustration. At times, these superordinates were reported to have blind spots regarding administrator frustration. This resulted in little awareness of and sensitivity to the feelings of the administrator.

The results suggested that when administrators acted as superordinates to other administrators, they tended to show more support for their subordinates by approach gestures. This seemed particularly true when they became aware that their administrative subordinates were experiencing frustration. Perhaps these administrators perceived the well-being of their subordinates to be an integral part of their job responsibilities and tended to take the initiative to offer support. Equally possible is an explanation which suggests that when superordinates tended to be sources of frustration and superordinates became aware of their role in frustrating subordinates, they may have wished to dissipate the effects of frustration by offering their support.

Type of Significant Others' Support

Significant others to the administrator in the college, (exclusive of superordinates and the work group), may also play a role in offering the administrator support during episodes of frustration. This can only occur if these others become aware of administrator frustration.

In order to determine if any other significant individual or group at the college played a supportive role during administrator felt frustration, administrators were asked to report on the reactions of significant others to the administrator.

Findings. Fourteen administrators perceived no awareness or support from significant others. Seven administrators reported supportive gestures of varying types; five reported approach behaviors and two reported being left alone (retiring behaviors) as a gesture of support. One administrator reported perceiving nonsupportive gestures from significant others. Table 19 summarizes these reactions.

Table 19

Type of Significant Others' Support to Administrators Experiencing Frustration

Type of Support N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Approach/Supportive	5	22.7
Retire/Supportive	2	9.1
Nonsupportive	1	4.6
Unaware	14	63.6

Discussion. These administrator perceptions suggest that most awareness of administrator frustration was generally confined to the work group and the immediate superordinate. Physical proximity again seemed to play a role in support shown to the frustrated administrator. A lack of contact between the administrator and significant others may have precluded any awareness of frustration and hence the absence of accompanying gestures of support. The responses also tended to reinforce the contention (originally made in reference to work group support) that administrator preference determines the type of supportive gesture. Others, on cue from the administrator, would shown support by an empathic approach or by staying out of the administrator's way.

Effects of Frustration on the Work Group

The next point of interest has to do with the effects of administrator frustration on work group performance. To determine both the positive and negative consequences on the work group from administrator experienced frustration, administrators at the college were surveyed and asked to describe the effects of their frustration on their work group.

Findings. The majority of the negative consequences reported by administrators referred to tensions and discomfort felt by the work group (54.5%). These same administrators reported that the positive consequence of their experienced frustration was more productivity from the work group. Eight administrators reported no negative consequences and four administrators reported that no positive consequences to the work group resulted from their job related frustration. Two administrators reported that their work groups tended to lose motivation as a consequence of administrator experienced frustration while six administrators reported the development of a better team effort by the entire work group. Table 20 describes both the negative and positive effects of administrator frustration on the work group based on administrator perception.

Table 20

Positive and Negative Consequences of Administrator Frustration for the Work Group

Type of Negative Consequence N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Tension and discomfort for group	12	54.5
Work group loses motivation	2	9.1
No negative consequences	8	36.4
Type of Positive Consequence N=22	**Frequency**	**% of Total**
More productivity	12	54.5
Better sense of team	6	27.3
No positive consequences	4	18.2

Work group members were also surveyed and asked to categorize their perceptions of the effects on the department following the administrator's experience with job related frustration. While most administrators were able to report both positive and negative effects, half of those work group members who reported an awareness of administrator frustration viewed this as having generally to extremely positive effects on the department. The other half reported mixed positive and negative effects. No work group member reported any generally to extremely negative effects of administrator frustration on the department. Two members reported no awareness of administrator frustration. Table 21 summarizes work group members' responses to the effects of administrator frustration on the department.

Table 21

Effects of Administrator Frustration on the Department as Perceived by the Work Group

Nature of the Effect N=42	Frequency	% of Total
Extremely positive effects	2	4.8
Generally positive effects	18	42.8
Mixed positive and negative effects	20	47.6
Generally negative effects	0	0.0
Extremely negative effects	0	0.0
Not aware of frustrations	2	4.8

Discussion. The effects of administrative frustration can be disruptive to the milieu of the work group. Interferences with normal functioning, caused by frustration, can occur whether or not the work group shows support to the administrator. Some of these frustrations may operate to increase the level of positive arousal in the work group thereby enhancing task performance (Maier and Verser 1982). The converse can also be true. Some incidents of frustration may serve to unite the group, while others may result in group fragmentation. Frustration can therefore have both positive and negative consequences to the work group in the same manner as it has to the individual administrator.

Administrator responses indicated that the same 12 administrators reporting increased levels of discomfort also reported increased group productivity. This suggested that the increased level of group arousal, producing discomfort for the work group as a result of administrator frustration, seemed to be responsible for greater task performance. The four administrators reporting the lack of any consequences to their experienced frustration, generally acknowledged the looseness of interaction between the administrator and the work group. The six administrators reporting greater team efforts did not perceive a noticeable increase in productivity but did notice increased levels of individual commitment to the group with a resulting increase in the expression of group satisfaction.

The fact that no work group member viewed administrator frustration as having negative effects on the department, may indicate the nature of support, within the department, for the administrator. It may also be seen to indicate that work group members generally viewed the effects of administrator frustration to the department more positively than did administrators.

Work group results may support the contention of certain administrators that their frustration engendered a better feeling of team participation or some other related positive effect to the department. Perhaps work group members actually got involved with the situation causing administrator frustration and worked together with the administrator in order to reduce the threat the situation may have presented to the department. Some administrators had attributed this behavior to their departments.

<u>Effects of Frustration on Superordinates</u>

In addition to affecting the work group, administrator frustration can also be disruptive to superordinates. In order to determine both the positive and negative effects of administrator frustration on the superordinate, administrators at the college were asked to describe their perception of these effects.

<u>Findings.</u> Eighteen administrators reported no negative consequences while ten reported no positive consequences to the superordinate as a result of administrator experienced frustration. Ten administrators perceived positive consequences to the superordinate by increased levels of mutual support and contact between the administrator and superordinate as a result of experienced frustration. Two administrators reported engaging with the superordinate in a mutual process of discovery for solutions to blockages. This led to an enhancement of the working relationship with the superordinate. The only perceived negative consequence to the superordinate involved feelings of discomfort and tension. This was reported by four administrators. Table 22 summarizes these responses.

<u>Discussion.</u> Administrator frustration can also be disruptive to the milieu and working arrangements involving the superordinate; it can disrupt routine and focus task based energy on the nature of the relationship between administrators. This may have the effect of accentuating

negative feelings brought to the surface by frustrating experiences. It is also possible for the effects of frustration to be energizing and to stimulate creativity which may be brought to bear on the problem solving behaviors. Increased and rewarding contact between administrators should serve to solidify their working relationship and increase mutual commitment to joint participation.

Table 22

Positive and Negative Consequences of Administrator Frustration for Superordinates

Type of Negative Consequence N=22	Frequency	% of Total
No negative consequences	18	81.8
Tension and discomfort	4	18.2
Type of Positive Consequence N=22	**Frequency**	**% of Total**
Mutual support and contact	10	45.5
No positive consequences	10	45.5
Sense of discovery	2	9.0

The consequences of administrator frustration to the superordinate appeared more clear-cut than those involving the work group. Fewer negative or positive consequences were perceived to accrue to the superordinate than to the work group. This may have been a direct result of the difference in the amount of physical contact between administrators and the two cohort groups, administrator-work group contact being greater. It may also have been a condition of the particular type of interaction between the administrator and the cohort groups. Earlier, the superordinate was reported to initiate a higher ratio of approach gestures than retiring gestures toward the frustrated administrator as compared to that of work group members. This fact may have resulted in the perception of fewer negative superordinate consequences as an effect of administrator frustration. When the superordinate did not initiate approach behaviors, the administrator may have perceived the superordinate to be unaware and thus unaffected by frustration.

<u>Effects of Frustration on Significant Others</u>

A previous section, which dealt with the support by significant others for administrators experiencing frustration, revealed that those outside the work group and exclusive of the superordinate had little awareness of administrator frustrations. With this in mind, the effects of administrator frustration, either positive or negative, on significant others should not be significant.

Administrators were asked to report on both positive and negative consequences for their experienced frustration to significant others.

<u>Findings.</u> The results indicated fewer positive consequences to significant others (41%) when compared with the work group (81.8%) and the superordinate (54.5%) but greater negative consequences (31.8%) as compared to the superordinate (18.2%) from administrator frustration. No negative or positive consequences to significant others were

reported by 15 and 13 administrators respectively. Seven administrators reported the slowing of productivity as a negative consequence while nine administrators reported an improvement of service and dialogue between themselves and others as a positive consequence. Table 23 summarizes administrator responses regarding the effects of their frustration on significant others.

Table 23

Positive and Negative Consequences of Administrator Frustration for Significant Others

Type of Negative Consequence N=22	Frequency	% of Total
No negative consequences	15	68.2
Productivity slows	7	31.8
Type of Positive Consequence N=22	**Frequency**	**% of Total**
No positive consequences	13	59.0
Improvement of service and dialogue	9	41.0

Discussion. Productivity and the ability to maintain or improve service are the common threads that run through administrators' interaction with significant others. Significant others achieve their significance to the administrator by their relationship to the administrators' task environment; that is, they provide services necessary but ancillary to the accomplishment of the administrator's goals. Administrators at the college reported that they tended to have received these services rather than to have provided them. When administrators experienced frustration and significant others became aware of this, one of the two following processes seemed to occur:

1. The frustrated administrator approached or was approached by the significant other and problem solving behavior which facilitated or reduced performance of, the service to the administrator occurred.

2. The frustrated administrator and the significant other choose not to contact during the course of frustration and service to the administrator was negatively affected.

Where the administrator, by virtue of the job function, was in active contact with the significant other, greater positive as well as negative consequences to the significant other occurred as a result of administrator frustration. Modifying this picture somewhat was the fact that most administrators at the college did not need constant contact with significant others; consequently administrator frustration would appear not to be as great a consideration [illegible] most significant others as it would be to the work group [illegible] the superordinate.

Actions Taken to Address Administrator Frustration

Administrators reporting the consequences of their frustration to superordinates tended to include only their immediate superordinate in their reaction. Of some interest were the various behaviors and policy enactments of the senior level superordinate group (who exerted influence on all subordinate administrators), in terms of support for administrator felt frustration.

Both administrators and work group members at the college were surveyed in order to determine the frequency of actions taken by the college (the executive group) to address their job related frustrations.

Findings. Only six administrators reported no actions taken by the college to address their experienced frustration, while 16 reported some frequency of action taken. No administrator reported an ongoing college-wide plan to address administrator frustration.

Table 24

Actions Taken by the College
to Address Administrator Frustration

Frequency of Action	* Admin	%	** Wrk Grp	%
Ongoing actions taken	0	00.0	1	2.4
Many actions taken	3	13.7	3	7.2
Moderate number of actions taken	7	31.9	2	4.8
A few actions taken	6	27.2	13	30.9
No actions taken	6	27.2	23	54.7

Type of Action N=16	* Frequency	% of Total
No one consistent action	8	36.3
Workshops and retreats	3	13.7
Delays which exacerbated frustration	3	13.7
Policy enactments	2	9.1

*Administrators' Responses (N=22)
**Work Group Responses (N=42)

Work group members perceived proportionally fewer actions taken to address administrator frustration. Twenty three work group members felt no actions were taken by the college to address administrator frustration while 13 members felt few actions were taken. Only six work group members reported moderate to ongoing actions taken to address administrator frustration.

When the 16 administrators reporting some frequency of action were asked to identify the type of action taken by the college to address their job related frustration, eight administrators could not identify any one consistent action. They indicated a variety of college reactions to administrator frustration, such as workshops and policy changes.

The remaining eight administrators reported one prominent action tendency taken by the college to address administrator frustration. Another three administrators reported delaying actions which tended to exacerbate administrator frustration. Table 24 summarizes these reports.

Discussion. Administrators reported mixed perceptions as to the actions which were taken by the college to address administrator frustration. When actions were reported, administrators were further divided as to whether or not the actions were beneficial. While administrators were split as to the perception of action frequency taken by the college, they tended to believe the college could have taken more initiative in addressing their job related frustration. This belief seemed to occur in response to the perception that many superordinates acted as sources of frustration rather than acting as avenues for frustration reduction.

Work group members perceived fewer actions taken by the college to deal with their administrator's frustration. This might be explained by the less frequent incidence of contact between work group member and senior levels of administration as compared to the nature of administrator - senior superordinate contact. Work group members seemed to be generally aware of the frustration the administrator experienced but not as aware of those behaviors which administrators and their superordinates engaged in to alleviate frustration at the department level.

In Chapter 4, it was reported that administrators at the college perceived the major sources of frustration to originate primarily from interpersonal events involving superordinates and secondarily from subordinates. Superordinates were reported, many times, to be the source of the frustrating event and sometimes not to recognize these effects on subordinate administrators. When recognition did occur and superordinates desired to show support, they tended to make more approaching as opposed to retiring gestures to subordinates. These approaching gestures of support for the administrator experiencing frustration, however, were perceived as being a response initiated by the particular superordinate and not representative of college support.

Effectiveness of Actions Taken to Address Frustration

While most administrators felt the college acted in some manner to deal with frustration at the department head level, work group members had reported that they generally perceived little action taken to address administrator frustration. What is of further interest is the perception of both groups as to the effectiveness of the actions taken. Accordingly, administrators and work group members were surveyed as to the effectiveness of the actions taken by the college to deal with administrator frustration.

Findings. Of the 16 administrators who reported some action taken to deal with frustration at the department head level, slightly greater than half (56.2%) felt the actions taken were generally effective; while five reported the actions were generally or highly ineffective. Only two administrators felt the actions taken by the college were neither effective or ineffective.

Of the 19 work group members who reported some action taken by the college, only five reported the actions taken were generally effective; while another five reported the actions were generally ineffective. Nine work group members felt the actions taken were neither effective or ineffective. Table 25 summarizes these perceptions.

Table 25

Effectiveness of Action Taken by the College to Address Administrator Frustration

Effectiveness of Action	*Admin	%	**Wrk Grp	%
Highly effective	0	0.0	0	0.0
Generally effective	9	56.2	5	26.3
Not effective or ineffective	2	12.5	9	47.4
Generally ineffective	4	25.0	5	26.3
Highly ineffective	1	6.3	0	0.0

*Administrator Response (N=16) **Work Group Response (N=19)

Discussion. Work group members seemed more divided than administrators as to the effectiveness of the actions which were taken to deal with administrator frustration by the college. Perhaps their lack of direct involvement in those situations concerning their administrator and superordinates at the senior level may account for this. Administrator attendance at workshops and retreats did not involve work group members. The work group members' only way of reacting to the effectiveness of these situations may have been as a consequence of administrator report or by way of rumor.

Actions Which Reduce Frustrations

In order to determine the range of response or, conversely, the degree of uniformity in administrator perception as to how the college should have responded to administrator frustration, administrators at the college were surveyed for their comments.

Findings. Most administrators (40.9%) perceived that increased contact between administrative levels would have addressed much of their high level frustration. More professional development (22.7%), more timely response by senior administration to issues (18.2%), and more visible administrator support by superordinates (13.7%) were other suggested palliatives for combating job related frustration. Finally, there was one suggestion to remove senior administrator ego involvement in issues. Table 26 summarizes these responses.

Table 26

Ideal College Responses to Administrator Frustration

Ideal Response N=22	Frequency	% of Total
Improved contact between levels	9	40.9
More professional development	5	22.7
More timely responses	4	18.2
Better support by superordinate	3	13.7
Depersonalize the issues	1	4.5

Discussion. An ideal condition is often desired and seldom attained. Discovering flaws in any situation requires those discovering them have some conception of an ideal situation, however unattainable its nature. It seems reasonable, therefore, to suggest that administrators acquire insights into more effective means of goal accomplishment in their jobs as they acquire experience.

Administrators at the college generally agreed that frustration is an integral part of their jobs. They, however, did perceive ways by which the levels and types of frustrations could periodically be reduced. Of note are the nature of responses made by administrators with greatest experience in their administrative jobs. These administrators tended to respond with the greatest level of detail to a desired ideal condition of dealing with administrator frustration.

Generally, responses to administrator frustration were localized to upper administrative levels involving both the immediate superordinate as well as the senior executive group. This seemed consistent with earlier reports that the greatest source of frustration originated from these levels.

A theme which appeared to run through administrator responses concerned the wish for increased contact between all levels of administration. Many respondents desired that the type of interrelating currently present at the department head-work group level should also occur at higher levels of administrator functioning. The same administrators were quick to indicate that, at present, concerted attempts were being made to achieve this process. A possible obstacle to the accomplishment of this desirable objective is the nature of physical proximity between the various levels of administration.

SUMMARY

Most administrators at the college perceived they expressed frustration to their work groups primarily through non-verbal behaviors. Work group members, on the other hand, reported that their awareness of administrator frustration came primarily through verbal behaviors. There was general agreement as to both administrator and work group perception of the reactions of departments to administrator frustration. However, more administrators than work group members perceived very positive reactions to administrator frustration as coming from the department.

Administrators felt that when work groups perceived administrator frustration, they tended to react positively, showing empathy and support toward the administrator both through approach and withdrawal gestures. Superordinates, on the other hand, were perceived to show support to frustrated administrators mainly through approach gestures.

Significant others to the administrator appeared to be the group most unaware of administrator frustration; they were followed in order by the superordinate and the work group. The degree of awareness of administrator frustration at the college appeared to be directly related to the degree of physical contact and subsequent job related activities which took place between the administrator and the referent group. When significant others appeared to be aware of administrator frustration they were perceived by administrators to be more supportive than superordinates but less supportive than the work group. The lack of perceived superordinate support for administrator experienced frustration was attributed to the superordinate who more often acted as a source of frustration than the other cohort groups.

Administrators perceived a greater frequency of both positive and negative consequences to the work group than to any other cohort group as a result of administrator frustration. The fewest perceived negative consequences of administrator frustration tended to occur to the superordinate group.

While administrators tended to report both tension and discomfort as a negative consequence to the work group, more administrators reported positive than negative consequences. Most administrators mentioned work group productivity along with more effective team participation as positive effects of administrator frustration. In general, work group members viewed the effects of administrator frustration as being a positive influence on the department.

A majority of work group members perceived no college action to address administrator frustration. While administrator reports were more optimistic, administrators at the college had mixed perceptions as to the frequency and type of action taken by the college to address their job related frustration. Generally, administrators reported that the college might have done more about their experienced job related frustrations. Work group members were divided on reports of the effectiveness of actions taken by the college to address administrator job related frustration. Proportionally more administrators than work group members felt the college had taken some action to deal with frustration at the department head level.

Administrators desired improved contact between administrative levels, more professional development, more timely responses to their request, and better support by their superordinates as a means to address future frustration. Those administrators having the longest tenure in office seemed to offer a greater number and more detailed descriptions of what the college might do to address administrator job related frustration. Most administrators pointed out that many of their suggested corrections are currently being implemented in response to administrators job related frustration.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of Chapter 7 is to review the objectives of the study, to summarize the findings and conclusions reported in earlier chapters, and based on these findings, to list conclusions for the study as a whole. Additionally, this chapter presents some implications of the findings of the study for the practice of administration as well as for future research and theorizing in the field.

The chapter contains six sections: (1) an overview of the purpose of the study, including a description of the conceptual framework used in the study and a brief review of related literature, (2) a brief description of the methodology of the study, (3) a review of selected findings, (4) a general discussion of the findings, (5) a presentation of the conclusions based on the findings, and (6) a discussion of the implications of the study for the practice of administration and for future research and theorizing.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to explore the sources, the immediate effects, and the long term consequences of job related frustration as these relate to administrators at a community college.

More specifically, three primary objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the sources of administrator job related frustration as it applies to operations within a community college environment; this phase of the research focused on

   a. an identification of job areas where frustration had occurred,

   b. an identification of those job events causing the greatest amount of administrator frustration, and

   c. the frequency of experienced frustration.

2. To determine the immediate effects of experienced job related frustration for administrators within a community college environment; this phase of the study explored

   a. the types of immediate reactions by administrators both to specific and general sources of frustration,

   b. the relationships of job related frustration to administrator productivity,

   c. the nature of administrator reactions to varying levels of frustration,

   d. the perceptions of administrator comfort or discomfort when experiencing job related frustration, and

   e. the stability of administrator reactions to frustration over time;

3. To determine the consequences of administrator job related frustration for various individuals and referent groups within the community college; this phase of the study examined

   a. administrator perceptions of the support received from their work groups, superordinates, and significant others in the college setting,

   b. the positive and negative consequences of administrator frustration for these cohort groups,

c. the actions taken by the college in coming to grips with the problem of job related frustration affecting administrators, and

d. administrator perceptions of the actions which the college could ideally have taken to address administrator job related frustration.

Conceptual Framework

The framework within which the study was conducted was provided for by the following concepts:

1. Administrators experience sources of job related frustration from obstructions, delays, and conflicts in interpersonal, task related, resources related and technology related areas within the organization.

2. The immediate effects of these frustrators to administrators include feelings of anger, depression, and anxiety. The administrator may in turn exhibit behaviors such as withdrawal, fixation of responding, denial, regression, and resignation as a consequence of these feelings.

3. The long term consequences to the organization from these frustrators are a function of the manner in which the administrator performs his/her duties and the nature of the relationship between the administrator and individuals and groups within the organization.

A model was adopted which conceptualized these three components as a sequence in the emergence of administrator job related frustration. In this study each component was investigated as part of the focus into the nature of administrator frustration.

<u>Review of Related Literature</u>

The literature reviewed in the study dealt with the following perspectives of the theorizing and research on frustration:

1. Theories which conceptualized frustration to be a distinct entity and concentrated on behavioral outcomes.

2. Theories which conceptualized frustration as an integrated part of behavioral theory and recognizes the existence of numerous independent variables in frustrating situations.

3. Theories which conceptualize frustration to be a construct or an intervening variable acting as a mediator between goal interference and some consequent behavior.

The following generalizations were extracted from the various theories and research studies concerning the nature of frustration in organizations.

1. Goal blockages, delays or impediments to goal accomplishment appeared to be generally accepted as antecedents to feelings of frustration.

2. Most theorizing about the nature of frustration tended to concentrate on describing the immediate effects of frustration.

3. Very little attention had been devoted in the literature to the long term consequences of frustration in organizations.

4. Concepts such as conflict and stress in

organizations which are related to and in some instances overlap with the concept of frustration have been popular t[illegible] research.

Most of the attention concerning frustration in organizations has been concentrated at the operations level.

NATURE OF THE STUDY

The study examined the sources, immediate effects, and consequences of administrator job related frustration within an Alberta community college. Direct interviewing and a questionnaire survey were employed in order to gather data from all full time administrators. A sample of faculty members was also surveyed by questionnaire in order to determine the extent of commonly shared perceptions between the administrators and their subordinates.

The study was timely in that the college had just experienced a change in senior level administration which followed several years of faculty-administration friction. The study examined administrator job related frustration for the academic year immediately prior to the change in senior level administration.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS REPORTED IN PRECEDING CHAPTERS

This section details in point form the findings which were reported earlier.

1. Administrators reported that interpersonal sources of frustration occurred with greatest frequency and tended most often to involve the superordinate as the specific

source of frustration. Task related sources of frustration such as obstacles to decision making and lack of job preparation occurred with second most frequent mention, while resource related sources of frustration, particularly inadequate capital funding received the third most frequent mention. Technology related frustrators, which included a lack of available expertise in problematic situations, received the least frequent mention by administrators.

2. The job events which caused administrators the greatest amount of frustration were also those in the interpersonal area and involved the superordinate as the major contributor. Task related and resource related frustrators, in order, were identified as the next greatest sources of frustration at the college.

3. Administrators were generally divided in their reports on the frequency of occurrence of significant levels of job related frustration. Approximately half of the respondents cited daily and weekly experiences of significant frustration while the remainder reported monthly and less frequent occurrences. The various work groups generally felt that administrators experienced fewer occurrences of frustration than the administrators themselves reported.

4. Administrators, when asked to describe a particularly significant frustrating event, tended to describe events which included very high levels of frustration and involved negative reactions on their part.

Annoyance and anger were reported to be the most frequently occurring negative reactions.

5. Administrators who reported an inability to anticipate the blockage of a perceived desirable goal, tended generally to have negative feelings and to express these negative feelings in external ways, that is, in such a way that others would notice.

6. Administrators having success in overcoming a goal blockage tended to moderate their negative reactions and to perceive themselves as becoming more productive. Those administrators perceiving no resolution of the problem or perceiving a protracted time to resolve the goal blockage tended to maintain or increase the negative reactions associated with the situation.

7. Administrators reported that they kept negative feelings to themselves in most frustrating situations. They, however, reported expressing these feelings in situations involving high levels of frustration.

8. Administrators reported that their job performance changed under conditions of varying amounts of frustration. Job performance tended to increase as administrators experienced optimal amounts of frustration and hence probably optimal amounts of arousal. Administrators perceived that their job performance decreased as frustration varied in amount (decreased and increased) around this level, thereby showing support for arousal theory.

9. Administrators reported feelings of relative comfort

for the job related frustration they experienced at the college. Discomfort was reported when superordinates were perceived as unsupportive and/or as sources of frustration.

10. Administrators generally tended to persist in their attempts to overcome goal blockages rather than to withdraw from the situation and express negative feelings. However, during those times, when high levels of frustration were experienced and feelings of stress increased, administrators admitted to expressing reactions such as anger, depression, anxiety, and denial.

11. Administrators at the college sometimes engaged in projecting blame to the situation or the self, as opposed to blaming others, when experiencing frustration.

12. Administrators perceived themselves as being better able to cope with experiences of frustration at present than they had done when they first assumed their positions. Some perceived themselves becoming less emotionally involved in frustrating situations while others reported responding more assertively. In most cases, administrators admitted to an increasing ability to detach themselves emotionally from job events.

13. Administrators reported showing feelings of frustration to those around them primarily by non-verbal means where as work group members perceived their administrators using verbal means in revealing their frustrations.

14. Administrators tended to feel the support of their

work group when experiencing frustration. Work group members generally confirmed the administrators' perceptions of such support.

15. When experiencing frustration, the administrator perceived that the support shown them by work group members was of two types; namely, active approach behaviors and withdrawal supportive behaviors. On the other hand, support by the superordinate tended to be shown by means of approach rather than withdrawal behaviors. The support shown by the superordinate was reported to be less than that shown by the work group. Superordinates were identified by most administrators to be a major source of their feelings of frustration.

16. Awareness of administrator frustration was usually confined to the work group and to the immediate superordinate. Generally, the lack of frequent contact with others in the college precluded these others becoming aware of the administrator frustration and therefore also precluded their offering any support.

17. Administrators perceived that more of both the positive and negative consequences of their frustration affected their work group than any other individual or group within the college. The superordinate was perceived to be least affected by any negative consequences of administrator frustration.

18. Work group members reported no negative consequences for the department as a result of administrator frustration. Also these members generally perceived that

there were more positive consequences for the department than the administrators themselves perceived.

19. The administrators' significant others were perceived to have experienced fewer positive consequences of administrator frustration and more negative consequences than were experienced by superordinates.

20. Administrators reported that no college-wide plan existed to address their job related frustrations, and although acknowledging that some actions had been taken to address this matter, felt that more could have been done. Work group members reported fewer incidents of actions taken by the college to address administrator frustration than did administrators themselves. Responses to administrator frustration were perceived to be those initiated by particular superordinates and these were not viewed to be part of a general concerted effort by senior administration to address frustration.

21. Work group members reported that the effects of actions taken by the college to address administrator frustration were mixed, some of these actions were perceived to be beneficial and others detrimental.

22. When asked to report on what the college might do to better address their job related frustrations, administrators suggested increased contact with all levels of administration, more timely responses to requests, more professional development, and more support by their immediate superordinates. Administrators with more job

related experience were more specific as to the manner in which frustrators could be addressed.

The findings in the study tended to support the the conceptual model detailed in Figure 4 of Chapter 3. Sources of frustration comprised of goal thwarting or blockage, role conflict or role/personality conflict were perceived by administrators to occur in the college. These perceptions seemed to have triggered changes in administrator affect. The changes in administrative affect seemed to have certain immediate effects both on the administrator and his/her task performance. Administrator behaviors such as response fixation, aggression, resignation, withdrawal as well as innovation and creative problem solving were reported to have been the result. These administrator responses had consequences both for other individuals and work groups in the college generally resulting in enhanced task performance at certain times and dysfunctional performance at other times. For these reasons the conceptual framework which served as the basis for the study has been supported.

GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Sources of Frustration

The source of frustrating incidents can affect administrative behavior. Administrators' perceptions of the sources of their frustration may determine where and how their energies will be directed. The ability to detect potential obstacles to job completion and goal attainment might enable administrators to prepare themselves to cope with threats to goal attainment. Motivation level, feelings of self-esteem and perhaps even the job survival of the administrator may thus be affected. The desire to predict and control one's environment seems to be a widespread concern (Coffer and Appley 1964).

Interruptions in goal-seeking behavior may produce frustration when anticipated goal attainment is believed important. This would suggest that an unanticipated condition (environmental or other) could be viewed in a negative manner by any administrator. The prediction and localization of potential sources of frustration should enable administrators to address the frustrating conditions. Predicting the sources of frustration should be of interest in organizations where there is concern about minimizing the effects of frustration on the administrator.

Katz and Kahn (1966) suggest that any organization requires three behavioral prerequisites in order to function. People must be attracted to join and remain in the organization, they must dependably perform the tasks for which they are hired, and they must engage in some form of creative and innovative behavior at work. While organizations must come to grips with certain motivational problems in order to function effectively (a concern with what energizes, directs, and sustains employee behavior), they must also be concerned with organizational effects on employee motives as these change, are impeded, and conflict with each other. This suggests that much of the frustration in an organization has its source in interpersonal interaction associated with the job. In this respect, frustration patterns at the college appear to be no exception. Frustration was reported as a natural outcome when administrators perceive delays or blockages to their desired organizational expectations, behaviors, and goals.

Much human activity involves following routines and previously learned procedures. Many jobs can be classified in this manner. They can be performed effectively without the individual having to make difficult decisions. Satisfaction in these instances results from successful application of these routine procedures.

When jobs are less routine and complex decision making are more often required, the progress toward goal attainment becomes more tortuous. Additionally, as complexity increases, job roles and any associated job descriptions are subject to varying interpretations. As a result, an administrator may become aware of the contradictions and pressures which arise from the differing expectations others have for the way his job is to be performed. Such conflicting expectations have been reported as sources of frustrations by some administrators at the college.

Complicating this work situation are the varying aspirations of participating individuals in each work group. When people are brought together in groups at work, their individual aspirations are put aside or submerged into the group will. When aspirations are set aside, individual goals are delayed. This may engender a sense of frustration. The fabric of any organization is fraught with examples of unmet personal aspirations which in turn can produce frustration in organizations. While this condition undoubtedly exists at the college, it is difficult to unravel the personal from the job related dimension. Both may be considered to operate interactively and their combined expression may be felt in terms of job related frustration. If this can be applied to the college, the generally reported low periodic incidence of job related frustration would suggest that many administrators experience low personal levels of frustration as well.

In order to understand more clearly the effects of frustration on organizational behavior, the identification and examination of the sources which are instrumental in the production of frustration seems justified. Lawson (1965:41) has identified seven general conditions which contribute to the frustration process and which may be viewed as general source conditions for frustration:

1. Non-reinforcement after a history of reinforcement - interfering with the maintenance of a goal.

2. Preventing completion of a reinforced response sequence - stopping short of goal acquisition.

3. Preventing a response aroused by goal stimuli - blocking goal behavior.

4. Changes in incentive conditions - arbitrarily varying the payoff for goal attainment.

5. Failure - inability to achieve goal conditions.

6. Use of hypothetical situations - simulations to produce frustration.

7. Use of punishment and conflict as antecedent

conditions to frustration.

Each of the above conditions may create frustration for administrators particularly when the attaining of individual needs compete with organizational goals.

Questions that organizations must address concern the maintenance of appropriate job behavior toward effective goal functioning given a pervasive and omnipresent level of frustration. In other words, the following questions must be answered. Will the administrator continue to act in a goal directed manner? To what extent will the original intensity surrounding the achievement of goals change? In what direction will the change be manifest? Part of the answer to these rather complex questions may be found in the examination of the sources and direction of job related frustration. Another part of the answer may be discovered by examining the effects of frustration on the administrator.

Immediate Effects of Frustration

Frustration generally results in reactions both internal and external to the frustrated individual. Different theorists have identified a variety of individual reactions to frustration. Aggression (Dollard and Miller 1939), regression (Barker, Dembo, and Lewin 1941), fixation (Maier 1949), and resignation (Amsel 1951) have all been identified as symptoms indicating that frustration was present. Such reactions are viewed as an externalization of frustration. Maier and Verser (1982:76) posit that

> ...symptoms of frustration should be observed primarily to determine whether an individual's behavior is a reaction to frustration or an attempt to solve a problem.

Such an action may be particularly valuable since a frustrating behavior seems unrelated to goal-oriented behavior.

The type of reaction or the symptoms of frustration seem not to form a "...logical connection with the situation in which they occur" (Maier and Verser 1982:77). The expression of frustration appears to be related to the availability of objects for the purpose of displacing tension. Thus, certain objects may be the target for aggression, or regression simply because they are readily available and are socially acceptable outlets. Certain behaviors which are practiced and available during frustration may be fixated and become expressed repeatedly during subsequent frustration episodes. Individuals may also, acting under the stress caused by frustration, seem simply to stop emitting any behavior and appear to withdraw from the situation. The result is behavior which is different ~~under~~ the effects of frustration. The variation in behavior occurs when any of the four symptom types of behavior can be expressed in many different ways by individuals who may be more or less susceptible to frustration at that time. Thus certain individuals show less effects of frustrated because they either have higher levels of tolerance or view situations differently.

A common effect seems to be expressed. As situations become increasingly stressful, the tendency to shift from goal-motivated to frustration-instigated behavior seems more probable (Yates 1962). Such behaviors can be seen to be both the precursor and consequence of stress. In fact, Howe and Wolman (1962) suggest that continued stress, on or off the job, can result in behavioral changes. Where this occurs, frustration may cause reactions internal to the administrator. If the stress provoked by frustration is severe enough, it can lead to external manifestations.

In the performance of their jobs, administrators sometimes perceive the necessity of masking external reactions to frustration in order to be effective in dealing with those around them. They nevertheless experience internal reactions to frustration. This may eventually influence the performance of their jobs as suggested by Howe and Wolman (1962). Administrators at the college tend to report some masking of external reactions in most situations not generating extreme forms of frustration. This masking is reported to occur in order to preserve the working relationship between the administrator and another. Administrators reporting such masking tend to use the rationale that any form of expression could exacerbate a counter-productive event.

Sometimes, however, masking the expression of frustration cannot occur. Usually, conditions of extreme frustration cannot be masked. The extreme nature of any frustrating event seems to be dependent on at least three variables (Pastore 1952, Berkowitz 1960, Yates 1962):

a. The more predictable the onset of the goal blockage the more prepared the individual should be and the less extreme reactions are likely to be.

b. The greater the desire by the individual to accomplish the goal the more likely reactions to frustration will be extreme.

c. The longer the duration between the goal blockage and its ultimate resolution the more likely individual reactions will be extreme and continue to be expressed.

Where blockages are not foreseeable, where goals are highly desirable, and where obstacle resolution is protracted, frustrations are likely to yield more observable reactions.

Consequences of Frustration

Frustration is said to produce changes in motivational states (Child and Waterhouse 1952). Frustration may either increase or inhibit performance by promoting or detracting from the desire to maintain goal oriented behavior. When frustration enhances performance, the increasing level of motivation for the task tends to be reflected by optimum individual arousal. Korman (1974) suggests that when optimum arousal has been achieved, the individual seems more receptive to environmental stimuli. Optimum arousal is said to depend on the degree of stimulation an individual desires and is accustomed to and the amount actually present at that time.

Steers and Porter (1983:380) claim that the inverted - U hypothesis advanced by Yerkes and Dodson (1908) describes a situation in which

> ... both arousal and task difficulty, with their opposite effects, operate simultaneously as mediators between demand and performance.

Where this is not the case, they suggest that irrespective of the level of task demand, the higher the levels of arousal, the better the task performance. Individual effectiveness in the performance of a task seems then to be a function of four factors:

1. The difficulty of the task as perceived by the individual.
2. The individual's perception of his/her own ability which is dependent on experience and talent.
3. The match between task difficulty and the individual's ability which is a measure of task uncertainty.
4. The level of arousal present at that time which is dependent on the perceived consequences and uncertainty of the task.

This model stresses the individual's perception both of the task and of the ability to do the task. When an individual's uncertainty with respect to the accomplishment of a task increases and task consequences increase, so does arousal level.

Performance can be seen to suffer when arousal levels are either very low or very high. Both extremes elicit motivational problems. At higher levels, performance suffers because task difficulty is high and problem solving energy is deflected to deal with task uncertainty. Yates [redacted] mentions two possible outcomes of this motivational [redacted]:

a. A fixation in the behavioral response emitted while experiencing frustration.

b. The expression of any response designed to alleviate frustration, the selection of which may be determined by forces other than goal achievement.

This would suggest that administrators could make responses in the face of frustration which are not entirely adaptive. These responses then may be used to protect the administrator rather than to accomplish the previously desired goal. Such defensive behavior might be characterized as a departure from normal administrator functioning.

At lower levels of arousal, the absence of strong motivation occurs as a result of low task difficulty and low outcome uncertainty. Steers and Porter (1983) suggest that in a situation where individuals perceive their ability to be much higher than the perception of task difficulty, overconfidence will decrease arousal and task performance should be negatively affected.

The consequence of frustration to others in organizations can be a direct result of arousal, task difficulty, and the administrator's perception of future task success. When these variables combine to produce extreme levels of frustration, the administrator may engage in behaviors which affect not only his/her own task performance but that of significant others in the organization as well. Where frustration is pervasive and affects large numbers of the administrative group, the consequence to the organization may have far reaching and rather mixed effects.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of the study are collected in this section. They are as follows:

1. Administrators at the college felt most of their job related frustrations were associated with events involving their immediate superordinates and resulted in their job being less predictable. Administrators undoubtedly exerted less direct control and influence over the behaviors of their superordinates than they did over those involving their subordinates. The resulting lack of control over their superordinates' behaviors may have been an important precursor to the administrators' reports of superordinate initiated frustrations.

2. The administrator's expression of negative behaviors (such as anger, denial, or withdrawal) arising out of frustrations seemed dependent on whether or not a quick resolution to the frustrating event had occurred. Negative behaviors were less likely where the resolution was quick. Additionally, it seemed that the more resistant the blockage was to successful resolution and the greater the desire to obtain resolution, the higher the reported level of frustration. The ability to predict goal obstructing events and to anticipate a reasonable chance of successful resolution tended to decrease the effects of the frustrating episode, especially the expression of negative feelings.

Similarly, it had the effect of increasing feelings of being in control during frustrating situations. Further, in order to enhance these feelings of control, administrators at the college tended not to express their feelings by attaching blame to an individual or event. Perhaps by attaching blame the administrator may have indicated a lack of control in situations.

3. Administrators at the college seemed to thrive on reported high levels of frustration indicating that this helped them maintain interest in their job. The ability to cope with these levels of frustration tended to increase over time. As administrators acquired more experience, greater levels of job frustration were more often viewed to enhance the performance of their jobs. Perhaps administrators became better able to predict the onset of frustrating episodes with increased experience and as a result were more prepared to resolve goal blockages. Additionally, as administrators gained expertise in their jobs, they became more interested in expanding their inputs into the college environment. This may have brought them into conflict, mainly with their superordinates.

4. Some administrators reported that increased time on the job resulted in a greater detachment from the emotional issues inherent in it. Where this detachment took the form of task withdrawal, the college may have experienced fewer benefits of the administrator's creative energies.

5. When administrators at the college recalled specific

frustrating episodes, these tended to be negative experiences for them. They also appeared to be accompanied by feelings of inadequacy as the administrator attempted to resolve the situation. In most cases of this type, administrators were motivated to learn from these episodes in order that future occurrences would be resolved more successfully.

6. The path to administrative position at the college may have been a self-selecting one in terms of ability to cope with frustration. Administrators appeared to expect considerable frustration when undertaking administrative duties and to be relatively comfortable with a high level of frustration. Perhaps those who were more willing to experience frustration and who perceived themselves more able to deal with its effects may have tended to seek administrative positions at the college. Further, this apparent preparedness may have permitted administrators to cope with job related frustrations more adequately and encouraged them to identify positive aspects in the experiencing of frustration.

7. The immediate effects of frustration for administrators at the college took various forms. Their feelings of frustration were communicated to others both verbally and non-verbally. While administrators generally reported that they kept their feelings of frustration well hidden from others around them, they may not have realized the extent to which they verbalized their feelings of frustration with the work group. However, most

administrators at the college perceived that they usually appeared outwardly calm and non-hostile in the face of frustration in order that the effects of the frustration did not complicate other aspects of the job. This appeared to be the case more so when the frustration was addressed rather than ignored. Administrators at the college also appeared to have internalized fairly uniform expectations of their roles. Most reported that when acting in the capacity as administrators, they may have tended more often than not to suppress the outward expression of many personal feelings in order to demonstrate what they considered to be behavior appropriate to the administrative role.

8. Job performance tended to be enhanced when administrators at the college experienced success in the resolution of goal blockages. Perhaps the feelings of satisfaction which resulted from successful resolution of frustrating events had acted to set a "tone" for future interventions where frustration was present. Additionally, successful interventions in blockage situations may have had a training effect which would enable the administrator to more easily cope with similar episodes. This would have tended to make administrators more comfortable with frustration as their job experience increased. An optimum arousal level for administrators, therefore, could be one where blockage resolutions had occurred successfully in the past and where expectations for future resolutions were high.

9. Physical proximity to the administrator tended to enhance feelings of support in situations where frustration was present for the administrator. Greatest perceived support (from the work group) may have been a reflection of shared task commitment between the first line administrator and the work group as well as their physical proximity. This "bonding" between the administrator and the immediate work group may have also resulted in certain others, such as the superordinate, being excluded from the intimacies shared by those within the primary administrative unit. Thus, administrators tended to relate to and trust those with whom they had greater contact. They had appeared more often to invite support and also to receive it from these "close" others. Superordinates may have wished to show support to their administrative subordinates, however, they may also have felt excluded from administrator-work group interactions.

10. Work group members also appeared to be more sensitive to the administrator's moods and wishes, perhaps as a result of the physical setting they shared and the resulting increase in day to day contact. This sensitivity allowed work group members to exhibit flexibility in the manner by which they interrelated with administrators who were experiencing frustration. Work group members tended either to approach or to withdraw from the administrator depending on their perception of the administrator's mood. Superordinates, on the other hand, showed a narrower range of behaviors in responding to administrator frustration.

Additionally, many superordinates tended not to recognize the role they played in acting as a source of frustration for the administrator. Those who did so attempted to resolve frustrating situations in which they were key contributors. They did this by taking the initiative in approaching the administrator rather than allowing the administrator to make the first approach following the frustrating episode. The different responses experienced by administrators from work group members as compared to superordinates may have been indicative of the various entrenched role expectations felt by all participant groups.

11. Most administrators at the college tended to share their frustrations more with their immediate work group than with any other individual or group within the college. This may have resulted from the greater feelings of trust within the immediate administrative unit. The small number of many consequences of administrator frustration to the superordinate tended to indicate a reluctance to share frustrations with those higher in the organization and to exclude this group affectively from the work unit. Increased social distance between the administrator and the superordinate together with attendant perceptual differences may have resulted in the generation of the reported greater number of interpersonal frustrations having their source with superordinates.

12. The job related interactions with significant others at the college, exclusive of the work group and the

immediate superordinate, which produced frustrations for the administrator tended to operate mainly in a negative direction. Attention was called to these interactions only when they were not functioning effectively and resulted in blockages.

13. Responsiveness by the college to administrator frustration was generally perceived to be uncoordinated and inconsistent in its application. It was left largely to each superordinate to detect and address frustration. Job related frustrations were, therefore, viewed often as unfortunate side effects of being an administrator. The resulting lack of coordination tended to produce unequal treatment among administrators. Work group members, separated from senior level administration by an additional layer, were more negative than their administrators in their reports on any college-wide activity to address frustration than were administrators.

14. Administrators with more job experience tended to believe they were as able as senior administrators to identify the palliatives which might be applied to address administrator job related frustrations. Administrators at the college appeared not to have the impact they would have wished in order to communicate their particular job related frustrations to senior administrators. One example concerned the reported preoccupation by senior level administrators to address task generalities rather than to attend to important specific concerns identified by subordinate administrators. The communication and

resolution of frustrations then could have been differences in perception between the layers of administration. Increased contact between the administrative layers had been identified by some administrators as one solution to the problem of addressing job related frustration.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE, RESEARCH AND THEORY

The implications of the study for practice, future research, and for theorizing in this field are addressed in turn below.

Implications for Practice

Administrators in any organization are subject to goal blockages. While many organizations are becoming more sensitized to the effects of frustration, it is expected that the administrator will be able to function under a variety of conditions, including high levels of frustration. One implication of this expectation concerns the attitude that administrators have toward frustration.

Administrators who tend to react to frustration by denying its existence tend to be intollerant of poor performance by others when frustration is used as an excuse for that performance. The lack of sensitivity which is conveyed by the failure to recognize and deal with the affect inherent in frustrating situations may reduce the administrators' effectiveness in an organization. For example, Organ and Hammer (1982:261) reported that milder forms of aggression arising from frustration are a healthy sign, reflecting a desire to come to grips with the environment rather than to submit to it. If aggression is blocked, apathy, resignation, and withdrawal behaviors may result in decreased quality of performance. One of the administrator's real tasks then must be to decrease the occurrences of unproductive forms of frustration, such as unconstructive aggression, without having it displaced on other persons or situations. At the same time, the administrator should allow the energizing effects which come from experiencing optimal levels of frustration to creatively enhance task accomplishment.

Another implication for the practicing administrator concerns appropriate means of dealing with the occurrence of frustration. Frustration may be better viewed as a part of the fabric of an organization rather than simply as isolated or unrelated personal events. The findings of this study revealed that all administrators in the college experienced frustrations and that many of these episodes tended to be related. Common means of addressing debilitating goal blockages should prove to be of benefit to the organization. Both from the point of increasing efficiencies and enhancing group commitment and supportiveness, physical contact between cohort groups may be a necessary prerequisite to decreasing the particularly negative consequences of frustration. Additionally, increased physical contact between administrators when addressing sources and effects of frustration may help to release the creative and motivational task energies need to identify solutions to the blockages.

A third practical implication concerns the maintenance of the level of creative task energy available in an organization. Where an administrator has experienced a history of unsuccessful attempts to resolve goal blockages together with the accompanying stress, withdrawal behaviors may be the result. Apathy and withdrawal from those tasks where goals may be perceived to be blocked at some future time may create an a self-fulfilling prophesy. Both administrator energy and creativity are lost to the organization. If this situation should become widespread among the administrative group, organizational effectiveness must be called into question.

Implications for Further Research

While many research findings detailed in the literature were supported by the present study, research hypotheses were not formulated or tested as part of an empirical study. This study has tested a methodology which could be used in future studies. When used in other college settings, certain generalizations may result.

Future studies on frustration in college organizations could address such issues as:

1. The extent to which organizational structure has an effect on the frequency and nature of frustration.

2. The relationship between the incidence of administrator frustration and organizational effectiveness.

3. The extent to which frustration operates to enhance the decision making process in consensus groups of various types.

4. The extent to which diagnostic instrumentation for the measurement of levels of individual frustration might determine optimum levels in order to enhance organizational effectiveness.

5. The effectiveness of various strategies designed to reduce the debilitating effects of frustration within organizations.

Implications for Theory

Literature dealing with frustration has tended mainly to emphasize the reactions, both affective and behavioral, of the individual facing the goal blockage. Secondarily, theories of frustration deal with the motivational role of frustration-instigated behaviors and especially mention the debilitating effects on individuals. As a result, until recently, any organizational consequences were, understandably considered to be an aggregation of negative individual consequences.

The present study has provided some direction by means of which the consequences of frustration may more readily become reconciled with a position which recognizes also possible positive and mutually beneficial organizational effects, particularly when dealing with administrative functions. Frustration often affects behavior in a desirable direction. Organ and Hammer (1982:259) have suggested three desirable attributes of frustration that deserve mention. Frustration operates:

1. As a generator to enable experimentation with new methods when old processes are found to be unsuccessful. Frustration then adds color and complexity to organizational behavior.

2. As a precondition for reinterpretations of our environment resulting in perceptual as well as behavioral change.

3. As an energizer, acting to arouse reserves of energy to better focus our attention, tone our readiness for action, and improve our vigilance.

This study has also indicated that many incidents of frustration have their source in the interpersonal domain. Administrators must interact with other members in the organization to accomplish task objectives. The assumption that the initiating behavior of administrators is a unidirectional process has been questioned by Campbell et al (1970:422). This assumption suggests that managers are viewed only in the perspective of initiators of actions for others and that the interactions end once directives are made. In opposition to this view, these theorists have proposed rather that "The basic factor that is missing from these unilateral views is that persons who interact undoubtedly behave as if relationships were reciprocal rather than unilateral" (1970:422). The further development of concepts which describe the nature of frustration based interactions between people should be pursued.

Finally, a potentially troublesome area may be identified which relates to the theoretical effects of frustration on administrators. In this study the position was taken that job related frustration for the administrator was confined to the organization. Administrators function in roles outside the organizational milieu and, therefore, experience the attendant frustrations that those roles produce. These frustrating experiences may influence what occurs in the organization. Theoretical frameworks which relate the sources, immediate effects, and long term impacts of frustration should be developed. These frameworks must recognize and allow for a seperation of the effects of organizational and of extraorganizational sources of frustration.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

INTERVIEW GUIDE

I would like to ask you a few questions about your job as a middle level administrator/manager here at the College. I am particlarly interested in learning about the obstacles or blockages you perceive to interfere with doing your administrative job. For the purposes of this interview, I will refer to these goal blocks as frustrators. I am mainly interested in those notable events which have occurred in the last year since these will be fresh in your mind. However, if some notable event stands out beyond that time period it also would be of significance.

Frustrators

1. Where in your role as an administrator do you experience significant frustrators which interfere with doing your job? (Probe - interpersonal related, personnel related, task related, resource related, technology related.)

2. Which of these interferences cause you most frustration? Why?

Immediate Effects - Specific Event

I would like you now to recall a recent job related event or situation during which you experienced significant frustration. Would you briefly describe the nature of this event?

3. What were your immediate reactions when you encounted this frustrating situation in your job? (Probe - How did you feel, How did you behave?)

4. How did your immediate reactions change as you started dealing with the frustrating event or situation?

5. What effect did your immediate reactions to this particular frustrating situation have on your ability to carry out the responsibilities associated with your administrative job?

Immediate Effects - General Events

Would you now consider all the job related frustrating events which have occurred during the last year.

6. How would you describe your typical reaction to highly frustrating situations? (Probe - your feelings, your behavior?)

7. How do these reactions differ from those you make to less frustrating situations.

8. As you reflect on the time you have spent in your present administrative position how have your reactions to job related frustrating situations changed over time? (Probe - Do you respond differently now than you did earlier in your career?)

Reactions to the Immediate Effects

9. How did those around you become aware that you were experiencing frustration? (Probe - non verbal behavior, verbal behavior)

10. What were their typical reactions when you exhibited extreme levels of frustration?
    Probes - your peers, your superordinate, others.

Secondary Effects or Consequences

11. How did your performance as an administrator change when you felt frustrated? (Probe - deteriorated, improved)

12. What negative consequences occurred as a result of your reactions to frustrating situations? (Probe - For your department? For your relationship with your superordinate? For the organization as a whole?)

13. What positive consequences occurred as a result of your reactions to frustrating situations? (Probe as above)

Reactions to the Secondary Effects

14. What particular actions were taken in the College to deal with your job related frustrations?

15. Where did these particular actions originate from?

16. Ideally, how do you feel this organization should respond to job related frustration at the mid administrative /management level?

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADMINISTRATORS

ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to the following questions by checking the appropriate response or filling in the blank.

1. How long have you held an administrative position in this institution? (include the present year)

    _______________ year(s).

2. How would you describe the extent of growth or decline in your department at this time?

    _ a. In a phase of high expansion.

    _ b. In a phase of moderate expansion.

    _ c. In a no growth phase.

    _ d. In a phase of moderate contraction.

    _ e. In a phase of high contraction.

3. How often, during the past year, did you experience what you consider to have been a significant frustrating event in your administrative job? (check one response)

    __ a. About once a day.

    __ b. About once a week.

    __ c. About once a month.

    __ d. Rarely or not at all.

4. How comfortable are you with the level of job related frustration which you experience?

    a. Very comfortable.

    b. Somewhat comfortable.

    c. Neither comfortable nor uncomfortable.

    d. Somewhat uncomfortable.

    e. Very uncomfortable.

5. In each of the following items, please put a check mark in the blank which most accurately reflects your feelings and reactions.

(1.always; 2.frequently; 3.sometimes; 4.seldom; 5.never)

A. How frequently do each of the following reactions apply to you when you are experiencing frustration?

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	
___	___	___	___	___	1. I tend to become angry.
___	___	___	___	___	2. I tend to become depressed.
___	___	___	___	___	3. I tend to worry about how to deal with the frustrating situation.
___	___	___	___	___	4. I tend to continue grappling with the frustrating situation.
___	___	___	___	___	5. I tend to ignore the frustration.
___	___	___	___	___	6. I tend to seek out the company of others.
___	___	___	___	___	7. Itendtoexperiencephysical disordersinresponsetothe frustrating situation.
___	___	___	___	___	8. Other ways not mentioned. Please indicate ____________________ ____________________.

B. In a frustrating situation how frequently do you tend to:

(1.always; 2.frequently; 3.sometimes; 4.seldom; 5.never)

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

_ _ _ _ 1. Blame yourself for the situation because you feel that you could have prevented its occurrence?

_ _ _ _ _ 2. Blame others because, as a middle administrator, you feel that others are in control.

_ _ _ _ __ 3. Blame the situation (policies, rules, practices)?

_ _ _ 4. Other ways not mentioned. Please indicate. _____________

____

6. In the past, when you have experienced job related frustration, how did those in your department most often become aware of this?

_ a. By your body language (non verbal communication).

_ b. By what you said (verbal communication).

_ c. By virtue of the action decisions you subsequently took.

__ d. Other ways, please indicate_________________

____.

__ e. To my knowledge they did not become aware of my job related frustration.

7. When you were experiencing frustration, how did department members generally react?

_ a. Generally in a very positive manner.

__ b. Generally in a positive manner.

__ c. Generally in a neutral manner.

_ d. Generally in a negative manner.

__ e. Generally in a very negative manner.

8. How would you describe the effects on the department following your experiences with job related frustration?

____ a. Extremely positive effects on the department.

____ b. Generally positive effects on the department.

____ c. Mixed positive and negative effects on the department.

____ d. Generally negative effects on the department.

____ e. Extremely negative effects on the department.

9. To what extent were actions taken in the College to deal with frustration at the department head level?

____ a. Ongoing actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

____ b. Many actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

____ c. A moderate number of actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

____ d. A few actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

____ e. No actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

10. If actions were taken in the College to deal with department head frustration, typically how effective were these actions?

____ a. The actions taken were highly effective.

____ b. The actions taken were generally effective.

____ c. The actions taken were neither particularly effective or ineffective.

____ d. The actions taken were generally ineffective.

____ e. The actions taken were highly ineffective.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FACULTY MEMBERS

FACULTY/STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

ON ORGANIZATIONAL FRUSTRATION

Middle level administrators/ managers in any organization frequently encounter a variety of obstacles or blockages which interfere with doing their job. For the purposes of this survey these goal blocks will be refered to as frustrators.

This survey solicits your help in determining the nature of administrator/manager reaction to job related frustration and how this affects first your immediate department and then the College at large. As you ponder the events which seemed to produce administrator/manager frustration, those occurring in the last year will be of greatest interest since they will be fresh in your mind. However, if some notable event stands out beyond that time period it also would be of significance.

Please respond to the questions on the following pages as they relate to your **department head** by checking or filling in the appropriate blank. All responses will be treated confidentially.

Thank you for your participation.

Work History at the College

How long have you been employed at the College?
________ years.

Which department do you currently work in? ______________.

1. How often during the past year did you perceive your department head to experience job related frustration?

   __ a. About once a day.

   __ b. About once a week.

   __ c. About once a month.

   __ d. Rarely or not at all.

2. If in the past you perceived that your department head was experiencing frustration, how did you most often become aware of this?

   __ a. By his/her body language (non verbal communication).

   __ b. By what he/she said (verbal communication).

   __ c. By virtue of the action decisions he/she subsequently took.

   __ d. Other ways. Please indicate ______________________________
   ____.

3. When your department head was experiencing frustration, how did department members generally react?

   __ a. Generally in a very positive manner.

   __ b. Generally in a positive manner.

   __ c. Generally in a neutral manner.

   __ d. Generally in a negative manner.

   __ e. Generally in a very negative manner.

4. How would you describe the effects on the department following your department head experiences with job related frustration.

__ a. Extremely positive effects on the department.

__ b. Generally positive effects on the department.

__ c. Mixed positive and negative effects on the department.

__ d. Generally negative effects on the department.

__ e. Extremely negative effects on the department.

5. To what extent were actions taken in the College to deal with frustration at the department head level?

__ a. Ongoing actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

__ b. Many actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

__ c. A moderate number of actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

__ d. A few actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

__ e. No actions were taken to deal with department head frustration.

6. If actions were taken in the College to deal with department head frustration, typically how effective were these actions?

__ a. The actions taken were highly effective.

__ b. The actions taken were generally effective.

__ c. The actions taken were neither particularly effective or ineffective.

__ d. The actions taken were generally ineffective.

__ e. The actions taken were highly ineffective.

Thank you kindly for your participation