Organizational Culture and Retention in Public Child Welfare Services Organizations

David Chenot Ph.D

Organizational Culture & Retention

- CCASSC
  - Two years ago I asked for permission to survey your personnel and cooperation from your agencies. You provided both.

  - Thank You!

Organizational Culture & Retention

- The Problem
  - Turnover
    - Rates: PCWS Workforce, National: 15-22% (APHSA, 2005)
      PCWS Workforce, California:
      1.) Average 9.8% (Clark & Fulcher, 2005)
      2.) Range 9-23% (NCCD, 2006)
    - Highly problematic for PCWS Agencies
      - Cost, $10,000 annually per vacated position-(1995 dollars) (Graef & Hill, 2000)
      - Estimates of total cost from an 18-state study $53.84 million (APHSA, 2005)
      - Training issues
      - Overall morale
    - Harmful to SWs & CMs who leave due to the working conditions
      - Increases workload & stress for SWs & CMs who remain
    - Most important, very unhealthy for children & families served in PCWS agencies!
      - Number-Ten

Purpose of the Study

- To examine the impact organizational dynamics have on the retention of social workers and case managers in Central CA. PCWS agencies

- Organizational dynamics = perceptions of the overall working environment

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Retention
  - Retention may be viewed as the opposite of turnover
  - In this study the focus was on retention as a desirable outcome
    - Retention directly addresses the problem of turnover.
      - Intent to stay has been the strongest predictor of retention in many studies historically
      - **Intent to stay** was the proxy for retention in this study
        - Intent to stay in the PCWS agency
        - Intent to stay in the field of CWS

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Theory
  - Organizational Culture
    - A "deep" construct in organizational theory.
    - Conceptual definition
      - Culture is composed of the **assumptions**, **beliefs**, **values** and **behavioral norms** shared in organizations.
      - The **shared** nature of these elements is very important to culture as a concept.

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Theory
  - Organizational Culture
    - Cultural Types
      - Constructive
        - The fulfillment of higher order satisfaction needs; i.e., self actualization, achievement, the motivation to excel, and a humanistic orientation marked by supportive behaviors and positive interpersonal interactions.
      - Defensive
        - Related to lower order security and protection needs; i.e., the approval of others (esp. authorities), conformity with conventional operations (rule-following), high levels of dependency, evasion of responsibility, blame and accountability.

Organizational Culture & Retention

- **Theory**
  - **Organizational Climate**
    - Shared psychological climates-employees perceptions of the effects their work environments have on them.
      - i.e., a sense of well-being and the impact employees have on the services they provide.
  - **Service Quality**
    - Attitudes and behaviors related to availability and responsivity to clients, dedication to client well-being, the effectiveness of services, etc.

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Theory
  - Work Attitudes
    - Job Satisfaction
      - Cognitive appraisal of work experiences and affective states connected to those appraisals.
    - Commitment to the Organization
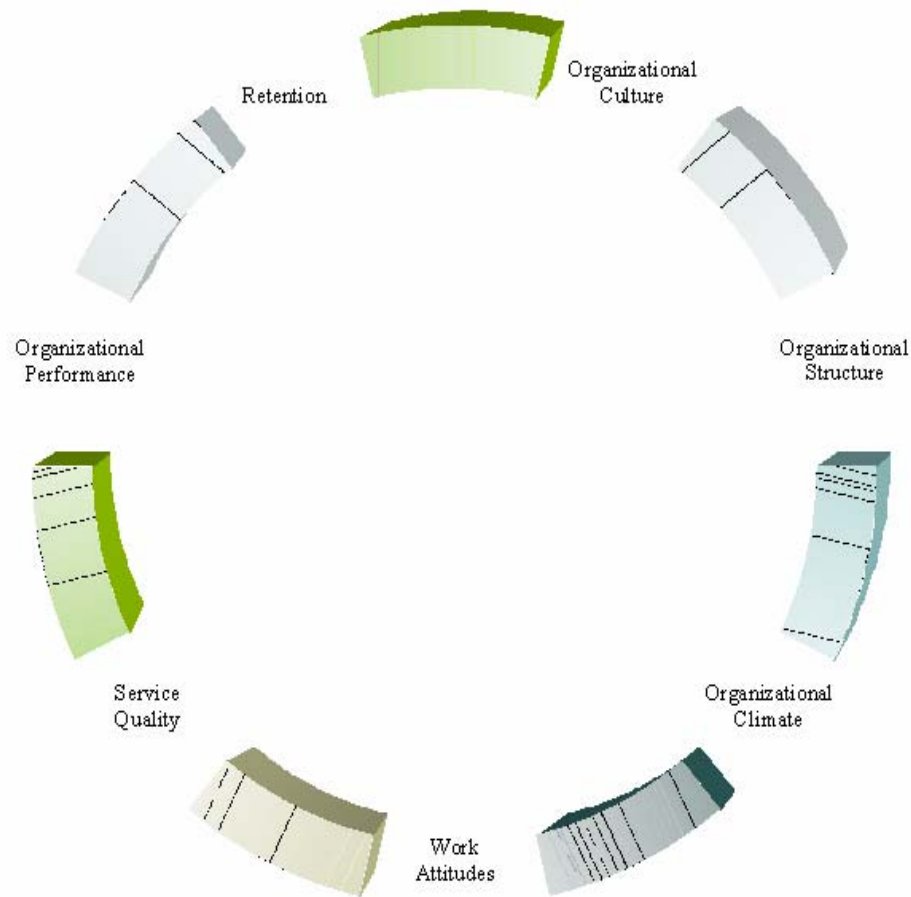   - Identification and involvement with the organization.
    - Commitment to the Field of Child Welfare Services
      - Identification and involvement with the field of CWS.
    - Service Orientation
      - Belief that the CWS practice is valuable to society.

Organizational Culture & Retention

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Methodology
  - Primary Research Questions

    - Does organizational culture affect the retention of social workers/case managers?
      - How do constructive cultures affect retention?
      - How do defensive cultures affect retention?
    - How does organizational culture combine with work attitudes to affect the retention of social workers/case managers?
    - Does organizational culture affect service quality?
    - Does organizational culture combine with service quality to affect retention?
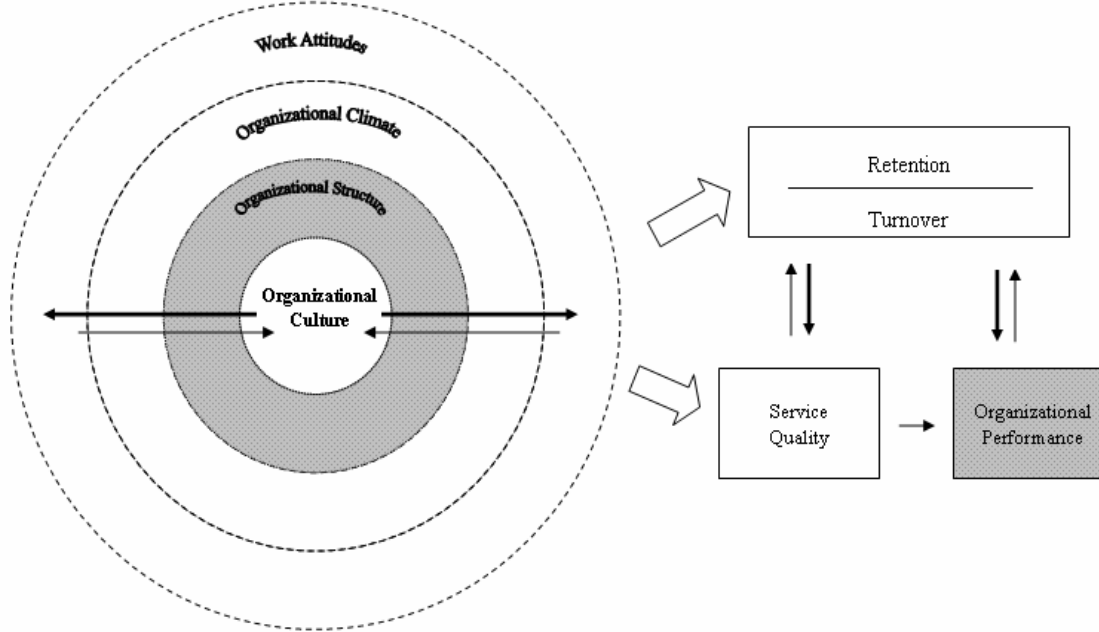
Organizational Culture & Retention

- Methodology
  - Hypotheses
    - Constructive organizational culture has a positive relationship with the intent to stay in the agency and in the field of CWS.
    - Defensive organizational culture has a negative relationship with the intent to stay in the agency and in the field of CWS.
      - Job satisfaction and organizational commitment moderate the relationship between constructive organizational culture and intent to stay-agency.
      - Commitment to the field and service orientation moderate the relationship between constructive organizational culture and intent to stay in the field-CWS.

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Conceptual Model

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Methodology
  - Study Design
  - Cross-sectional survey research design
  - Sampling
    - Initially a census sample.
    - Convenience sample, due to the realities of the data gathering process. Purposive elements for Central CA.

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Methodology
  - Data Collection
    - Eleven PCWS Agencies
    - 31 data collection trips
    - 4101 miles driven to collect data
    - Number of valid responses: n=767
    - Number of groups: n=34
    - Number of agencies: n=11
    - Response rate: 69%

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Sample
  - See Handout entitled Sample and County Comparisons
    - Sample Descriptive Statistics: pp. 1-9.

Organizational Culture & Retention

- ## Methodology
  - ### Analysis Plan
    - #### Multilevel Modeling
      - Cross-level Interaction
    - #### Referent Shift Consensus Model
      - Referent is moved from the individual to the collective
        - Particularly important for culture: conceptualized as *shared*
      - Overall consensus within groups but variation between groups

    - #### Results
      - Constructive organizational culture, organizational climate and service quality all met the criteria.
      - Passive defensive organizational culture met the consensus criteria but was _not_ significant for differences between groups
      - PDOC was not used in the analyses

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Bivariate
    - Correlations
      - Work attitudes associations reflect those found by Miriam Landsman
      - Multicollinearity between Constructive Organizational Culture and Service Quality ($r=.87$)

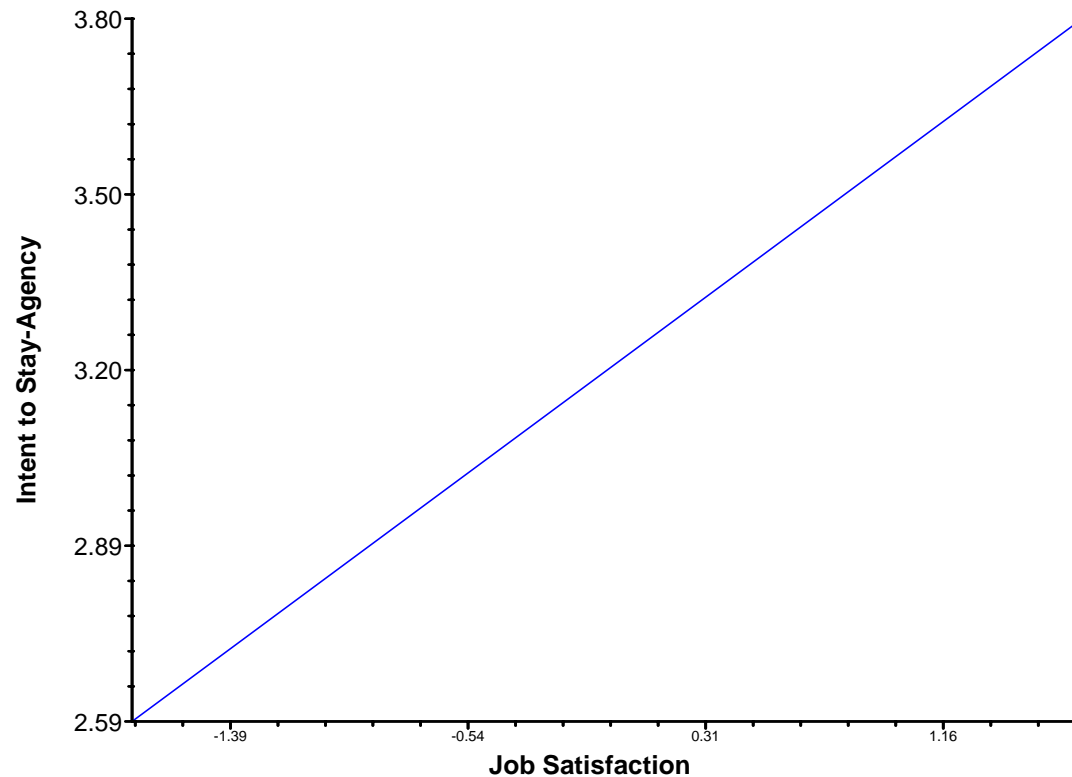# Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Multivariate

Significant Level-One Results

Outcome Variables	Predictors		
	Commitment Agency	Job Satisfaction	Commitment Field
Intent-Agency	.40	.36	.14
Intent-CWS	-	.23	.52

All coefficients significant at the $p<.01$ level

Organizational Culture & Retention

Slope: Job Satisfaction and Intent-Agency

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Methodology
- Analysis Plan
  - Multilevel Modeling
    - Data can be organized in 2-Level Models

Levels of Variables in the Study

Variable levels:	Individual	Group/Organizational
Variables by general category:	Work attitudes	Organizational culture
	Retention	Service quality
		Organizational climate

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Multivariate
    - Cross-level analyses with HLM 6
      - **Means as outcomes models**
        - Test for direct effects of group level variables on individual level variables. Example:
        - Constructive organizational culture did not have an effect on intent to stay in the agency (.068, p=.170)
        - Organizational climate did not have an effect on intent to stay in the agency (.004, p=.927)

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Multivariate

    - None of the direct relationships between group level constructs and the individual level outcome variables were statistically significant
    - One interpretation: Group membership may not explain The impact of organizational dynamics on retention in Central Calif. PCWS agencies
    - However, moderation was tested using group membership to represent organizational dynamics

      - Caveat: Possible misspecification of organizational constructs through group membership. Most participants were grouped by program not by unit.

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Multivariate analyses and hypotheses

    - The hypotheses stated organizational culture would have a primary or direct effect on the outcome variables

    - None of the hypotheses were supported

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Multivariate analyses
    - Exploratory analyses: Moderation
      - Does group membership explain moderation of relationships between work attitudes variables and retention?
      - Moderation by group-level variables

  - Findings
    - Constructive organizational culture and service quality *did <u>not</u>* moderate any of the significant relationships between level-one variables
    - **Organizational climate <u>*did*</u> moderate** relationships in each model with between job satisfaction and the outcome variables
      - Organizational climate is composed of: *emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, role conflict and role overload -* subscales

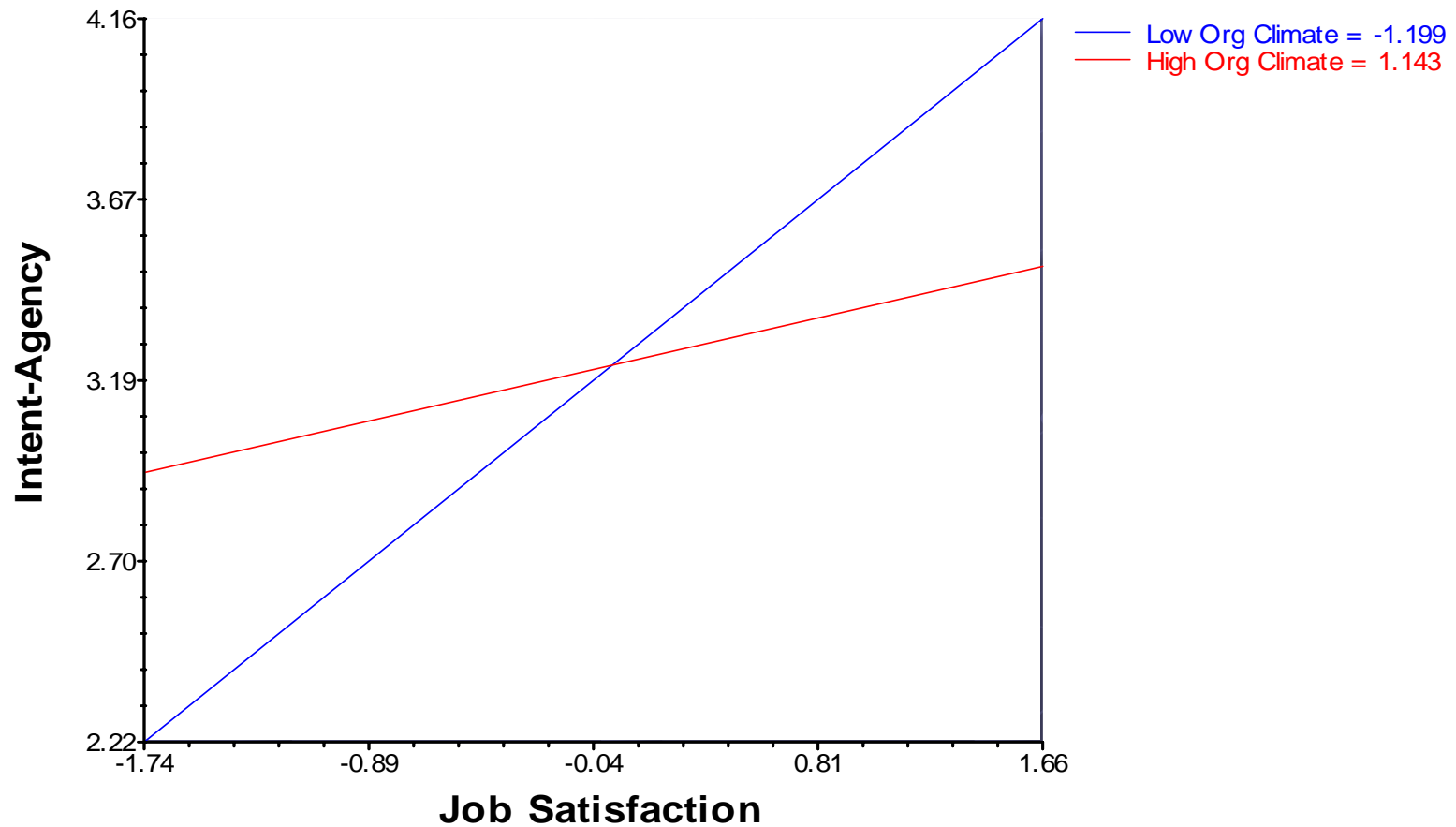# Organizational Climate & Retention

Significant Moderation Effects

Outcome Variables	Moderating Effects of Organizational Climate	
	Intercept	Predictor Job Satisfaction
Intent-Agency Model-1	.01	-.174
Model-2	.001	-.177
Intent-CWS Model-1	-.040	-.083
Model-2	-.033	-.082

No Intercept coefficients were significant. Slopes coefficients were significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Organizational Climate & Retention

Org Climate Moderation n=34 groups

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Multivariate analyses
    - Exploratory analyses
      - Moderation by Organizational Climate
      - Organizational Climate reconfigured as two types of climate
        - Engagement and Stress
        - Engagement is composed of personal accomplishment and 'personalization.'
        - Stress is composed of emotional exhaustion, role conflict and role overload.
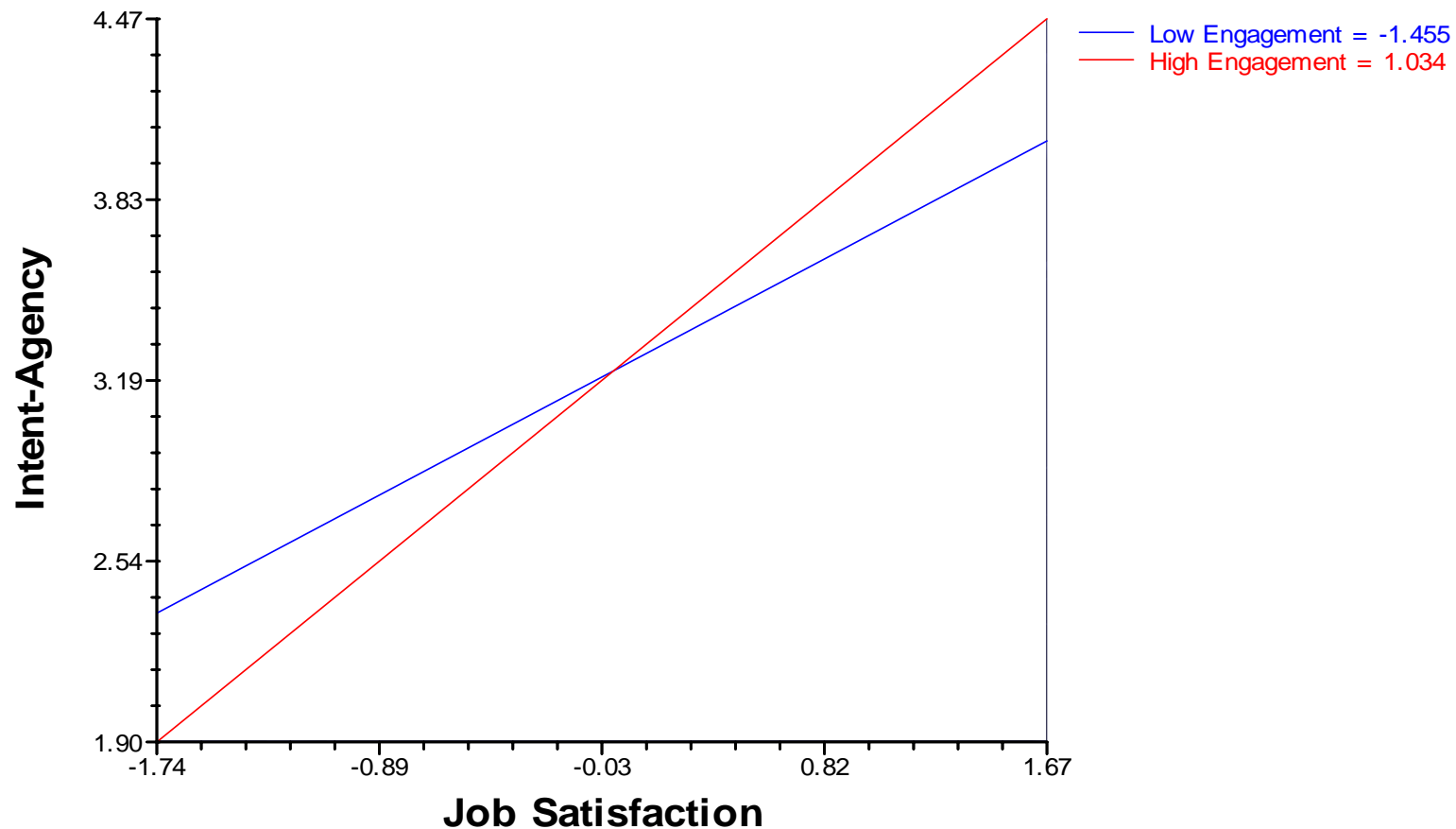
Organizational Culture & Retention

Significant Moderation Effects

Outcome Variables	Moderating Effects Engagement OC		Moderating Effects Stress OC	
	Intercept	Job Satisfaction	Intercept	Job Satisfaction
Intent-Agency	-.001	.105	-.027	-.109
	Intercept	Commit-CWS	Intercept	Commit-CWS
Intent-CWS	.001	.045	-.013	-.077

No Intercept coefficients were significant. Slopes coefficients were significant at the $p < .05$ level.

Organizational Culture & Retention

Moderation by Engagement OC
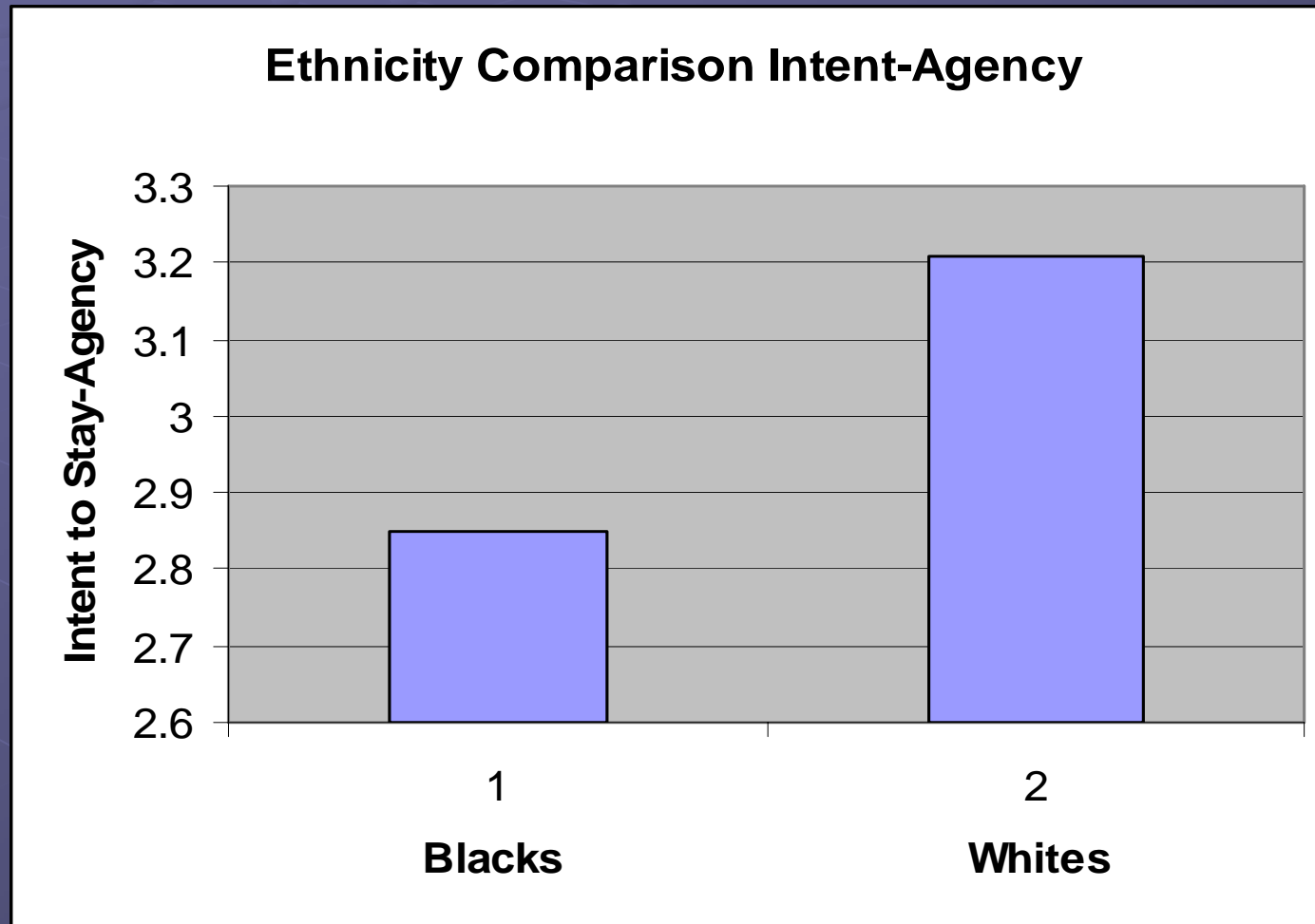
Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Multivariate analyses
    - Control Variables
      - Ethnicity
        - When all ethnic groups were analyzed, there were no significant differences between ethnic groups
        - However, when white and black PCWS employees were compared separately the difference was significant

Organizational Culture & Retention

Ethnicity Comparison Intent-Agency

David Chenot Ph.D

Organizational Culture & Retention

- Results
  - Multivariate analyses
   - Control Variables
      - Highest Level of Education
        - Both in the agency and in the field of CWS:
        - The higher the level of education the less likely employees were to stay. This was particularly true when the relationships between various educational levels and intent to stay in the agency were moderated by stress.
        - MSWs & BSWs were less likely to stay than those with all other degrees.

Organizational Climate & Retention

Highest Education & Intent-Agency (Stress)
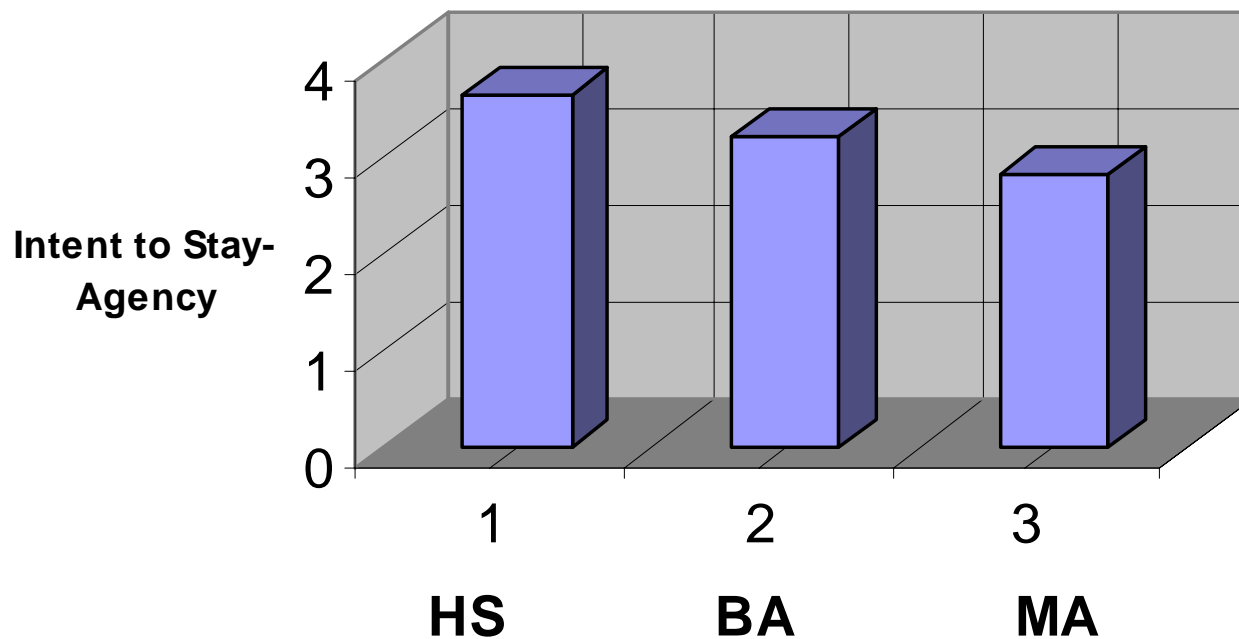
Organizational Culture & Retention

Education: Social Workers vs. Others

Organizational Culture & Retention

- County and area comparisons
  - See Handout entitled Sample and County Comparisons
    - Pages-10-15

Organizational Climate & Retention

- Implications
  - Policy
    - Focus-Organizational Climate
      - Even those who are more satisfied with their jobs are less likely to stay in more stressful climates
      - Role conflict and role overload need to be decreased in order to retain employees
      - Clarification of roles and streamlining responsibilities may improve perceptions of climate
        - Increase participatory decision making
        - Improve career ladders & professional development

Organizational Climate & Retention

- Implications
  - Practice
    - Improved organizational climates are likely to enhance workforce development and improve service delivery
    - A promising intervention
      - ARC=Availability, Responsiveness & Continuity

        (Glisson & Schoenwald, 2005; Glisson, Dukes & Green, 2006)

      - Targets all elements of organizational climate
        - A group/team improvement approach
        - Focuses on service provision
      - Improved PCWS climates appear to improve service provision

        (Glisson & Hemmelgarn, 1998)

      - Less stressful and more engaging climates may = a more stable workforce and higher quality service provision

Organizational Climate & Retention

- Implications
  - Practice
    - Improved organizational climates are likely to enhance workforce development & retention
    - Another effective team-based intervention

      - Strolin & Cargini (2007): The Design Team

        - Increased job satisfaction & commitment to the agency
        - Lowered burnout & the intention to leave

Organizational Culture, Climate & Retention

- Future Research
  - Exploration of the experiences of black social workers in PCWS agencies in Central California
  - Qualitative or mixed-methods research on organizational culture
  - Further investigation of the link between climate and the quality of services in PCWS agencies
    - This would include inquiry into the connection between client outcomes and organizational performance

Organizational Culture, Climate & Retention

- Link to digital copy of my dissertation:

    - http://www.ohiolink.edu/etd/view.cgi?case1169849653