Perceptions of Enrollment Employees in Community College: An Exploration of Organizational Climate and Organizational Effectiveness

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Perceptions of Enrollment Employees in Community College: An Exploration of Organizational Climate and Organizational Effectiveness

Abstract
This study investigated the type of organization climate and extent of organization effectiveness perceived by the enrollment division employees at a community college in the northeast United States, as well as the potential relationship(s) between and among descriptive categories and organizational climate, in relation to organizational effectiveness. Using a quantitative survey research design, this study applied field theory and used two instruments; the Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA) and the Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI). The WCA identified enrollment employees' perceptions of their department and division's organizational climate, also known as work environment, collecting two sets of data on actual performance and importance. The OEI identified enrollment employees' perceptions of their departments and division's organizational effectiveness, also known as operational productivity and goal achievement. This study focused on enrollment management employees from four interconnected departments: admissions, advisement, testing, and registrar. The study found significant differences in the way employees view the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness between descriptive categories, particularly in job titles. Additionally within the job title category, there were significant differences in climate perceptions among the directors and administrative support groups. The organizational effectiveness and organizational climate both varied, specifically and significantly within the category of job title, in the enrollment division at this particular college. Moreover the findings indicate that the organizational climate of this division predicts its organizational effectiveness, when controlling for job title at 65% variance consistently. Thus, job titles and organizational climate were explanatory variables for the variance found between and among groups' perceptions of organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

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Perceptions of Enrollment Employees in Community College: An Exploration of Organizational Climate and Organizational Effectiveness

By

Ronish Hamilton

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Ed.D. in Executive Leadership

Supervised by

Dissertation Chair
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St. John Fisher College

August 2017
Dedication

To my parents, Harold and Lawna Hamilton, who are amazing humans and ever thriving examples of what true dedication is; there are no greater parents on the planet than you. I thank you with all I have, and dedicate to you this life accomplishment of mine as a tangible indication that your faith, love, wisdom, support, personal sacrifices, and collective hustle have always been seen, heard, and felt. This was one of the greatest challenges of my life, yet it somehow still pales in comparison to all of what you both went through for me to get here. For all you have given of yourselves to my siblings and I, for us to have opportunities like this, the LEAST I could do is be successful. Your labor was not in vain.

To Lloyd Hamilton and Doreen Thomas, two blessings in addition to my parents. Thank you for being present, and for contributing selflessly and consistently to my upbringing, and to the person I am today.

To family, true friends, organic blessings, real love, and positive vibes; I am grateful. It was all worth it.
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Dr. Gilbert Louis, the dissertation sensei, there would literally have been no success on this journey without your unwavering support, guidance, honesty, and consistency; I am forever grateful and gladly in your debt. Thank you for everything.

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Dr. Janice Kelly, thank you for help and encouragement through challenging times.

Dr. Nikki Stewart, thank you for being a positive, motivating force along the journey.

Members of my cohort - you made a tremendous difference even when you did not know it. I am thankful we met.
Biographical Sketch

Ronish Hamilton currently teaches within social and behavioral sciences and human services departments at Kingsborough Community College, Queensborough Community College, and Suffolk County Community College. He is also the President of Hamilton Development Association, partner and Executive Consultant for professional development at MRG Consulting Group, and co-founder and Executive Director of Development at nonprofit organization E.M.T: Empowering Minds for Tomorrow. Mr. Hamilton holds a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management from New York City College of Technology, and a Master of Arts in Industrial and Organizational Psychology from Brooklyn College. In the summer of 2015, Mr. Hamilton began his doctoral studies in the Ed.D. in Executive Leadership program at St. John Fisher College. He pursued his research on the exploration of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness as internal explanatory variables in higher education under the direction of Dr. W. Jeff Wallis and Dr. Gilbert Louis, and received the Ed.D. in the summer of 2017.
Abstract

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) 2014 Digest of Education Statistics and the Teacher College at Columbia University's Community College Research Center (2016), reported on a year-round enrollment analysis that showed over 10 million students were enrolled in community colleges; yet, enrollment at community colleges is in a problematic decline. Community college enrollment declined at an average rate of 3.5% between fall 2012 and fall 2015, 10.5% over 3 years (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2015). This equates to an estimated 3,150,000 people not enrolling in college over those 3 years (NCES, 2014). Comparably, the community college used in this study saw an over 11% decline over a 3 year period, 2013-2015. NCES reports take into account information from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, or IPEDS (NCES, 2014). The NCES report of December 2014 explained that public 2-year institutions had the second largest decrease in enrollment since the preceding 2 years, at over 7%, and is therefore worth addressing in new ways.

The decline in college enrollment is one reason former President of the United States, Barack Hussein Obama, led American citizens to refocus on the potential of community colleges (Dempsey, 2009), calling for these 2 years of education to be free of charge through the America's College Promise policy proposal (White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015). Free college would eliminate the rising tuition costs, which contributes to enrollment decline, and it would relieve potential students and their families of the financial burden (White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact
This was one proposed method of addressing enrollment decline for the sake of the nation's future, and its social and economic stability (Fillion, 2016; Wong, 2016). There are a variety of external factors identified as common contributors to the national enrollment decline, such as increasing tuition costs, geographic location, and improvement in the economy (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). Organizational characteristics of higher education organizations, may be internal explanatory variables in community colleges that are experiencing the national enrollment decline (Abston, 2010; Canon & Gascon, 2013; McKinney, 2011).

It has been suggested that every community college identify an enrollment management division (Morris, 2012), and gather the perceptions of enrollment employee administrators as a part of basic operations, continuous improvement efforts, and the pursuit of institutional effectiveness (Dempsey, 2009). It has also been suggested that measuring organizational characteristics, such as climate and effectiveness, that may specifically impede or advance higher education organizations towards institutional effectiveness, would assist executive leaders in community colleges experiencing the enrollment decline, as they begin the endeavor of exploring potential internal explanatory variables (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Duggan, 2008; McKinney, 2011; Patterson et al., 2005; Perry, LeMay, Rodway, Tracy, & Galer, 2005).

Organizational climate is known to be a strong predictor of high performance and productivity across industrial and organizational settings, including higher education (Bernstrom, 2009; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Duggan, 2008; Patterson et al., 2005; Schein, 2010). The organizational effectiveness of a community college, in higher education terminology, is referred to as institutional effectiveness (Alfred, 2011; Gans,
1993; Manning, 2011; Schuttinga, 2011). The organizational effectiveness of an enrollment division, which includes the performance of marketing, recruitment, testing, admissions, registration, advisement, financial aid, and retention, is an aspect of the institutional effectiveness at any community college (Abston, 2010; Alfred, 2011; Clark, 2000; Lee, 2010; Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011; Morris, 2012; Schuttinga, 2011). The researcher of this study explored the type of organization climate and organizational effectiveness present in the enrollment division, as perceived by its staff, at a community college in the northeast United States where the enrollment decline was at or above that of the national average, in order to identify potentially explanatory variables.

**Problem Statement**

Despite the benefits of attending college and the many advantages of community colleges, college enrollment is on a national decline (Abston, 2010; Canon & Gascon, 2013; Clark, 2000; Hockey, 2015; Lee, 2010; Wong, 2016). Community college enrollment has steadily decreased since 2008, declining from 56% to 46% (Wong, 2016). This decline accelerated between fall 2012 and fall 2015, at a total average rate of 10.5%, and has not slowed down (National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2015). There is need for research in this area to affect positive change in strategy and function of the enrollment management divisions in community colleges impacted by the enrollment decline (Clark, 2000; Dempsey, 2009; Rholdon, 2012).

The researcher of this study acknowledged the plethora of factors (increased tuition costs, geographic location, economic recovery, family obligations) that influence enrollment decline in colleges; however, this study evaluated organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment management division in a public
community college in the northeast United States that has seen a decline at a higher rate than the national average. Since research on community colleges pays little attention to the relationship between employee perceptions of work environment and employee perceptions of productivity as a means to identify internal explanatory variables (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999), exploring this relationship at a college with an already evident decline was one of the primary goals of this research.

The many external causes of enrollment decline in community colleges today are discussed in available research and include geographic access to colleges, the continuous rise in tuition costs, and trade and industry recovery (Abston, 2010; Bristow, Shepherd, Humphreys, & Ziebell, 2011; Canon & Gascon, 2013; Clark, 2000; Fillion, 2016; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; Lee, 2010; White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015; Wong, 2016). Graduation and retention are commonly examined problems in higher education, but the decline in the number of people enrolling in community colleges is an equal, if not greater, concern. Enrollment decline was selected for this study because this problem has significant implications for society, the economy, and potential students, as more people are opting to forgo college (Bristow et al., 2011; Fillion, 2016; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015; Wong, 2016).

Society. Enrollment decline presents threats, not only to potential students, but also to the U.S. economy and society as a whole (Canon & Gascon, 2013; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). These threats are reflected in one trillion dollars in economic reductions society would see in contributions from college graduates during their entire careers (EMSI, 2014). Society invests in education by going without services that would be
available if the government funds were not spent on colleges, and by going without the production of business and goods that would exist if students were working instead of attending school (EMSI, 2014). Society is made up of taxpayers who deliver their investment into public community colleges via government funding (EMSI, 2014).

There are also social losses at an annual cost of $46.4 billion in American society when people do not enroll in college. These losses are seen in increased crime rates, higher percentages of people on welfare and unemployment, and decreased health and well-being of citizens (EMSI, 2014). Community colleges can lead to an increase in independence for young adults by helping them make life and career decisions, and they promote social justice and equal education opportunities for all people, regardless of the neighborhoods they live in (Cohen, 1996; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). The purpose of President Obama's 2015 America's College Promise policy was partially social and economic, and though it is at a cost to the taxpayer, it was a proposed long term investment in our society. The policy was intended for Americans to measure up to economic demands, avoid years of debt prior to starting their careers, and earn skills, knowledge, and education needed in the workforce at no cost (Fillion, 2016; White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015; Wong, 2016).

The economy. Declining enrollment in community colleges is a threat to the U.S. economy because these institutions ensure our country has well trained individuals (Cohen, 1996; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). The economy is one of the main factors that determine college enrollment, and especially impacts community colleges because minorities and people with low-income are prospective students (Morris, 2012; Perez-Pena, 2013). Despite the historically embedded access mission of community colleges
(Morris, 2012), effective achievement of enrollment goals is consistently challenging because the economic needs of the student demographic community colleges serve are consistent (Fillion, 2016; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; Wong, 2016).

Many adults who chose not to participate in a job market with limited openings went to college during the recession, then were enticed to return to work as the economy recovered (Perez-Pena, 2013). The enrollment problem therefore creates an ill prepared workforce because community colleges are not preparing the type of skilled and competent employees United States businesses need, especially in the areas of not for profit and government where many graduates with liberal arts degrees contribute skills (Canon & Gascon, 2013; Fain, 2016; Hockey, 2015; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015). There are also economic sub-factors that have been considered threatening and they are: higher tuition costs, changes in assistance programs, fear of failure, earnings risk, and more recently the recession and financial crisis (Canon & Gascon, 2013).

Enrollment decline needs to be addressed because it impacts students' and graduates' earning potential (Canon & Gascon, 2013). Economic market analyses indicate that people who begin community college earn 10% more in wages than those who never attend college, even if they do not finish (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). Canon and Gascon (2013) explained the results of an analysis of the skill premium, which measures the difference in average wage earnings between college graduates and non-graduates; non-graduates in this case were defined as those who did not enroll in or who dropped out of college. The skill premium exists because of differences in the availability and the demand for certain types of employees in the workforce (Canon & Gascon, 2013).
In 2013, the skill premium was estimated to be between 65% and 75%. In other words, that estimate suggested that a college graduate earns an average of 65 to 75% more in wages than a high school graduate. Using men as an example, that is almost $60,000 annually for male college graduates compared to less than $35,000 for male high school graduates (Canon & Gascon, 2013). Furthermore, from 2000 through 2007, the average unemployment rate of a high school graduate was 4.6%, and that of those with a college degree was only 2.4%. During the most recent economic recession, the difference in percentage between the two groups got as high as six points (Canon & Gascon, 2013). For context, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the unemployment rate at the end of 2007 when the recession began was 5%, and rose to 9.5% in 2009 after the end of the recession (Canon & Gascon, 2013; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015).

Addressing enrollment decline may increase community college attendees, and graduates, who would therefore have competitive advantages in the job market beyond those they presently have in the areas of wages and skill (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). Economic projections indicate that from now through 2018, jobs that require at least an associate degree will increase at double the rate of those that do not call for any college experience at all (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2010). The White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet (2015) further clarified that by 2020 the requirements for 30% of open jobs will stipulate potential employees have an associate's degree or some college; still, enrollment in community colleges has been declining.

**Potential students.** After more than 10 years of steady growth, the age of people who start college is dropping (Fillion, 2016; Perez-Pena, 2013; Wong, 2016). At-risk and low-income high school aged students, particularly those of color and ethnically diverse
backgrounds, are part of the target demographic sought by community colleges for enrollment (Fillion, 2016; Wong, 2016). Contrary to 4-year institutions, 2-year and for-profit colleges serve the largest population of disadvantaged students (Wong, 2016). Still, as Wong (2016) explained through U.S. Census Bureau figures, the number of low-income students who go straight to college from high-school has declined over 8 years, going from 56% to 46%.

Anderberg (2014) informed that as of 2013, 4 year colleges have about 14 million students enrolled and that number, steadily climbing, is projected to reach as high as about 20 million within the next few years. Although a portion of this projection are older, non-traditional students, most of it is made up of high school students who commonly attend college right after earning their high school diploma. That projection is true for both 2-year and 4-year colleges. "With this evolution came rapid growth of community colleges, both in terms of the number of institutions and student enrollment" (Dempsey, 2009, p.1). The enrollment increase in 4-year colleges does not offset the decline in community colleges, because once they opt out of 4-year colleges, people have a tendency not to attend higher education institutions at all (Wong, 2016).

Canon and Gascon (2013) sought to understand why more people were not enrolling in college despite the apparent benefits of earning a degree. They also analyzed the perceived risk in attending or not attending college, as well as why one may choose to become a student while another would not. As with other institutions, community colleges have increasingly become expensive, with the responsibility for tuition falling heavily on students and their families, and that financial strain keeps individuals from enrolling (Canon & Gascon, 2013). A study by Abston (2010) on perceptions of
enrollment management found that during years 2000 through 2010, more of the costs of college education fell on families, making the average student of the demographic served by community colleges more financially responsible for the bill but less capable of paying it.

Hence, a decennial analysis showed that student loans increased by about 70% from academic years 1997-1998 through 2007-2008 (Abston, 2010; Canon & Gascon, 2013). Underprivileged students, who are without sufficient financial resources or come from families with no generational history of attending college, as well as students over 25-years-old are two groups contributing to the decline in enrollment numbers (Wong, 2016). Community colleges are at the will of discretionary budgets and limited resources; this constricts their ability to meet the needs and wants of potential students (Canon & Gascon, 2013), and there is competition from online colleges, offering an appealing alternative to traditional colleges (Fillion, 2016; Perez-Pena, 2013).

Bristow et al. (2011) predicted that college students of the future will be more aware of and interested in offers to learn online, for either all or a part of their education. Lee (2010) asserted that declining student enrollments, and the disparity between rising college operational costs and state funds, were likely to cause imminent threats for public universities in the coming 5 years. The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2015) and Hockey (2015) both substantiated Lee's (2010) assertion that community colleges in the United States are experiencing declines in both enrollment and degree completion saying that enrollment has declined drastically, at over 3.5% annually since 2012. Hockey also found that the enrollment decline effects the decisions of potential students to attend or not attend community college. The importance of community
colleges to society has continued to grow to this day with Rhodlan (2012) reporting that nearly 50% of American jobs are classified as middle-skill that require higher than a high school diploma but lower than a bachelor's degree, therefore, investigating enrollment decline at community colleges is crucial.

Former United States president administration's community college plan.

Researchers, policymakers, economists, and the like, have tried to identify explanations for the enrollment decline phenomenon. Community colleges have not only received renewed interest from researchers who want to develop explanations and solutions, but from politicians as well such as President Obama (Bruce, Shook, & Fletcher, 2011; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). Though viewed as crucial points of access to higher education for at-risk students, including low-income and minority students, community colleges had taken pause in holding the nation's interest until when President Obama, was leading American citizens to refocus their attention on community college institutions and enrollment decline (Bruce et al., 2011; Dempsey, 2009). According to Bruce et al. (2011), White House proposals that focused on community colleges renewed specific interests in this fundamental part of the American higher education system.

There was a spotlight on community colleges and their role in higher education with the Obama administration’s initiative to retain and then graduate 5 million community college students by the year 2020 (Bruce et al., 2011). The more microscopic look at community colleges and the enrollment problem sparked a following for the White House initiative (Fillion, 2016). According to Edelman and Hay (2015), experts are saying that the America's College Promise policy proposed by the former President of the United States called for providing everyone with 2 years of tuition free community
college at a cost of $60 billion. The plan would include full payment of students' tuition, where the federal government would pay 75%, and the states students reside in would pay 25%. "Recipients of the newly announced America’s Promise Grants are expected to use the funds to scale up existing tuition-free programs, to expand employer partnerships, and to strengthen education and training performance at community colleges" (Morris, 2016, p. 2). The policy exists in two of the first states to adopt and implement it, Oregon and Tennessee.

Fillion (2016) informed that two of the first variations of the federal tuition-free community college promise proposal came into existence, at the state level, in Tennessee in 2014 and Oregon in 2015. Though they have slight differences, the systems are based on the same promise. The current program in Tennessee "gives all recent high school grads the chance to attend one of the state’s 13 community colleges, 27 colleges of applied technology or another eligible institution offering an associate degree program—without paying tuition or mandatory fees, such as lab fees" (Fillion, 2016, p. 17). Students must also maintain at least a 2.0 grade point average and do a certain number of hours of community service each semester.

Oregon became the second state to offer the free community college promise. Oregon's qualification standards are slightly different from those of Tennessee. To take advantage of the free community college program in Oregon, "students must be Oregon residents, enroll in a community college within 6 months of graduating from high school or passing the high school equivalency exam, have a high school GPA of 2.5 or higher and complete the financial aid application" (Fillion, 2016, p. 17). The willingness of lawmakers to carry out the promise in these two states puts them ahead of President
Obama's proposal and the federal implementation of the promise (Edelman & Hay, 2015; Fillion, 2016).

The implementation of the tuition-free promise proposal in two states could encourage other states to follow, and a higher level of adoption among states could lead to a federal mandate (Edelman & Hay, 2015; Fillion, 2016; Morris, 2016). Most recently, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo announced a plan to join Tennessee and Oregon by implementing free college for New Yorkers whose annual household income is less than $100,000. This could potentially encourage people to register for college, but this is not likely to be the solution to the core problem, enrollment decline (Edelman & Hay, 2015; Fillion, 2016; Morris, 2016).

There is greater interest in community college than in previous years (Bruce, et al., 2011). Nonetheless, the existing problems have to be addressed (Edelman & Hay, 2015) for interest to turn into ideas for improvement; whether they come from politicians or executive leaders in higher education. Enrollment decline can be addressed by looking at some core contributing factors; enrollment employees and their environment, or organizational climate, and the employees' process and productivity, or organizational effectiveness (Canon & Gascon, 2013; Hockey, 2015; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; Lee, 2010; Rholdon, 2012).

**Participant college's current enrollment strategy.** The community college used in this study began to recruit outside of their regional area. The college has built residence halls to accommodate students from out of town, as they reach out to students from both rural and urban areas. The enrollment team watches data and trends, and therefore planned for the decrease. This college raised money through tuition increases
and technology fees, and did not increase its spending when enrollment was high. The institution also began focusing a great deal of its efforts on retention of existing students, offering extra support to those who need it. Additionally, the college used is forging partnerships with high schools, so their students can earn credits and possibly be more likely to choose this college to attend when the time comes.

**Theoretical Rationale**

Field theory was a foundational component of this study. It is important to assess employees' perceptions of the processes related to outcomes in an organization because their perception affects their work, may or may not align with the operational goals of the organization, and can potentially hinder productivity and effectiveness of their work group or entire organization (Banks, 2013; Patterson et al., 2005; Perry et al., 2005; Schein, 2010). Field theory was chosen because it not only provided a basis for understanding the reasons for the selection of the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness as dependent variables, but was also used to better understand how important it is to assess employees' perceptions of processes related to outcomes in community colleges (McKinney, 2011).

Gestalt psychology focused on how human perception is organized, emphasizing that the whole is different from the sum of its parts (Feldman, 2015). Rooted in social and gestalt psychological concepts, the premise of field theory is that people and their environmental conditions relatively depend on each other. Field theory methodically separated the individual in society from social contexts (Banks, 2013). To understand and predict behavior, Lewin (1951) proposed that individuals' perceptions and their environment be viewed and analyzed as separate, interdependent phenomena that make
one whole. The concept of organizational climate developed from field theory and was primarily architected by Kurt Lewin (1951).

Field theory evolved into analyses of employees in the workplace, and their perceptions being separate from their work environment. In some cases, the most relevant components of work settings have sometimes been combined under the general heading of "climate." These components are typically measured by how individuals perceive the policies and practices of their organizations (Patterson, Warr, & West, 2004). Employees work within the climate of an organization, but they do not create the organizational climate (Banks, 2013; Lewin, 1951). The organization's practices and procedures formulate employees' priorities within their work unit, division, or department. This impacts employees' perceptions, the nature of relationships on the job, behavior, and innovation; thereby creating climate. Climate is also created by the feelings conveyed within a group by the physical layout of an organization, and the way employees interact with customers and with outsiders (Schein, 2010). Additional factors that determine an organization's climate are leadership, organizational structure, and the current circumstances of an organization (Banks, 2013; Schein, 1998, 2010). Organizational climate is affected by factors such as employees' collective perceptions of procedures, policies, and practices of their organization (Patterson et al., 2004; Patterson et al., 2005; Schein, 2010).

A noteworthy finding, as research progressed, was the effect organizational climate had on the extent to which organizations were meeting their goals, also known as organizational effectiveness (Banks, 2013). Employees' communication and leadership styles were factors researchers found to successfully predict group performance (Banks,
According to Banks (2013), in relation to employees’ perceptions of organizational climate and effectiveness, researchers Haplin and Croft (1963) were some of the first to study primary and secondary school environments. According to Banks (2013), an instrument was developed soon after by Pace and Stern (1968) to objectively measure college environments in an organized way. LaFollette and Sims (1975), Litwin and Stringer (1968), Patterson et al. (2004), Patterson et al. (2005), Schein (2010), Schneider (1990) and countless others have presented evidence to support the importance and value of Lewin's field theory and of organizational climate. Today there is little question about the legitimacy of climate and effectiveness as a part of organizational structure, and therefore supports the rationale behind using them for efficient organizational analysis (Banks, 2013; Patterson et al., 2005; Schien, 2010). This informed the decision to collect and analyze climate and effectiveness data, and for using field theory to fulfill the purpose of this study.

**Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to explore employee perceptions of organizational climate and effectiveness as determined by descriptive categories (department, job title, level of education, and years of experience), as well as explain the effectiveness of and within the enrollment division at a public community college in the northeast United States experiencing the national enrollment decline. This purpose was pursued through three distinct processes. First, the researcher determined the nature of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division. Second, the researcher assessed for differences between and among descriptive groups that make up the enrollment division. Third, the researcher evaluated the extent to which there was a
relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the entire enrollment division. The organizational climate results, in conjunction with the divisions’ descriptive categories (department, job title, level of education, and years of experience), were used to explain organizational effectiveness. The contexts of each of the descriptive categories, as predictors, will explicitly show the most salient categories influencing effectiveness, informed by the statistical analyses.

Ritze (2006) agreed with the importance of first identifying the organization's culture and its characteristics, such as climate, to draw conclusions about effectiveness and potential explanatory variables of certain enrollment operations. Ritze (2006) focused on enrollment management at City University of New York's Bronx Community College and found that the culture of that particular community college sustains the use of business practices to promote success. In community colleges, success is partially illustrated through increased and sustained enrollment outcomes. This informed the selection of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness as the areas of exploration in this study.

Enrollment outcomes act as an indicator of the institution's effectiveness. However, not only is it a poor assumption that enrollment management is the solitary division in the college responsible for enrollment outcomes, but that is not the only indicator of the enrollment division's organizational effectiveness (Alfred, 1999; Alfred, 2011; Cohen, 1994; Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011). According to Cohen (1994), effectiveness indicators are to be used by the college's community to make reasonable annual estimates about progress within each major aspect of the mission. Colleges, whether at the senior or community level, have definitive effectiveness indicators and the
responsibility for each indicator is logistically spread amongst divisions, theoretically contributing to overall success of the institution (Alfred, 1999; Alfred, 2011; Cohen, 1994; Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011). Yet "while incremental change has been documented in higher education, few instances of systemic, organizational transformation appear in the literature. Instead, higher education systems have been traditionally viewed as organized anarchies" (McKinney, 2011, p.4). As leaders of organizations that sell education, college administrators are accountable to make necessary changes (McKinney, 2011), as they seek to maintain positive organizational climate and to attain enrollment effectiveness (Banks, 2013).

**Research Questions**

In this study, the selected community college was a public community college in the northeast United States. The study addressed the following research questions.

1. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceive their division's organizational climate?
   
   1a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon department?
   
   1b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon job title?
   
   1c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon years of experience?
   
   1d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon level of education?
Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perception of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

2. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceived their division to be effective?

2a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon department?

2b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon job title?

2c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon years of experience?

2d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon level of education?

Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employee' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.
3. Is there a correlation between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division?

Null hypothesis. There is no relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

Alternative hypothesis. There is a relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

Potential Significance of the Study

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2014) reported that community colleges educated an estimated 10.1 million people every year. The significance of this study is multilayered. First, there are not enough literate workers in the workforce and community colleges are well positioned to fill the gap if people would enroll in them for education and professional training (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; Rholdon, 2012). If the enrollment decline continues, without exploration of potential internal explanatory variables, community colleges will forfeit access to creating these literate workers. Second, public community college is an affordable option, as it tends to be less expensive and will now be conditionally free in New York State, in alignment with its public access mission (Dempsey, 2009; Lee, 2010; Rholdon, 2012; Fillion, 2016). Third, community colleges are educationally sound, as they allow for the acquisition of skills, or provide remedial aid for weak skills (Fillion, 2016). Fourth, community colleges have a significant responsibility to their communities and represent an anchor for the community. Finally, community colleges create jobs, offer academic and career resources, and bind the community through exposure to diversity and cultural exchange (Ayers, 2005; McKinney, 2011; Morris, 2012; Wong, 2016).
Since the majority of research on community colleges has concentrated primarily on graduation and retention outcomes, and hardly on organizational characteristics and processes that may be explanatory variables influencing the enrollment division and its capabilities, there is an opportunity to add to this body of knowledge (Lee, 2010; McKinney, 2011, Wong, 2016). There is a need for studies that identify specific organizational culture characteristics in community colleges that deter or advance institutional effectiveness, and would assist colleges in strategizing as they move forward (McKinney, 2011). Climate is an organizational culture characteristic (Schein, 2010), and this study addressed that need by analyzing climate. Many studies have concentrated on organizational climate in non-education settings, while only a few have done so within higher education, and even fewer in community colleges (Duggan, 2008). Moreover, research is now focused on organizational climate as determined by group thinking and perception, rather than focusing on individual perceptions (Patterson, 2005). By design, this study collected data on both group and individual perceptions.

Organizational climate can be an exploratory tool in measuring internal functionality, and it can represent an in-depth look at colleges' divisions and their effectiveness in meeting institutional goals (Ayers, 2005; Banks, 2013). This study identified and explained the impact of climate, and significant descriptive categories, on effectiveness in the enrollment management division. Although this was done in one critical area, analyzing organizational characteristics at the divisional and departmental level in community colleges could become common practice in checking for internal explanatory variables in other areas. Alfred (2011), Brown and VanWagoner (1999), Manning (2011), McKinney (2011), Schein (1988), and Schein (2010) asserted that
although it is a fact that relationships exist between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness, only a limited amount of research has been done to explicate the nature of their relationship in community colleges. This study has now added to that limited research.

An institutional goal for community college leaders is to have organizational effectiveness within each department on campus, especially in all aspects of enrollment management (Alfred, 2011; Rholdon, 2012). There is a gap in the literature in terms of organizational climate and enrollment management at community colleges (Fain, 2016). Organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division may be more difficult to pursue in community colleges where decision makers, such as college presidents, provosts, deans, college cabinet members, and enrollment directors and staff, may not be fully aware of the effect(s) climate has on organizational processes and productivity (Alfred, 2011; Clark, 2000). Understanding the organizational climate of enrollment divisions and the relationship it may have with perceptions of organizational effectiveness will go a long way in possibly developing data-driven enrollment management operations and solutions (Banks, 2013).

The field of higher education is under intense scrutiny, and in-person learning is withstanding dramatic changes from technology aided teaching. This is in addition to what McKinney (2011) calls the imposition of high accountability and performance standards. Therefore, community college presidents, provosts, deans and enrollment leaders would be prudent in being accountable and giving attention to their enrollment division's organizational climate and organizational effectiveness, ensuring that the
division's perceptions, its areas of enrollment management, and respective processes align with college goals (Dempsey, 2009; Rholdon, 2012).

More often, community colleges are being required to document their effectiveness for internal and external stakeholders (McKinney, 2011). Internal stakeholders include students and employees, while external stakeholders include members of the communities and parents. Those in favor of conducting climate assessments cite the need for community colleges to document effects of the institute (Alfred, 2011). This way, internal and external stakeholders are aware of and understand how resources are used to accomplish the missions of the institution (Cohen, 1994).

McKinney (2011) advised that as colleges' leaders figure out how ready they are for change, and anticipate barriers that will hinder implementation of effectiveness strategies, it is just as important for them to examine the relationship between organizational culture characteristics and their institutions' ability to do better. Hence, community college executive leaders, their employees, future researchers, and the colleges' customers (students), are some of the stakeholders who will have benefited from this study (McKinney, 2011; Rholdon, 2012).

There are no studies found that identify what enrollment managers in community colleges perceive to be effective in relation to their environment and their division's performance (Dempsey, 2009). Ritz (2006), Dempsey (2009), Saunders-White, Preczewski, Roseman, and Burstein (2014), and other researchers concede that there is no acknowledged set of universal identifiers for the effectiveness of enrollment divisions in community colleges; however, there exists widespread consensus on industry trends and initiatives most frequently practiced to achieve success. Because varying factors
determine the perceptions of enrollment effectiveness for each institution, there is utility in measuring perceived trends or strategies that may lead the enrollment division to be viewed as organizationally effective (Dempsey, 2009; Ritz, 2006; Saunders-White et al., 2014). Whether an enrollment division is effective will depend on institution size, setting, funding, or even culture (Dempsey, 2009).

Furthermore, it is not possible to standardize enrollment approaches to organizational effectiveness for all community colleges because each institution has a different mission and purpose; and none can ignore the changes in student demands and needed services (Rholdon, 2012). This is why an in-depth understanding of environment and productivity perceptions, such as what was done in this study, could result in the development of a standard of practical analyses that could improve processes in the enrollment management division in a community college (Ayers, 2005; Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Manning, 2011; Morris, 2012; Schein, 2010). The results of this study may encourage community college executive leaders to conduct a similar study, to identify areas that need improvement, as well as areas of excellence that contain successful processes within the context of enrollment management (Abston, 2010; Rholdon, 2012). Conducting the type of exploratory internal analysis that was done in this study can create significant modes of transparency that illustrate the willingness of community colleges to be accountable to everyone, from students to employees to members of the communities (McKinney, 2011).
Definition of Terms

Academic year. One fall semester through the following fall semester was considered an academic year, for the purposes of this study (for example: fall 2015, winter 2016, summer 2016, spring 2016, fall 2016).

Enrollment division. In this study, the employees of the following five departments collectively were defined as the enrollment division, included in the study, and given the surveys: admissions, advisement, financial aid, testing, and registrar.

Enrollment effectiveness. Success illustrated through increased and sustained enrollment outcomes. Enrollment outcomes are an institutional effectiveness indicator (McKinney, 2011; Saunders-White et al., 2014).

Institutional effectiveness. Institutional effectiveness can generally be defined, as the extent to which a college is meeting its mission and achieving its goals, as measured by established indicators (Alfred, 2011; McKinney, 2011). For the purposes of this study, institutional effectiveness was defined as the extent to which an institution achieves its mission and goals (Alfred et al. 1999).

Institutional effectiveness indicators. Cohen (1994) says indicators should be defined by the community college, and are to be used by the institution to make reasonable annual estimates about progresses within each major aspect of the mission.

Institutional effectiveness process. Conversely, institutional effectiveness process is defined as the commitment to the continuous quality improvement of all aspects associated with fulfilling the institutional mission; this commitment is ongoing, broad-based, and embedded within the culture of the college (McKinney, 2011).
**Organizational climate.** Organizational climate is an evolving concept since it is conceived in individual mental processes, and is augmented through communications and other members of divisions to be apparent as a more complex communal phenomenon (Schulte et al., 2006). There are many approaches to defining climate of organizations. Climate can generally be defined as the daily environmentally determined perceptions and attitudes of employees (Banks, 2013; Patterson, 2005; Schein, 2010). For the purposes of this study, using the conceptualized dominant approach, climate was defined as "employees’ shared perceptions of organizational events, practices, and procedures (Schein, 2010). These perceptions are assumed to be primarily descriptive rather than affective or evaluative" (Patterson et al., 2005, p. 380).

**Organizational culture.** Edgar H. Schein (2010) said, the culture of a group can now be defined as a pattern of shared, basic assumptions learned by a group as it encounters and solves its problems of external adaptation and internal integration. This has worked well enough to be considered valid and can be taught to new group members or employees as the correct way to perceive and feel about those problems (Schein, 2010).

**Organizational effectiveness.** Organizational effectiveness, in all industries, represents the extent to which an organization achieves its mission and goals, as measured by specified organizational indicators (Alfred et al., 1999; Banks, 2013; Patterson et al., 2005; Schein, 1988).

**Chapter Summary**

The potential connection between enrollment decline, organizational climate, and organizational effectiveness is well documented (Abston, 2010; Banks, 2013; Brown &
VanWagoner, 1999; Dempsey, 2009; Hockey, 2015; McKinney, 2011; Rholdon, 2012; Schein, 2010). Effective organizations hire and retain employees who are familiar with the organizations' mission, culture, climate, goals, and outcomes. The ability of an organization to deliver on its mission and to its stakeholders is often linked to its organizational climate (Banks, 2013; Schein, 2010; Schulte, 2006). Organizational climate is a description of the college work environment derived from employees' experiences, particularly their perceptions of the official and unwritten guiding principles and processes in their organization (Banks, 2013; Patterson, 2005; Schein, 2010; Schulte, 2006). Abston (2010), Alfred (2011), Canon & Gascon (2013), Clark (2000), Gans (1993), Hockey (2015), Lee (2010), McKinney (2011), Schuttinga (2011), and Rholdon (2012), have studied enrollment management and strategies and perceptions of executive leaders, administrators, and staff involved in the enrollment process. They have all found that inquiries into employee perceptions, including those who work in college settings, provide insight into operations and a more accurate depiction of factors that challenge productivity.

They have also examined organizational factors that, if unaddressed, present barriers to the effectiveness of the enrollment management division in a community college. These studies and articles review enrollment management theories, obtain employees' opinions about organizational situations, further knowledge about college target demographics, explain effective enrollment operations, discuss retention effectiveness, and assist in projecting and interpreting enrollment, retention, and graduation rates. Still, few studies assess specific day-to-day perceptions of environment and productivity as internal explanatory variables that directly influence goals of the

The values and organizational dynamics in the higher education industry are unique (McKinney, 2011). Community colleges have seen an alarming decline in enrollment for almost a decade (Wong, 2016). All stakeholders should pay attention, as high school graduates are opting not to go to college, the cost of tuition and other education related needs continue to increase, competition from online programs become fiercer, retention rates make for an untrustworthy value proposition, and businesses drown in dire need of literate workers (Canon & Gascon, 2013; Hockey, 2015; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). Finally, the data is clear that even some colleges positively affect long-term earnings (Canon & Gascon, 2013). This matter had garnered the attention of former President Obama and the leaders of other nations like Germany, where the community college model has been perfected and Germans are enjoying a revitalization of their economies as well as renewed labor participation (White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015).

This study addressed the national enrollment decline problem by exploring the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division at a public community college in the northeast United States; to see if there is a relationship between the two and whether climate and descriptive categories are internal explanatory variables for the effectiveness of the division. By seeking to understand the way enrollment employees perceive their work environment and level of productivity, and whether those perceptions are aligned or misaligned with performance, the researcher was informed by the literature. Chapter 2 will discuss and present a review of the
literature, providing the foundation of the study by detailing the relevant literature on the history and impact of community college institutions. Chapter 2 will also document the role of organizational climate, organizational effectiveness in enrollment management, and the effect the performance of the enrollment division has on institutional effectiveness. Chapter 3 will explain the methodology used in this research, Chapter 4 will present an analysis of the findings of the study and a summary of the results, and Chapter 5 will discuss the implications and limitations of the study while providing recommendations for future research.
Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

Community colleges are a foundational level of post-secondary education, and contribute to the future of the United States (Abston, 2010; Bristow et al., 2011; Bruce et al., 2011; Canon & Gascon, 2013; Clark, 2000; Fillion, 2016; Hockey, 2015; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; Lee, 2010; White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015; Wong, 2016). They are being thoroughly reexamined as attempts for improvements are being made (Bruce et al., 2011; Canon & Gascon, 2013; Fillion, 2016; White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015; Wong, 2016). The purpose of this study was to explore employee perceptions of organizational climate and effectiveness as determined by descriptive categories (department, job title, level of education, and years of experience), as well as explain the effectiveness of and within the enrollment division.

The study explored the organizational characteristics, organizational climate and organizational effectiveness, as potential internal explanatory variables at a public community college in the northeast United States experiencing the national enrollment decline. Specifically, the study sought to examine how employee perceptions of organizational climate and effectiveness are determined by descriptive categories (department, job title, level of education, and years of experience), as well as explain the effectiveness within the enrollment division. Using the available literature as the guide, this chapter will briefly explain the development of community colleges, the reasons people attend them, the enrollment decline challenge, organizational climate, how
organizational climate predicts productivity, the relevance of climate to organizational and institutional effectiveness, and some enrollment division responsibilities.

Since one of the focuses, and a dependent variable, of this study was organizational climate, the difference between climate and organizational culture will be made clear in this chapter. The research cited will inform the purpose of this study. The combined areas of research in organizational climate, and organizational and institutional effectiveness have a wide array of theories including Field Theory (Bernstrom, 2009; Patterson et al., 2005) and the Organizational Effectiveness Index (Banks, 2013). More important, however, these theories and models support the potential significance of this study (Banks, 2013; Schein, 2010).

**The role of community college in the United States.** To further understand the impact of enrollment decline and where community colleges may need to go, it is important to grasp, at minimum, how far they have come (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). The idea of college in the Americas began in the 1600s. Since education was thought to have no comparative value to agriculture and the production and use of raw materials, learning religion through seminaries was a way those vying for educational institutions justified requests to the British for the inception of college (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003; Rudolph & Thelin, 1990). Not withholding credit due the colonists, a group of about 133 men who were Cambridge and Oxford trained founded Harvard College on October 28, 1636 (Rudolph & Thelin, 1990).

By no surprise at the time, not all of Harvard's first graduates stuck to religious ambitions and actually became clergymen; there were opportunities to study medicine and law (Rudolph & Thelin, 1990). Some students were mainly studying theology, Greek
studies, Latin, and civil law practice; today, those subject areas are referred to as the liberal arts (Rudolph & Thelin, 1990). The increase in the number of colleges after Harvard was not by mistake in America, a place deemed inferior in the eyes of English royal society (Drury, 2003; Rudolph & Thelin, 1990). To the royal society, college was meant to differentiate between a barbaric and a civilized American society (Rudolph & Thelin, 1990). Eventually, junior colleges sprouted from 4-year colleges and universities, and came to be seen as a necessity soon after (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003; Rudolph & Thelin, 1990).

Community colleges in America were originally called junior colleges, and a noticeable transformation in American higher education was the emergence of a network of public junior colleges (Anderberg, 2014; Rudolph & Thelin, 1990). The idea can be traced back to the Morrill Act of 1862, also known as the Land Grant Act. This Act expanded access to public higher education, beyond just those who were affluent (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). The majority of individuals who were previously denied access to or excluded from gaining higher education because of class, or many other reasons, had the option to attend colleges and universities after this act was passed (Drury, 2003). The first junior college in America was officially founded in 1901. William Rainey Harper, president of the University of Chicago at the time, was a primary driver behind its inception (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). University presidents, like Harper, recognized that the abilities of students in the first 2 years of post-secondary education were more similar to those of later high school years than to actual college level. They also noticed that the teaching styles used in college freshman and sophomore years were the same as those used in high school (Brint, 1989; Rudolph & Thelin, 1990).
There was a sense of community pride in building junior colleges and a sense of belonging and cultural development among citizens (Drury, 2003). There was a strong sentiment by community residents that college education should be available to all people (Drury, 2003). Other social, political, and economic factors influenced the development of 2-year colleges in the first part of the 20th century, such as the elitist movement by university administrators (Anderberg, 2014; Brint, 1989; Drury, 2003; Rudolph & Thelin, 1990). Fostering of social and cultural mobility for farm families, shopkeepers’ children, and other workers influenced growth of junior colleges beyond the early elitist movements in California, New York, and Illinois (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003).

In 1920, the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) was founded, and is known today as the American Association of Community Colleges, which is the national organization for community colleges in the United States (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). The growth of junior colleges was marked by debate among members of this national organization, over many issues. For example, some members supported transfer programs while others promoted vocational training (Drury, 2003). For a deeper understanding, in today’s context this would be similar to supporting the Associate of Science degree versus the Associate of Applied Science degree. Such disputes among the members of the AAJC were by no means the most serious issues facing junior colleges in the early 1920s (Drury, 2003). There were more pressing issues, such as those related to the lack of cohesive vision for the future of these institutions, brand recognition and associative imagery concerns (Schein, 2010), and the constant belittlement of the stature of junior colleges by senior colleges (Drury, 2003).
At that point, college included special programs for returning veterans and infrequent cases of important faculty research, both of which led to advancing ideals and inventions that could be used in support of war (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). For example, James B. Conant, who eventually became a president of Harvard, developed mustard gas, thereby further increasing collaborations between the U.S. government and junior colleges throughout World War II (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). After the second World War, these colleges first developed what was then referred to as a transfer function so that students could enter 4-year colleges or universities after completing 2 years of coursework at whichever junior college they attended (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003).

Junior colleges experienced expansion in California during the 1930s (Drury, 2003). Jesse R. Bogue became the executive secretary of the AAJC in 1946 and started using the term "community college." He later published a book entitled *The Community College*, which popularized the name (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). This combined with the social community factors and U.S. economic growth factors contributed to the ongoing development of community college, which helped to establish the purposes of community college (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). Arthur Cohen, Director of the ERIC Clearing House for Community Colleges, and Florence Brawer, Research Director of the Center for the Study of Community Colleges (1996) both share the opinion that there were three main influences behind the growth of community colleges: (a) the need for those entering America's expanding industries to be well trained to operate within them, (b) the increase in the number of years youths were considered to be in adolescence, and (c) the push across the nation for social justice and equality (Cohen & Brawer, 1996).
It had become general perception that attending college would lead to social mobility and generativity, therefore, all of society was expected to benefit from individuals pursuing higher education (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Drury, 2003). The 1947 Truman Commission on Higher Education gave reviews and suggestions in a Democracy Report. This report indicated the need to establish a network of public community colleges (Anderberg, 2014; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Drury, 2003). This network would serve the local areas in which they resided, provide cultural centers, offer a comprehensive curriculum, and charge low rates or no tuition at all (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Drury, 2003). The Truman commission concluded that research backed by federal funding should continue, there should be equal opportunity to education and training for all people, and higher education in America should expand in a massive way (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003).

Anderberg (2014) reported that in the early development of higher education in America, the students who were not admitted into "regular," 4-year colleges would go to a community college for 2-years, after which they would transfer to 4-year institutions. Thus, community colleges became perceived as the schools where the less gifted students would go, under the presumption that they could not make it into a 4-year college (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). Despite this categorization, students who first went to community colleges and then transferred to 4-year schools, did better in their junior and senior college years than students who travelled the traditional path of high school straight to a 4-year college (Drury; 2003; Fillion, 2016; Wong, 2016). Just as they do today, in their early years community colleges offered advanced terminal degree courses
and certifications for a variety of vocational and professional fields, to a diverse demographic. (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003; Fillion, 2016; Wong, 2016).

This led to great interest in community colleges as a viable option for Americans in need of skills and education, as well as an increase in enrollment throughout the country (Anderberg, 2014; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Drury, 2003). It was not always the case in American history that once 18-years-old, everyone would consider going to college. For over 300 years prior to the 1920s, a specific demographic of people, White men, attended university (Anderberg, 2014). After the inception of junior college and after the Land Act was passed, the majority of individuals who were previously denied access to or excluded from earning a degree had the option to attend colleges and universities (Drury, 2003). Today, our society encourages and expects diverse groups of people to obtain some form of higher education (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; Wong, 2016).

Today, seeking higher education seems to be the best choice, and community college is a viable option. Whether by their own convictions or based on cultural expectations, more than two-thirds of all high school students believe that it is the best decision for them to go directly to college after completing high school (Drury, 2003; Fillion, 2016; Lee, 2010). The college experience is an important one because people are not just going to be able to compete in the job market and build required career skills once completed, but it has also become a cultural staple (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). Attending college has become an American staple, one of the expected paths to take in life (Anderberg, 2014). Although 50% of 2-year public college students never matriculate to the second year, community colleges are a relevant part of our country's future success (Complete College America, 2011).
Freeman-Butler (2014) explained that community colleges are commended for providing access to students who are poorly prepared academically, and for flexibility with commerce, employers, and the community. Community colleges provide underserved students access to higher education in order to address regional needs (Rholdon, 2012), and are responsible for training these diverse groups of people for the workforce that our economic future depends on (Morris, 2012). Community colleges traditionally maintain an open access mission that consists of an open-door admissions policy, convenient locations within communities, flexible schedules for students to tailor class schedule to life needs, lower tuition rates, and comprehensive social and academic support programs and services (Dempsey, 2009).

Nonetheless, Alfred (2011) asserted that community colleges have less to work with than before and students do not lower their expectations, and then wait for institutions to meet them. On the contrary, learners continue to elevate standards for what they want and expect to receive, and colleges must innovate and deliver in ways that will avoid the consequences of falling short. Executive leaders, faculty, and administrative employees of community colleges train their diverse target market for the workforce that our country's economic future depends on (Morris, 2012). This is why enrollment decline is a problem today, just as it was decades ago.

**Enrollment Decline**

College enrollments increased after World War I, along with the enthusiasm of a changed society (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). Before World War II, the state universities with the largest enrollments were Ohio State University and the University of California at Berkeley (Drury, 2003). Each was far ahead of other institutions with
enrollments of around 19,000. Prior to World War II, several well-known state universities had enrollments between 3,000 and 6,000 (Drury, 2003). By 1970, compared to the University of Minnesota, Ohio State University's main campus at Columbus enrolled more than 50,000 students, and the University of California had grown its Berkeley campus enrollment to 26,000 students (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). As veterans returned to the United States economy, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act was passed in 1944, and became popularly known as the G.I. Bill (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). This financial aid program enabled an unprecedented number of returning military personnel, over 2 million by 1950, to attend colleges, universities, and other post secondary institutions.

College leaders knew they could make a great deal of guaranteed money from the G.I. Bill, as they would be paid directly by the government, and therefore escalated marketing efforts to enroll veterans (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). This is partly why, in as little as almost one decade, colleges were able to double and triple their enrollment. In addition, strides were made in civil rights cases related to educational access because of the G.I. Bill (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). Some states responded to increasing enrollments with complex, multi-campus systems; similar to the suggestion found in a Democracy Report by the 1947 Truman Commission on Higher Education. Enrollment also surged during the cold war era in the 1960s (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003).

Similar to today's education system in America, Anderberg (2014) said public colleges were able to repress tuition prices in the 1960s because they received the largest portion of allocated funds from governmental budgets. In contrast, private colleges had no choice but to continue to raise tuition to keep up with economic inflation and the cost
of living. Moreover, private colleges had to create a reputation of lavishness, adjusting prices to also separate themselves from public schools and foster a sense of elitism around their product. To encourage people to try to afford attending more expensive schools, the private institutions came up with a multifaceted marketing plan to appeal to potential students, including diverse financial packages, grants, scholarships, special loans, study abroad and work-study opportunities, a lower number of students per course, and atypical classes and topics (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003).

With these differentiators in place, private colleges effectively raised their level of prestige in the eyes of the public and, more importantly, in the eyes of their potential customers. This also meant, by 1965, community college's growing reputation of inferiority began (Anderberg, 2014; Clark, 2000; Drury, 2003). This combination of efforts and events explain how 4-year institutions had seen a surge in applications, more than they could actually admit, in the decades following World War I (Anderberg, 2014; Drury, 2003). After seeing increases in enrollment due to the G.I. Bill and the baby boom, higher education institutions began to experience declines in enrollment in the mid-1970s (Clark, 2000).

Overall, community colleges have seen enrollment drop by at least 10% since 2008, from 56% to 46%, while 4-year institutions have had enrollment increase or remain the same (Wong, 2016). Despite the changes in the age of students graduating high school, people still tend to support their families over their education, when there is no perceivable choice (Canon & Gascon, 2013; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). Richard Perez-Pena discussed this issue in the 2013 New York Times article "College Enrollment Falls as Economy Recovers," saying the decades of increases in enrollment that allowed
colleges in the United States to drive up tuition prices is over. Based on the findings of several studies, enrollment decline is an unsettling phenomenon (Perez-Pena, 2013).

Canon and Gascon (2013) studied why more people were not enrolling in college despite the apparent benefits of earning a degree. Similar to Perez-Pena (2013) and Fain (2014), Canon and Gascon (2013) found through quantitative analysis that usually more students attend college when the economy is bad, and a steady enrollment increase begins; while on the other hand most people go back to work when the economy improves. For example, expert data shows that it is likely that the growth in the economy was the cause of a 2.7% drop in enrollment at community colleges (Fain, 2014).

Moreover, in a study on perceptions of enrollment management employees, Abston (2010) discussed the fact that in the first decade of this century, much more of the costs of college education fell on families, making the average student of the demographic served by community colleges more financially responsible for the bill but less capable of paying.

Canon and Gascon (2013) agreed that the financial strain of college keeps individuals from enrolling. As with other institutions, community colleges have increasingly become expensive, with the responsibility for tuition falling heavily on students and their families. Wong (2016) further explained that underprivileged students without sufficient financial resources, those who come from families in which there is no generational history of attending college, as well as students over 25-years-old are groups contributing to the decline in enrollment numbers. The instability of enrollment deterrents, such as the economy, are therefore a cyclical challenge because they are both causes and effects of the enrollment decline.
The early childhood through secondary education (K-12) community often has difficulty with understanding and recognizing the differences in terminology when it comes to higher education (Kirp, 2014; Wong, 2016). For example, there are differences in what the term outcomes represents in each field, especially because of the current increases in high school completion, while college enrollment declines (Kirp, 2014). Wong (2016) explained that something very different is happening at the K-12 level, where students who are usually classified as at-risk are actually the population credited with increasing high school graduation rates. At-risk high school aged students, particularly those of color and or low income status, are part of the target demographic sought by public community colleges for enrollment (Morris 2012).

Canon and Gascon (2013), Fain (2014), Kalleberg and Dunn (2015), and Perez-Pena (2013) analyzed the unemployment rates related to college enrollment, the impact of the recessions on enrollment, perceived risks and benefits in attending or not attending college, and reasons one may choose to become a student while another would not. Results showed that students pursue other options, often employment for a variety of reasons, but it does not always work out as planned. An illustration of the unexpected outcomes is in the fact that from 2000 through 2007, the average unemployment rate of a high school graduate was 4.6%, and that of those with a college degree was only 2.4% (Canon & Gascon, 2013). During the most recent recession, the difference in percentage between the two groups got as high as six whole numbers; and potential community college students were a part of that statistic (Canon & Gascon, 2013).

Consequent challenges. David L. Kirp is a professor of public policy at the University of California, Berkeley who in a January 8, 2014 contribution to the New York
"How to Help College Students Graduate," said students in America are enrolling in college in record numbers, while they are also dropping out in large numbers. Hardly 50% of students who begin at senior colleges, and a concerning one third of community college students, complete a degree (Kirp, 2014). According to Kirp (2014), those statistics represent one of the worst records in any developed nation, and inform on the extensive drain this enrollment problem has on the economy. Kalleberg and Dunn (2015) provided a different perspective of the challenge stating that if enrollment decline were addressed, for colleges with high operating budgets it would mean more flexibility in funding programs, salaries, and necessities that go beyond basic courses and materials (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). This also means that higher enrollment outcomes of a community college may potentially foster more satisfied employees (Ayers, 2005), create an awareness of organizational climate (Banks, 2013; Schein, 1988), and improve analyses of the institution's effectiveness (Alfred, 2011; McKinney, 2011).

Kalleberg and Dunn (2015) examined how a college's institutional factors affect who will stay in the labor market rather than attend college, and therefore is a consequence of enrollment decline. Their study also analyzed the impact that the characteristics of first time students, from a community college system, have on their earnings. Kalleberg and Dunn (2015) conducted a quantitative analysis of unemployment insurance data, college transcript data, and graduation and enrollment data of over 825,000 colleges. When analyzing the effects of students having no college degree, Kalleberg and Dunn (2015) found the average individual who attended a community college, even if they had some college and did not earn the degree, earned an estimated 10% more in wages than an individual with no college education.
In the same study, Kalleberg and Dunn (2015) measured outcomes for displaced workers and found that just one extra year of attending community college increased their long-term earnings by 13% for women and 9% for men. Though they were statistically different for men and women, enrollment size of community colleges was found to be an institutional variable positively correlated with earnings; this means, the larger enrollment numbers, the higher the operating budgets, and ability to help students earn more after graduation (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). According to a report, for students in the labor market, "enrollment size was positively correlated to higher wages" (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015, p.228). It is likely larger colleges may be in a better position to invest in new program development to attract students who are usually located in geographically urban areas, which may increase access to job opportunities, but there was no data to test this hypothesis (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015).

Lee (2010) asserted that declining student enrollments, and the disparity between rising college operational costs and state funds, were likely to cause imminent threats for public universities in the coming 5 years. Hockey (2015) conducted a quantitative study on students enrolled in educational opportunity programs in community colleges, who are chosen from the general enrollment population. Hockey (2015) substantiated Lee's (2010) assertion, informing that community colleges in the United States are experiencing declines in both enrollment and degree completion. With the large number of students who actually do enroll in community college today, many are not graduating (Rholdon, 2012).

2011 New York Daily News article, "CUNY Dropout Rates Show Public Schools Aren't Preparing Kids," elaborated on that point sharing,
Nearly four of five high school graduates arrive at CUNY's six community colleges needing remedial coursework in reading, writing, math — or, increasingly, all three. And within six years, the study says, an eye popping 51% have dropped out from what are supposed to be two-year degree-granting institutions. A mere 28% actually manage to get a degree six years after enrolling at Kingsborough, Queensborough, LaGuardia, Hostos, Bronx or Borough of Manhattan community colleges (*New York Daily News*, 2011).

From any perspective, these statistics signify that meeting retention and graduation goals is a procedural task that begins with enrollment management teams (Rholdon, 2012).

Challenges enrollment managers face, especially those that result from the decline problem, determine how they can best lead their respective community colleges in working to address and produce optimal enrollment results (Schuttinga, 2011). An analysis of enrollment processes, such as those conducted in this study, may help in gaining further clarity (Lee, 2010; Saunders-White et al., 2014; Schuttinga, 2011). Davis Jenkins, a senior research associate with the Community College Research Center (CCRC) at Columbia University’s Teachers College, said community colleges are not likely to see significant gains in enrollment in the near future, especially since college communities must now consider the word of mouth from those who are not matriculating to help enrollment begin to increase again (Fain, 2014). Similar to Perez-Pena (2013) of the *New York Times* and Wong (2016) of *The Atlantic*, Fain (2014) discussed the declining enrollment crisis, citing specific statistical fluctuations that, if community college leaders are attentive to, could assist them in the continuous development and improvement of enrollment effectiveness.
Organizational Culture

In addition to fluctuating economic conditions, rising tuition costs, geographic location, and family obligations; organizational culture characteristics of higher education organizations, such as climate and effectiveness, may be additional factors promoting enrollment decline (Abston, 2010; Canon & Gascon, 2013; Hockey, 2015; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015). Organizational culture is the deep-rooted beliefs, values, and assumptions widely shared by members of an organization, which powerfully shape the identity and behavioral norms for the group (Schein, 1990). One of the most widely used organizational culture frameworks, to date, is that of Sloan Fellows Professor of Management Emeritus at MIT, Edgar H. Schein’s theory and Organizational Culture Model: Three Levels of Culture. Since the 1950s, Schein has been one of the leading authorities on the link between organizational culture, organizational behavior, and organizational cultural characteristics, such as climate. Schein’s theoretical focus on organizational culture and its influence has been at the forefront of organizational psychology for decades.

The culture of a group can also be viewed as the pattern of collective assumptions a group learns as it adapts to the outside world and integrates members and ideals already within (Schein, 1990; Schein, 2010). Over time, as a group changes, it needs to form and implement methods to integrate people into its culture without disrupting it. This has worked well and often enough, confirming validity, and can be taught to individuals who join the group as the correct way to function (Schein, 2010). This means theorists earlier than Schein did not see the components of what became known as culture, as factors that
might individually explain ways to improve an organization's functionality (Schein, 1988).

In Schein's (2010) organizational culture theory, the term "level" describes the components by which organizations can be reviewed. "The term level meaning the degree to which the cultural phenomenon is visible to the observer" (Schein, 2010, p. 23). The suggestion is that distinguishing one level from another will emit a true understanding of culture, flattening confusion that may surround the term. The three levels presented are suggested to be evident within every organizational culture. The first is artifacts, the second is espoused beliefs and values, and the third is basic underlying assumptions. The level of artifacts represents that which is at the surface and phenomenological; it encompasses what is seen, felt, and heard when coming into contact with new groups and new cultures (Schein, 2010).

When describing what constitutes artifacts, Schein refers to the things that are visually linked to a group or organization such as building design and architectural associations, apparel, style, published lists of values, interpersonal norms, and organizational stories or myths. Though observable, artifacts can be difficult to decode and difficult to measure. The second level is espoused beliefs and values. Schein (2010) described this level as the ideas, goals, values, aspirations, ideologies, and rationalizations of an organization's culture. Espoused beliefs may or may not align with the structures and processes of the artifacts level, or with the behaviors of the group. The third level is basic underlying assumptions. This is the deepest level of culture, and can be the most difficult to comprehend. "Such assumptions often start out historically as values, but, as they stand the test of time, they gradually become assumptions and come
to be taken for granted" (Schein, 1988, p. 9). It is an unconscious conditioning whereby
cognitive and emotional directives become the means for interpreting the meaning of
things, what to remain attentive to, and the actions to take in given situations.

The identification of culture in organizations began with the need to be
accountable to society, the families of employees, and other stakeholders, while success
was being pursued in an industrial age (Schein, 2010). Community colleges are
accountable to stakeholders such as students, faculty, and the communities they serve,
and therefore cannot afford to ignore the importance of having knowledge of their
organization's culture and cultural characteristics since it relates to the achievement of
outcomes. "Some cultural analysts see climate as the equivalent to culture, but it is better
thought of as the product of some underlying assumptions and is, therefore, a
manifestation of the culture" (Schein, 2010, p. 24). Opportunities exist today to see things
differently in community colleges, and as a result do things differently. With Schein's
(2010) theory and model as evidence, there was evident value in conducting research the
way the researcher of this study did. Analysis of the climate within an embedded culture
can yield an understanding of any potential effects climate may have on the enrollment
management division's effectiveness (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999). It is
expected that such an analysis can help executive leaders avoid the complacent mindset
some cultural analysts already have. Organizational climate was the main focus of this
study's internal systemic inquiry.

Connection Between the Theory and the Tools

Kurt Lewin, renowned German psychologist, was one of the first individuals who
sought to understand the relationship between the way humans behave and their
environments in the 1930s (Litwin & Stringer, 1968). The foundation of social psychology, and consequently Lewin's theory, is that behavior is a function of the interactions an individual has with his or her environment (Banks 2013; Schien, 2010). The influences from outside of a person are countless and the ways in which an individual can respond to these influences are just as diverse (Barrett, 2014). This interrelated connection of individual and their environment creates a situation where the environment does not invariably produce the same perceptions; any change in the environment will alter the individual's perceptions of the next situation, the same way that perceptions differ person to person (Barrett, 2014). Social situations, including working as an employee within an organization, are psychological events (Lewin, 1951; Schien, 1999). The effects of a psychological event depend on what is in the mind as well as what is happening in the environment (Feldman, 2015). That is how climate instruments began to develop, and why climate was selected as one of the dependent variables in this study.

It is quite evident the instruments most frequently employed to measure the organisational climate of an organisation, are Halpin and Croft's (1963) Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire, best known as OCDQ; then, Likert's (1967) Profile of Organizational Characteristics - POC; Litwin and Stringer's (1968) Organization Climate Questionnaire - OCQ; Campbell and Pritchard's (1969) Organizational Climate Questionnaire: Experimental Form; Payne and Phelsey's (1971) Business Organization Climate Index - BOI eider and Bartlett's (1968, 1970) Agency Climate Questionnaire - ACQ and finally, Taylor and Bowers (1972) Survey of Organizations Questionnaire - SOO (Neves, 1988,
Litwin and Stringer's (1968) OCQ instrument was validated through a variety of research since its inception, showing it was a useable measure of organizational climate across diverse industries in America (Perry et al., 2005). Due to the research and efforts behind the development of previous climate tools, the path was paved for the Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA) in 2002. The work of Litwin and Stringer (1968) was used as the foundation for the creation of the WCA. The WCA was the tool used to measure climate in this study. Originally used to analyze the impact of climate on motivation, performance, and management strategies in health organizations, WCA developers Sarah Johnson and Greg Rodway identified three dimensions of climate as critical to the creation of the assessment: clarity, challenge, and support (Management Sciences for Health, 2002). After items were written with the literature as a guide, staff and managers reviewed them to use for operational improvement and professional development (Management Sciences for Health, 2002). Later, Perry et al. (2005) conducted a study to validate the tool.

In the validation study, Perry et al. (2005) applied the WCA "in Brazil, Mozambique, and Guinea to assess the intermediate outcomes of a program to develop leadership for performance improvement" (Perry et al. 2005, p.1). There were 42 work groups with a total of 305 people. Mozambique had 18 work groups with 97 employees, Guinea had three work groups with 26 employees, and Brazil had 21 work groups with 182 employees. The survey was administered to three groups of managers in Brazil. In Ceará, a state in Brazil, a group had gone through leadership training for 5 years, and the other two groups had just started leadership training in different states (Perry et al.,
There was a broad range in average scores from low in the other two states to a high in Ceará.

The results from this testing illustrated that the WCA tool can discriminate between low and high performing work groups, which is known as discriminant validity (Perry et al., 2005). Cronbach's alpha is a recognized internal reliability measurement for quantitative surveys. Established reliability in the Perry et al. (2005) was calculated at a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87, based on one 122 tests where the WCA tool was used in Egypt and Latin America. The statistic 0.87 provides evidence that the fourteen items of the WCA have reliability, or internal consistency. Also, correlations were 0.20 with a standard significance value of 0.05. "Values outside the admissible range for a given variable were reassigned as missing" (Perry et al., 2005, p.4). Despite the fact that organizational climate surveys collect personal views and beliefs, they inevitably reveal the existing organizational structures and systems that affect them (Furnham & Goodstein, 1997; Patterson et al., 2005).

Lewin's (1951) theory and subsequent label of organizational climate, as well as Furnham & Goodstein's (1997) work, coincides with organizational effectiveness. Banks (2013), using a public liberal arts college as the setting, assessed the way professional staff and administrative personnel perceived the level of engagement in behaviors related to organizational climate, their perceptions of organizational effectiveness within their departments, and the relationship between climate and effectiveness (Banks, 2013). This study was a representation of connections that can exist between field theory, organizational climate, and organizational effectiveness. Banks's (2013) study found that
over 8% of employees perceived people to have been exhibiting positive organizational climate (citizenship) behaviors in their work environment.

Over 32% of respondents to that study did not perceive individuals to have spent time on activities unrelated to the mission of the organization. Over 29% of participants in Banks's (2013) study also highly disagreed with the idea that changes in the institution are effectively communicated among employees. In regards to organizational effectiveness, the results of Banks's (2013) study showed that almost 100% of employees believed there was high quality and high quantity of services produced at the college. Despite the high levels of perceived productivity, anything related to change in the organization was perceived unfavorably by employees (Banks, 2013).

Organizational effectiveness theories include organizational climate (Patterson et al., 2004; Patterson et al., 2005). This becomes evident by measuring the organization's climate, as it can be a predictor of organizational effectiveness (Patterson et al., 2005; Schien, 2010). Litwin & Stringer (1968) were among the first to develop measurement tools for climate, referred to as the Organizational Climate Questionnaire (Furnham & Goodstein, 1997). According to Furnham and Goodstein (1997), the importance of organizational climate became more salient to managers because of the work of pioneering researchers, Litwin and Stringer (1968). The original climate measurement tool developed by Management Sciences of Health (2002), found to be reliable and valid by Perry et al. (2005), is grounded in theory. Furthermore, it plainly details the frame of reference in which it is used, is valid in various work settings, and can apply to management and staff level employees. Thus, the Work Group Climate Assessment
(WCA) and the Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI) stem from Lewin's Field theory, and were applied to this study.

**Organizational Climate**

Before the increased popularity of business management on an organizational level, rather than solely on an industrial level, there were commonly accepted organizational concepts (Patterson et al., 2005; Schein, 1988, 2010). One example of this is evident at an organization's surface, which is organizational climate; this initially became a well-known buzzword (Schein, 2010). There are many approaches to defining organizational climate, in part, because it is real time and can be assessed down to a moment, or specific instances, whereas culture can often take longer to realize (Schein, 1988, 2010). Organizational climate is an evolving concept since it is conceived in individual mental processes, then augmented through communications and with other members of divisions (Banks, 2013; Patterson et al., 2005). In this way, it becomes apparent as a more complex communal phenomenon (Schulte et al., 2006).

Climate can generally be defined as the environmentally determined perceptions and attitudes of employees. Schein (2010) defined climate as "the feeling that is conveyed in a group by the physical layout and the way in which members of the organization interact with each other, with customers, or with outsiders" (Schein, 2010, p.36). Patterson et al. (2005) said of the difference between organizational climate and organizational culture, that culture only becomes salient when employees are asked to explain why behavioral climate patterns exist. That explanation can be found in what Schein (2010) referred to as shared values, common assumptions, and patterns of beliefs held by members of the organization, thereby defining the organizational culture. The
foremost approach to defining climate shapes it as the shared views employees have about organizational practices and procedures, events, and overall environment.

For the purposes of this study, using the concept's dominant approaches, organizational climate was defined as "employees’ shared perceptions of organizational events, practices, and procedures. These perceptions are assumed to be primarily descriptive rather than affective or evaluative" (Patterson et al., 2005, p. 380). Since the priority of this concept is real-time perceptions and attitudes of employees in the midst of multiple organizational phenomena, rather than deeply held meanings, beliefs, and values, the information gleaned from studies on organizational climate are much more pragmatic (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999). Being that organizations are groups, it is important to understand group fundamentals as a foundation to exploring climate. A group is two or more individuals, who interact with each other, have mutually agreed upon goals and experience themselves as members of the group (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson, 2003). Common knowledge about social dynamics within groups implies that group norms and groupthink are likely in effect (Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Johnson, 2003). Group perceptions or groupthink means a group has established interpretations of meanings behind terms and events in the same way (Schein, 2010).

Groupthink minimizes individual thought processes and promotes the idea of group perception, which is then treated as a more sophisticated organizational construct known as climate (Johnson, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Patterson et al., 2005; Schein, 2010). Employees, and groups to which they belong, are part of each moment within an organization, and as such act as determinants of productivity and profitability (Patterson et al., 2005; Schein, 1988, 2010). Commonly, group views are expected to be
mainly descriptive, instead of supported by action or analysis (Johnson, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Schein, 1988). The identification of internal explanatory variables in colleges dealing with the enrollment decline has been studied in some areas, but scarcely within community colleges or in the context of organizational structure, and even less from the perspective of the group perceived to be solely responsible for enrollment, the enrollment management division (Dempsey, 2009). Hence, analysis of enrollment employees' climate perceptions could introduce practices and strategies for improved organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Dempsey; 2009; Rholdon, 2012).

Organizational climate as a predictor of organizational effectiveness. Climate remains one of the most relevant aspects of the organizational context, having been researched and found to influence performance, productivity, and outcomes. Research has found it to be a factor significantly affecting innovation and organizational effectiveness (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Litwin & Stringer, 1968; Patterson et al., 2005; Stringer, 2002) The concept of organizational effectiveness has become important to any organization, regardless of industry (Banks, 2013). Nonetheless, the assessment of organizational effectiveness in higher education institutions, including workgroups and subunits, has remained incomplete because institutional leaders do not use organizational climate measures (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999). The organizational effectiveness of a community college, in higher education terminology, is referred to as institutional effectiveness. As organizational effectiveness does in all industries, in the context of higher education, it represents the extent to which an institution achieves its mission and goals, as measured by specified organizational
indicators (Alfred et al., 1999). Community college leaders need to understand the climate of their organizations.

Most climate studies attempting to measure climate against aspects of organizational performance use cross-sectional designs, which give results that analyze performance within the period just before climate is actually measured. "It is instead desirable to examine climate at one point in time as a possible predictor of performance in a subsequent period" (Patterson, Warr, and West 2004, p.194). That is what the researcher of this study did, while investigating the organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division at a public community college in the northeast United States. "The inclusion of organizational climate into the assessment of institutional effectiveness provides a previously overlooked level of insight that can be employed to more comprehensively inform the creation and implementation of organizational initiatives" (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999, p. 4).

Duggan (2008) conducted a descriptive study that surveyed the climate perceptions of non-teaching staff members at a community college. One conclusion of the study was that once the leaders of community colleges comprehend elements of climate and the nature of fundamental practices and perceptions that affect climate, employees' needs can be met (Duggan, 2008). Duggan's work was noteworthy in relation to this study it because clarifies the point that many studies have addressed organizational climate in non-education settings, while only a few have explored it within higher education, and even fewer in a community college setting (Duggan, 2008). Another study done in a college setting was that of Banks (2013), though Banks (2013) focused on one particular aspect of organizational climate while this study focused on climate generally.
Banks (2013) gained information on respondents' perceptions of the institution as well as citizenship, a subcategory of organizational climate that refers to discretionary behaviors. Measuring against the results of daily operations and processes, or organizational effectiveness, of a public higher education institution, the study particularly analyzed faculty, administration, and staff perceptions. The results of the study provided recent insight into organizational climate. At least 80% of employees perceived the climate of their unit to be positive, and at least 95% agreed there were high levels of productivity. The lowest level of agreement on the 11-question, six-item Likert scale survey used in Bank's study was on items related to acceptance of and adjustment to changes. A study by Pettitt and Ayers (2002) that had similar results was conducted after there was a change in a college's leadership. In that study, the researchers evaluated conflict behaviors against organizational climate of individuals in different employment groups within a community college.

The organizational effectiveness of a community college and its divisions, in higher education terminology, can be referred to as institutional effectiveness and can be measured by climate (Abston, 2010; Alfred, 2011; Patterson et al., 2005). "Organizational climate is a seminal indicator of institutional effectiveness that is geared towards specifying the interrelationship between organizational initiatives as well as the behaviors, perceptions, and verbalizations of its members" (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999, p. 4). The present decline in enrollment is a problem community colleges face, and is a barrier to institutional success (Alfred, 2011). Organizational climate is a predictor of organizational success (Banks, 2013; Patterson et al., 2005). For these reasons, this study
sought to identify potential internal explanatory variables, at a community college suffering the enrollment decline.

Riordan, Vandenberg, and Richardson's (2005) research supported the intentions of this study, as they concluded that organizational climate was related to organizational effectiveness. They found that organizational climate can highlight the performance of a group, and therefore how effective a particular group may be. Brown and VanWagoner (1999) concurred saying, "the extent to which an organization maintains a healthy climate is the extent to which an organization can be effective" (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999, p.11). Moreover, quantitative analysis of an introspective climate survey can provide insight into operational processes (Perry et al., 2005). At any organization, across different industries, climate data can be compared to goal achievement and the effectiveness of organizational outcomes. Organizational climate remains one of the most relevant aspects of the organizational context. It is an important factor, significantly affecting innovation and organizational effectiveness (Patterson et al., 2005).

Organizational theories support and clarify these assertions about organizational climate. They also clarify how social interdependence, organizational climate, and employee behaviors each correlate to organizational goals and outcomes. Based on theories by Lewin and Deutsch (1949), social interdependence exists when a group shares common goals and each individual’s outcomes are affected by the actions of the others (Johnson, 2003; Johnson & Johnson, 1989; Lewin & Deutsch, 1949, 1962). The premise of social interdependence theory is that the type of interdependence built into an organizational setting determines individual perceptions of the work environment, which is climate, and how individuals interact with one another, which is a determinant of
outcomes. In organizations, group norms develop, as do group goals. Goals can lead each member of a group in independent directions, but just as important are the positive results a group with exemplified social interdependence can achieve.

A high-performance group meets all the criteria for an effective group and outperforms all reasonable expectations, a credit to its membership. What differentiates a high performance group from an effective group is the level of commitment members have to one another and to the group’s success (Johnson, 2003). Schein (2010) agreed saying when it comes to climate, if even the main group goals were accomplished because group members recognize that they need one another for success, it is evident there would be a positive effect on the achievement of tasks. This is true for community colleges in relation to enrollment because similarly, with the recognition of climate and effectiveness, there could be increases in the degree to which the level of achievement aligns with organizational goals.

In a review article of research on organizational climate, James et al. (2008) referred to literature as far into the past as the late 1950s. Results of research studies show a relationship between organizational climate and factors such as job satisfaction and level of productivity (Johnson & McIntye, 1998; Tsai & Huang, 2008). A veteran management consultant, Harvey Hornstein, explored in the book, *Brutal Bosses and Their Prey: How to Identify and Overcome Abuse in the Workplace*, the issues of abusive superiors and their impact on perceptions of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness. Hornstein categorized types of despotic managers and the reasons for their behavior, suggesting methods for environmental renovation; this is interpreted as analysis of an organization’s climate. Hornstein (1997) also explained a variety of organizational
situations to explicate the relationship between the work environment, direct reports, their leaders, and productivity.

Employee behaviors, and their perceptions of interactions in the work environment, are components of organizational climate. Hornstein (1997) gave insight into how organizational structure, and the attitudes of those in positions to effect change, contribute to social dynamics and productivity. This represents how organizational climate is a predictor of productivity and in the selected community college for this research could be hindering the institution's enrollment division from achieving organizational effectiveness. It was important to this study for the researcher to analyze employees' perceptions of the work environment, also known as climate, because any evidence of interdependence or disunion can be found among climate survey data and may be connected to organizational effectiveness in enrollment.

Johnson and McIntye (1998) reported on a study in which data were collected, using an anonymous survey of employees in a government service agency. Nineteen aspects of organizational culture and climate were measured in the survey. The correlations found illustrated positive and significant relationships between the measure of job satisfaction and all other measures. Climate measures, in order of most to least closely associated with job satisfaction, were communication, goals, creativity and innovation, and decision-making. Johnson and McIntye (1998) reviewed the results and their practical application, and found that they had significant bearing on organizational effectiveness.

Schulte et al. (2006) supported those findings through their research, asserting that minute research has investigated the importance of both individual-level climate
perceptions and organizational climate in a single study. In their study, Schulte et al. (2006) sampled 1,076 employees from 120 subdivisions of one United States bank, and examined individual satisfaction and its comparative importance to unit-level and individual climate. As it was a cross-level study, "results of hierarchical linear models indicated that individuals’ perceptions of the climate accounted for a large percentage of variance in individuals’ satisfaction" (Schulte et al., 2006, p. 645). Additionally, Schulte et al.'s (2006) results showed that unit level systems of climate were credited with a significant part of individual satisfaction, above how individuals perceived the climate. These results of the Schulte et al. (2006) study suggested that the overall climate in a division in some way influences individual attitudes, after taking into consideration unique and or peculiar individual perceptions of the climate.

Kezar and Eckel (2002) explained a three-part correlation between success in organizational change and the culture of the organization. The literature first proposes that organizations need a culture that supports and encourages change. Secondly, the main institutional elements that form the organization's culture will be tailored because of the change processes. Thirdly, those who are in authority or executive leadership positions must comprehend and focus on the unique components of their organization's culture and make available the resources needed for the changes. The results of this study have now contributed to the same body of knowledge that Banks (2013), Hornstein (1997), Johnson & McIntye (1998), Kezar & Eckel (2002), and Schulte et al. (2006) have contributed. The studies and theories that support the reliability of organizational climate are just as important as the valid tools that measure it.
Community college leaders need to understand the climate of their organizations in order to be institutionally effective (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Dempsey, 2009; Rholdon, 2012). They must seek new and innovative ways to incorporate honest and specific, continuous analyses of climate because it is connected to progressive organizational change and to success. It is not enough to identify the organizational climate; but theoretically, these organizations should seek thereafter to act on findings while in pursuit of achieving organizational goals (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Schein, 1988, 2010).

**Organizational climate in community college enrollment.** Some researchers have provided cognitive reasoning in support of the need for organizational climate analysis in colleges, without discounting the importance of organizational culture (Duggan, 2008; Schein, 2010). Organizational climate is not a new area of research, but it has not been used often in relation to community colleges and institutional effectiveness indicators (Ayers, 2005; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Duggan, 2008; Manning, 2011; Patterson et al., 2005; Schulte, 2006;). Climate is relevant to the enrollment management division at a community college, the ways in which it operates, and its outcomes (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Lee, 2010; Rholdon, 2012). Rholdon (2012) suggested that studies be done in leadership, specifically building from within the organization, for enrollment management at community colleges. As an alternative to organizational structures in community colleges, Rholdon (2012) recommended appointing disengaged employees to synergize staff. However, community colleges are not responsible only to those who hold stake internally, but also have great demand from
external stakeholders to be more accountable for measures of the institution's effectiveness (McKinney, 2011).

Concerned with the quality of higher education, external stakeholders usually impose high accountability standards, and high performance and improvement expectations for college leaders to consistently surpass (McKinney, 2011). External stakeholders expect community college leaders to take extensive approaches to success; the keys to which may be rooted in the organizational culture characteristics of the community college (McKinney, 2011). Internal stakeholders generally have concerns about the college's ability to control its own destiny and have academic independence (Abston, 2010; McKinney, 2011). For example, internal stakeholders question the authority of influences from outside the college that dictate the ways in which the institution measures its own accountability (McKinney, 2011).

A climate analysis of the enrollment management division can show the effectiveness of enrollment procedures, or lack thereof, by taking control of the narrative and allowing the type of internal assessment conducted in this study (Abston; 2010; Clark, 2010; Dempsey, 2009; Lee; 2010; Schuttinga, 2011). Community colleges need to make the processes discussed in the literature, and carried out in this research a present and consistent organizational pursuit in order to have a better future (Brown & VanWagoner; 1999). They can begin this process, as the literature and the researcher of this study suggest, by conducting climate and effectiveness analyses of the non-instructional administration and staff generally responsible for enrollment (Clark, 2000; Rholdon, 2012; Ritze, 2006; Schuttinga, 2011).
"Exploring non-instructional staff perspectives of the college is vital to understanding the organization and effecting change" (Duggan, 2008, p.47). Duggan (2008) provided working definitions of organizational climate, as did Brown and VanWagoner (1999), James et al. (2008), and Johnson & McIntye (1998); but Duggan (2008) went beyond the correlations climate has to institutional effectiveness, culture, and job satisfaction. Duggan (2008) focused on the functions and perceptions of non-instructional staff, such as the enrollment management division, which is the category of employees this study used as research participants. Duggan's study answered questions surrounding organizational climate in colleges, related to those who are satisfied or dissatisfied, what about these individuals contribute to institutional effectiveness, and why their perceptions mattered. Duggan's (2008) research concluded that non-instructional staff interactions and climate could affect organizational effectiveness, as well as outcomes of institutional effectiveness indicators.

An article from the same year by James et al. (2008) gave a brief history of mental and emotional climate, and summations of climate, collectively known as “organizational climate.” This article summarized research on organizational climate up to that point in time. The article also provided an abridgment of psychological climate and organizational climate, citing the impact mental processes have on practices and procedures. James et al. (2008) placed emphasis on the meaning behind forming intra-group collectives of psychological climate, and what criterion these collectives or divisions must meet in order to qualify as measures of organizational climate. Based on theories and research before their 2008 study, James et al. argue in favor of climate and
culture being two distinct constructs, simultaneously supporting the theoretical rationale of this study.

Brown and VanWagoner (1999) reported on a growing organizational climate measurement, which represented one of as many as 10 institutional effectiveness indicators within a community college. Brown and VanWagoner (1999) reiterated the point made by other researchers that different from organizational culture, organizational climate allows more precisely measured specifications to be made. This then fosters a wide-ranging comparison of changes that are happening in the area crucial to this study, organizational effectiveness. The Brown and VanWagoner (1999) study was mixed methods, qualitative and quantitative, where an "Institutional Climate Survey" was administered to every full-time employee in a college, and four focus group discussions were facilitated.

The results of the survey in the Brown and VanWagoner (1999) study gave insight into the employees' perceptions of the planning process on the college and departmental levels, job training and satisfaction, professional development thereafter, and the relationship between the individuals and the organization. The analysis of focus group discussions showed that the most emotion producing issue was that faculty members were unsatisfied with the college's administration. Since these focus groups were created for the study, open forum meetings now exist where faculty, administration, and staff continue to exchange ideas (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999). The hope is that the idea behind and results of the research in this study will encourage a similar type of practical inception in the study site and other community colleges, where climate and effectiveness analyses might be ongoing.
As so much has been done to analyze the enrollment decline externally, actions to address it internally should begin with a thorough analysis of daily processes and outcomes. The analysis of enrollment climate and effectiveness in this study can be done at community colleges on both the state and city levels. "The inclusion of organizational climate into the assessment of institutional effectiveness provides a previously overlooked level of insight that can be employed to more comprehensively inform the creation and implementation of organizational initiatives" (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999, p.4).

**Organizational Effectiveness**

The concept of organizational effectiveness dates back to the development of the earliest production, or assembly, lines by the Venetians in the 12th century, and then the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century by Henry Ford (Jordan, 2016). The inclusion of organizational effectiveness into academic and business settings became more typical by the 1900s. There were many theories, books, and articles on organizational effectiveness published from the 1960s through the 1980s, but in the following decade, they became scarce (Abston & Stout, 2006). This is partially because of the various schools of thought and continued disputes among researchers about the way to define, adequately theorize, and appropriately measure organizational effectiveness (Abston & Stout, 2006).

It was particularly difficult to compare organizational effectiveness studies to one another because there was no standard or generally accepted criteria on which researchers could base their exploration of organization effectiveness (Cameron, 1978; Patterson et al., 2005). Eventually, these ambiguous aspects of organizational effectiveness were accepted and built upon because no one organization is the same, thus the phenomena of
effectiveness could be viewed from a variety of perspectives (Abston & Stout, 2006; Banks, 2013; Cameron, 1978; Patterson et al., 2005). With no general factor of analysis for organizational effectiveness, a combination of situational analyses and the grouping of schools of thought were deemed the best ways to identify relevant effectiveness criteria (Abston & Stout, 2006; Cameron, 1978; Patterson et al., 2005;)

Today, organizational effectiveness represents the extent to which an organization accesses internal and external resources to achieve its mission and goals, as measured by specified organizational indicators (Alfred et al., 1999; Banks, 2013; Federman, 2006; Patterson et al., 2005; Schein, 1988). Organizational effectiveness is assessed with the principle in mind that it is achieved by seeking to gain the most, with the lowest costs (Abston & Stout, 2006; Jordan, 2016). Costs and gains can be categorized in different ways according to industry and organization, but generally include money, personnel, time and other resources (Jordan, 2016). The criteria for effectiveness changes, as the tasks and challenges in an organization change (Jordan, 2016). Academic and theoretical models of organizational effectiveness consider cost versus profit; profits and costs can be based on finances, time, or both (Jordan, 2016). The community colleges, and divisions of community colleges, that are organizationally effective consistently meet and maintain low costs and high profits because they conduct assessments while in pursuit of this goal (Alfred et al., 1999; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Cameron, 1978; Jordan, 2016; Manning, 2011).

**Institutional effectiveness as a predictor of community college success.**

Institutions such as schools, families, and the community are the foundation of society; organizations are the places people go to work (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). College
organizations strive to achieve institutional effectiveness and analyze the extent to which it is achieved via institutional effectiveness indicators (Alfred, 2011). Institutional effectiveness indicators are routinely measured outcomes of educational programs and institutional goals and operations (Alfred, 2011; Manning 2011). Enrollment outcomes are an example of such indicators; therefore, the organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division is a critical component of the entire institution's effectiveness (Alfred, 2011; Dempsey, 2009; Rholdon, 2012). Institutional effectiveness is to higher education institutions what organizational effectiveness is to all organizations, and the subdivisions of a college (Manning, 2011); it can be referred to as what Alfred (2011) calls growth and resources, and outputs.

In this illustration, growth and resources are known as the numerator, and outputs are known as the denominator (Alfred, 2011). Growth can be depicted in many different forms, such as increasing enrollments, consistent additional revenue, and ultimately anything else tallied, easily comprehensible, and calculated (Alfred, 2011). Growth in these and other areas is potentially a smart measure of effectiveness for executive leaders of colleges to use (Alfred, 2011). Resources are those tools and people used by colleges to achieve growth. Outputs are not as easily calculated or understood as growth factors, even if done by numeric measure, but they are usually seen as outcomes based on students and other stakeholders (Alfred, 2011). These other stakeholders include, but are not limited to, faculty, staff, administration, external community members, and local and state level government officials (Alfred, 2011; Banks, 2013; Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011).
While most institutional effectiveness models used in community colleges today mainly focus on contributions from the demographic they serve, the work of executive leaders demands the use of resources go to efforts to grow enrollment (Alfred, 2011). The literature suggests that college executive leaders can likely gain more results when concentrating on growth and resources, rather than focusing efforts on measuring outputs (Alfred, 2011). Alfred (2011) and Cohen (1994) explained that it is imperative for community college organizations to perceive institutional effectiveness indicators as gauges of effectiveness used internally for annual analysis, but also as tools to encourage members of the faculty and staff to support and adopt established processes. Though using indicators is not a new trend, doing so emits hope and support for those who understand the value of assessments that document success and effectiveness of the various efforts community colleges take on (Cohen, 1994). Nonetheless, the assessment of indicators, as well as the assessment of overall institutional effectiveness is not complete because organizational climate measures are not being used (Alfred, 2011; Brown & VanWagoner 1999; Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011).

Alfred, Ewell, Hudgins, and McClenny published the results of institutional effectiveness studies and ways in which it could be measured. Alfred et al. (1999) examined all of the changes in the institutional effectiveness arena at the time, conditions that were affecting it and schools of thought that were new and developing. Though their report led to a variety of questions, they did not stop the discussion there. Similar to Alfred et al. (1999), Alfred (2005, 2011), Hom (2011), Kezar and Eckel (2002), Manning (2011), and McKinney (2011) provided working definitions of institutional effectiveness; it is referred to as an illustrating model of the fundamental components, primary factors
categorized by specialized areas, data and suggestions for measurement, and action plans that community colleges can follow.

Kezar and Eckel (2002) did a study based on six out of the 23 institutions that took part in the ACE Project on Leadership and Institutional Transformation. The project's focus was on the processes involved in an institution's transformation process. Kezar and Eckel (2002) studied the effect of organizational culture characteristics on change processes, conveying the importance of looking beyond institutional changes that are only relevant at the surface of the institution. Climate fits into that category. Kezar and Eckel's (2002) directive of correlation dimensions suggested that higher education literature is developing towards, or may currently be in a place not previously explored. Kezar and Eckel (2002) also shared points that help researchers understand the steps taken when analyzing how organizational change is pursued in a college.

Alfred (2011) addressed the future of institutional effectiveness in community colleges, emphasizing key areas being measured in the realm of institutional effectiveness and the reasons these areas are key. The study began with a retrospective view of previous institutional effectiveness research, after which there was the explanation of an overarching view of models and methodologies used today. The Alfred (2011) study also included predictive scenarios for the future of community colleges that appropriately measure institutional effectiveness and outcomes. Alfred (2011) cited and discussed subjective situations facing community colleges, in addition to what these situations meant for the organizations' effectiveness. Out of this study came a suggestion for community colleges try a variety of approaches to effectiveness simultaneously rather than one at a time, even if the approaches are from opposing schools of thought (Alfred,
Doing this could keep the institution ahead of changes as they come. Understanding these and other factors possibly contributing to enrollment decline at a community college may lead to the development of effective enrollment solutions and strategies at a college (Lee, 2010; Morris, 2012; Saunders-White et al., 2014; Schuttinga, 2011).

Popovics and Jonas (2005) shared two key components a college needs to have to become an enrollment effective institution; internal research and experimentation, and departmental self-assessment. Periodic self-assessments involve reviewing the past and strategically planning for the future, which should be done consistently in some form of a cycle. A key element assessment programs are usually missing is a process that uses collected data regularly for continuous improvements (Alfred, 2011; McKinney, 2011). Institutional effectiveness and assessment plans are not only required by accreditation organizations but they have also become fundamental parts of almost every university and college, even in college self-studies. With the understanding of how important community college is to the growth and future of our nation (White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015), there should be greater comprehensive goals in relation to factors that are affecting processes, effectiveness, and success in accountability in community college.

K-12 education has been met with greater demands for accountability for more than twenty years, but community colleges are now giving attention to how they can and should use data to inform programs, and plan policies and initiatives that promote continuous improvement and internal accountability (McKinney, 2011). McKinney (2011) advised that, for the sake of consistent quality improvement, it would benefit
community colleges to explore how institutional effectiveness programs and structures could be integrated into the organizational culture to promote accuracy, improve skills, and encourage communication among those who hold stake in the college. The collection and analysis of data should repeatedly be used to make possible the creation and sustainability of a culture that uses the data for institutional effectiveness (McKinney, 2011).

Though the mission and makeup of the enrollment management division at each college is different (Saunders-White 2014; Schuttinga, 2011), to analyze the relationship between climate and effectiveness of the enrollment division, the terms need to be operationally defined for the context of this study. Institutional effectiveness is the ultimate goal of community colleges (McKinney, 2011), followed by the components of institutional effectiveness that are individual and group processes.

As there are a myriad of terms for institutional effectiveness, it is important that this study ground its research in a specific definition. For purposes of this study, the definition for institutional effectiveness is defined as the extent to which an institution achieves its mission and goals (Alfred et al. 1999). Conversely, institutional effectiveness process is defined as the commitment to the continuous quality improvement of all aspects associated with fulfilling the institutional mission. This commitment is ongoing, broad-based, and embedded within the culture of the college (SACS, 2005) (McKinney, 2011, p. 44).

For the enrollment management division, periodically collecting a variety of perceptions among enrollment employees can better shape institutional effectiveness processes, and create more reliable assessments of successes (Abston 2010; Duggan,
Abston (2010) concurred explaining that the perceptions of those who work with students on a day-to-day basis may differ when compared to those who do not. For example, the perceptions of mid and upper level administrators are not likely to match those in the enrollment division who have direct initial and ongoing contact with students (Abston, 2010; Dempsey, 2009; Duggan, 2008). For that reason, among others, employees and employers in community colleges must seek to develop a culture that includes a paralleled understanding of definitive, continuous improvement standards.

This thought process should be ingrained in the minds of all employees in the college so that institutions can potentially be more successful, but the enrollment management division employees are a good place to start. According to Bruce, et al. (2011), community colleges were visited in Texas while gathering data and had, as part of their culture, the importance of improvement ingrained in the minds of faculty and staff. Improvement tactics ingrained in the minds of faculty and staff can mean that the college more easily implements necessary improvements. Despite that positive possibility, most institutions still maintain typical organizational structures by which core offices of recruitment, advisement, admissions, and the registration process, remain under the direction of student services (Abston, 2010).

Few institutions seem to have developed structures related to necessary outcomes, such as institutional effectiveness indicators (McKinney, 2011). The problem of declining enrollment is a costly issue that can be addressed by exploring the relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment management division in community colleges (Fillion, 2016; Wong, 2016). McKinney (2011) reported that among the literature on the higher education industry, while consistent periodic
change has been documented, there are very little instances of systemic, organizational transformation. It appears that higher education systems have commonly been viewed as organized anarchies (McKinney, 2011). Abston (2010) added, since there is a continual decrease in public funding and increased consumer comparison to private universities and colleges, public community colleges are being challenged to recognize the need for managing their indicators of institutional effectiveness more closely. Incremental change may be achieved by beginning with analysis of individual divisions (Demsey, 2009), such as the enrollment management division.

More than any other period in history, executive leaders of community colleges have to develop and promote an evidentiary culture that filters throughout their organizations (Alfred, 1999, 2011; Ayers, 2005; Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011; Morris, 2012;). Defined as a data-driven, comprehensive approach to improving institutional effectiveness, systematic in nature, a foundational evidence-based culture will constantly demand improvement. This demand for continuous improvement is in decision-making and ultimately institutional performance as well (McKinney, 2011). To investigate the reasons for the enrollment decline phenomenon, it is prudent for decision makers in community colleges to accept the importance of understanding the people employed, their processes utilized, and the effects of the people and processes on the product offered to their target markets (Abston, 2010; Dempsey, 2009; Duggan, 2008; Schein, 2010; Schulte, 2006). As a result of these concerns, community colleges have been challenged by community members, academic accrediting agencies, business leaders, and state and federal lawmakers, to assess the effectiveness of their organizations (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999).
In a study conducted by Gans (1993), admissions recruitment effectiveness was measured against admissions recruitment objectives. Gans's (1993) research focused on selected factors like institutional characteristics, admissions plans and goals, recruitment activities, and their influence on six hundred forty-three persons' perceptions of admissions recruitment effectiveness. Gans's (1993) population consisted of managers and staff in admissions, as well as presidents. The findings showed, in 21% of the cases, that the existence of strategic enrollment management and admissions plans were related to perceptions of the effectiveness of achieving admissions goals (Gans, 1993). A study by Schuttinga (2011) examined the relationship between enrollment management strategies and enrollment growth or decline between 2005 and 2009. Through an online survey of 45 lead enrollment administrators from 45 colleges, Schuttinga's (2011) results found a need for executive leadership within the conglomerate of institutions to be more meticulous in analyzing the dependence of enrollment growth or decline outcomes on enrollment management strategies, and vice versa.

Abston (2010), Alfred (1999, 2011), Canon & Gascon (2013), Clark (2000), Gans (1993), Hockey (2015), Lee (2010), McKinney (2011), Rholdon (2012), and Schuttinga (2011) have looked at enrollment management and strategies and perceptions of those executive leaders, administrators, and staff involved in the enrollment process. These studies and articles reviewed enrollment management theories, obtained employees' opinions about things, furthered knowledge about students, discussed effective practices and retention effectiveness, and assisted in understanding and projecting enrollment and retention rates. Nonetheless, few studies seem to assess specific day-to-day practices that directly influence organizational effectiveness of enrollment divisions. Understanding
climate as a potential contributing factor to the decline can lead to developing effective solutions and strategies in the enrollment space for a community college. Organizational climate is a recognized measurement of organizational effectiveness, and the organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division is a recognized indicator of institutional effectiveness.

The Enrollment Management Division in Community College

Those in favor of conducting assessments cite the need for community colleges to document effects of the institute so that internal and external stakeholders are aware of and understand how resources are used to accomplish the missions of the institution (Cohen, 1994). Hockey (2015) recommended that community colleges examine enrollment policies and components of enrollment management processes. Enrollment in public community colleges is dependent upon the open access mission, but the enrollment goals are often set by university systems, or are state determined (Cohen, 1994; Manning, 2011; Morris, 2012). Given the need for the mission and goals of colleges to be met, enrollment management materialized during the 1970s economic recession as an essential part of the community college organization, while college enrollment was declining (Rholdon, 2012).

Abston (2010) informed that "with the continual decrease in public funding and increased competition with private colleges and universities, public community colleges are now being forced to recognize the need for managing their enrollments more closely" (p.1), and that starts with their enrollment management divisions. To understand this, briefly setting aside the traditionally analyzed enrollment outcome data, it is important to understand perceived responsibilities of the enrollment management division (Dempsey,
Enrollment management staff promotes institutional effectiveness through successful recruitment and retention of students (Rholdon 2012). Executive leaders of community colleges could be missing answers to the decline problem by failing to analyze the people (enrollment employees) and daily processes that should contribute to increased and sustained enrollment (Banks, 2013; Dempsey, 2009; Rholdon, 2012). Given the challenges community colleges face, ignoring or lacking a clear understanding of the purpose of enrollment divisions could be just as serious as ignoring the division's organizational climate and effectiveness. The research of Anderberg (2014) and Drury (2003) provided historical perspectives about community college, tracing the start of ideas that promoted innovative methods of enrolling community college students in the past. The methods Anderberg (2014) and Drury (2003) discussed in timelines showing the development of college, inform present needs for enrollment management plans for practices, marketing strategies, retention, graduation, and overall effectiveness that could contribute to the achievement of institutional effectiveness for community colleges.

The enrollment management division is responsible for retention. There is difficulty retaining students in college, as a study by Winter (2012) confirmed citing that SUNY Cobleskill’s rate of retention for students pursuing associate degrees decreased from 58% in 2003, to 56% in 2005, to 53% in 2007. One way to start is by recognizing that, as Schuttinga (2011) said, enrollment efforts do not stop at getting students into the institution because the importance of retaining students and the focus on persistence is critical to overall enrollment success. Rholdon (2012) reported, though most higher
education executives view leaders of enrollment management divisions as critical components of the college, there are critics of the enrollment management field.

Since executives in charge of postsecondary institutions tend to rely heavily on tuition and student activities fees to produce revenue, those who oppose the existence of enrollment management have alleged that higher education professionals mainly target students who have affluent or diverse family backgrounds (Rholdon, 2012). Even with general criticisms, it is acknowledged that leaders of enrollment management divisions in community colleges avoid average levels of critical review when it comes to specific organizational effectiveness strategies because community colleges offer open enrollment (Rholdon, 2012; Schuttinga, 2011). Apart from that concession, however, community college leaders must recognize the enrollment management division's perception of performance is conducive to institutional effectiveness (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999).

Abston (2010) examined community college administrators' perceptions on enrollment management practices. Using 21 community colleges for the research context, Abston's (2010) study surveyed executive, director, management, and research administrators in the colleges from the president's offices down to the enrollment divisions. The survey asked each administrator, concerning their institution, about different areas of enrollment management and the level of importance and effectiveness of specific activities that are a part of the area. The data was related to parts of enrollment management that included student services, career services, retention, financial aid, recruitment, institutional research, orientation, learning assistance, marketing, and academic advising (Abston, 2010). Results signified that academic advisement and
retention were two parts of enrollment that were deficient in many of the institutions, and a low 50% of the participants' colleges had a recognized, formal plan for the enrollment management division (Abston, 2010). This, in part, validates the need to assess the organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division in community colleges as seen by those charged with carrying out the procedures meant to meet institutional goals (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Dempsey, 2009; Rholdon, 2012).

Using a point-by-point presentation analyzing several Texas community colleges, Bruce et al. (2011) contributed to this body of research and paved the way for other research in this area. The 2011 study was a qualitative case study research design to assess factors that contribute to student success. Bruce et al. (2011) used a different lens in which to view the concept of communication and effectiveness in community colleges by considering current events in shaping perceptions of practices and procedures, as viewed by financial aid, registrar and advisement offices. The research of Bruce et al. (2011) presented key procedures and suggestions for community colleges, and cites the important role these institutions play in the future of the country.

Clark (2000) developed a study using 26 most frequently used processes for effective enrollment management teams; it also identified the 10 least used enrollment management processes for equity in reporting. This comparative view promotes awareness on the necessity of objective research on the organizational effectiveness of enrollment divisions in community colleges. Abston (2010) asserted that most institutions have maintained the typical organizational structure whereby the core offices of the registration process, recruitment, admissions, and advisement, remain under the direction of student services. Only a few institutions seem to have developed an enrollment
management structure (Abston, 2010), through which climate and effectiveness can be measured.

There have been no studies found that clarify community college enrollment managers' perceptions of the best ways for their divisions to achieve organizational effectiveness (Dempsey, 2009). Dempsey (2009), Ritz (2006), Saunders-White et al. (2015), and other researchers agreed that there are no standard operational procedures that can guarantee the level of organizational effectiveness in an enrollment division. However, there exists widespread consensus on industry trends and initiatives that are most frequently practiced and have positive outcomes. The literature indicates there is significance in identifying perceived organizational trends of enrollment management effectiveness within the literature (Abston, 2010; Cameron, 1978, Dempsey; 2009; McKinney, 2011). For example, it is vital to know whether there are major differences in community college enrollment management divisions' operations and procedures based upon the enrollment size of the institution and or the campus setting (Dempsey, 2009).

The research of Saunders-White et al. (2014) showed that some organizationally effective enrollment divisions across the nation have focused heavily on several key items. Some successful admission, retention, and graduation processes enrollment divisions carry out include: reaching students in the virtual environment by incorporating social media into marketing and communications efforts, particularly Twitter; making "two multi-functional enrollment management task forces guide all communications strategies, convene weekly, and react quickly to changing needs tied to weekly analyses of key metrics" (Saunders-White et al., 2014, p.2), instituting constant communication to enhance teaching and mentoring by issuing faculty members a cell phone so that faculty
are mentors as well as instructors; creating pre-orientation programs where groups of 10 or more incoming freshmen can spend days together while pursuing common interests; having a new student planning committee made up of multidepartment representatives; and creating a residential bridge program, which is a 3 week freshman academic institute (Saunders-White et al., 2014).

Rholdon's (2012) study assisted in understanding organizational effectiveness of enrollment management through the explanation of practices, and the effect they are likely to have on enrollment outcomes. Rholdon (2012) gave a summation of the need for enrollment management to improve at the same pace as the college. Rholdon (2012) said it is not possible to standardize approaches to enrollment for all community colleges, because each institution has a different mission and purpose, and none can ignore the changes in student demands and needed services. Whether the processes and procedures of an enrollment division are perceived as effective will also depend on institution size, setting, funding, culture, etc. (Dempsey, 2009). The purpose of Dempsey's (2009) research was to determine the perceptions of enrollment management administrators related to three things. First, the processes and strategies used by community colleges to retain full-time, degree-seeking students from their first through second year; second, the importance of the processes used; third, whether there exists differences between those most frequently used and those considered most important when the enrollment size and campus geographic setting of the institution are considered (Dempsey, 2009).

Dempsey (2009) also discussed the relevance of increasing the number of community college institutions opening up, as it relates to enrollment retention trends, and the need for improvements in enrollment management divisions. The results of the
study showed that perceptions were found to be important, namely, a noted significant difference between the setting of campuses and the way enrollment employees perceived the level of importance of certain enrollment procedures, particularly retention practices. The connections made in Dempsey's (2009) study supported the premise of this proposed study by highlighting the perceived effectiveness of the various departments that make up the college's enrollment management division.

Chapter Summary

The research discussed in this chapter makes it clear where this study fits into the literature. There is a gap in the literature in terms of climate being studied in higher education, less in community colleges, and even less specifically analyzing enrollment management (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Fain, 2014; Rholdon, 2012). The literature explains that it is just as important to conduct research on, and within aspects of, community colleges because they can potentially fill employment gaps if people would enroll in them for education and professional training (Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015). McKinney (2011) recommended that current researchers seek to identify organizational culture characteristics, such as organizational climate, that can directly prevent or promote community college organizations' achievement of institutional effectiveness.

Dempsey (2009) and Duggan (2008) suggested examining the perspectives of college administration and staff members, especially those who work in enrollment, because their perspectives are relevant to a sound comprehension of the college organization and the implementation of change. It was further suggested that
organizational climate in non-education settings has been studied by numerous researchers, while only few have investigated specific effects of climate within higher education; and even fewer have done so in a community college (Duggan, 2008). Beyond the literature's reiterated recommendation for current researchers to analyze the climate of community college, the literature also consistently recommends examining the effectiveness of the enrollment division. Hockey (2015) conducted a quantitative study on students enrolled in educational opportunity programs in community colleges, who are chosen from the general enrollment population.

As a result of the study, Hockey (2015) encouraged current researchers and executive leaders of community colleges to examine the performance of enrollment divisions, as well as the effectiveness of components of the enrollment process, for the improvement of operations and possibly enrollment outcomes. The literature indicated that it is important to identify an enrollment management division (Morris, 2012) and gather the perceptions of enrollment employee administrators as a part of basic operations, continuous improvement efforts, and the pursuit of institutional effectiveness (Dempsey, 2009). The literature also stated that measuring organizational characteristics (such as climate and effectiveness), that may specifically impede or advance higher education organizations towards institutional effectiveness, would assist executive leaders in community colleges experiencing the enrollment decline, as they begin the endeavor of exploring potential internal explanatory variables (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Duggan, 2008; McKinney, 2011; Perry et al., 2005).

The next chapter will describe the methodology and processes that were employed to conduct this study. The aspects of the methodology that will be specifically
reviewed are the research context, research participants, the instruments to be used in collecting perception data, and the proposed statistical procedures to be used. Community colleges have a variety of internal factors that research suggests hinders, propels, or have no affect on the continuous improvement of institutional effectiveness (Mc Kinney, 2011). It was hypothesized that the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment management division would have a relationship with one another, and therefore may be affecting an institutional effectiveness indicator vital to the success of the college.
Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

Community colleges serve an essential function in American society; however, they have a number of areas that need improvement, including but not limited to low graduation and retention rates, poor branding, and most recently enrollment decline (Anderberg, 2014; Hockey, 2015; Wong, 2016). Despite the benefits of attending college and the many advantages of community colleges, enrollment is on an overall national decline (Abston, 2010; Canon & Gascon, 2013; Clark, 2000; Hockey, 2015; Lee, 2010). As Anderberg (2014), Cohen and Brawer (1996), and Lee (2010) explained, community colleges ensure the United States of America has a well-trained population, increase independence for our young adults, and promotes social justice and equal education opportunities for all people. Community colleges are crucial to our country's future, therefore it is reasonable to investigate the enrollment decline problem by using these institutions for research (Ayers, 2005; McKinney, 2011; Ritze, 2006).

Following the suggestions for future research in the literature, this study gathered the enrollment division employees' perceptions of their environment and productivity, as a starting point in identifying internal explanatory variables in community colleges experiencing the national decline. The purpose of this study was to explore employee perceptions of organizational climate and effectiveness as determined by descriptive categories (department, job title, level of education, and years of experience), as well as explain the effectiveness of and within the enrollment division at a public community college in the northeast United States experiencing the national enrollment decline. The researcher sought to determine if there was a relationship between and among the
independent variables, descriptive categories (department, job title, years of experience, level of education), and the dependent variables, organizational climate and organizational effectiveness. Finally, the relationship between organization climate and organization effectiveness was also tested. The researcher used two surveys, one for organizational climate (WCA) and the other for organizational effectiveness (OEI); both were administered online.

When analyzing the effects of students having no college degree, Kalleberg and Dunn (2015) found the average individual who attended a community college, even if they had some college and did not earn the degree, earned an estimated 10% more than an individual with no college education. For students in the labor market, "enrollment size was positively correlated to higher wages" (Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015, p.228). Lee (2010) asserted that declining student enrollment and the disparity between rising college operational costs and state funds were likely to cause imminent threats for public universities in the coming 5 years. Hockey (2015) conducted a quantitative study on students enrolled in educational opportunity programs in community colleges, who are chosen from the general enrollment population. As a result of the Hockey study, community colleges were encouraged to examine the enrollment management division and its components. Moreover, Hockey (2015) substantiated Lee's (2010) assertion that community colleges in the United States are experiencing declines in both enrollment and degree completion; analysis of enrollment employee perceptions can help.

This was a quantitative, survey-based, exploratory study. First, there was the exploration of the enrollment employees' perceptions of the organizational climate and the organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division. Second, the researcher
identified whether there was a possible association between organization climate and organizational effectiveness at this college experiencing the enrollment decline. Ritze (2006) agreed with the importance of first identifying the organization's culture and its characteristics, such as climate, to then draw conclusions about the potential effectiveness of using certain kinds of enrollment practices. In the 2006 study on enrollment management at City University of New York's Bronx Community College, Ritze found that the culture of that particular community college sustained the use of business practices to promote success. One way in which success is illustrated is through enrollment effectiveness, and increased and sustained enrollment outcomes (Ritze, 2006).

This informed the selection, for this study, of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness as areas for exploration in addressing enrollment. Organizational climate in this research represented, "employees’ shared perceptions of organizational events, practices, and procedures. These perceptions are assumed to be primarily descriptive rather than affective or evaluative" (Patterson et al., 2005, p. 380). Organizational effectiveness represented employees' perceptions of productivity and outcomes (Banks, 2013; Schein, 2010). Research on community colleges pays little attention to the relationship between organizational climate and perceptions of enrollment productivity, from the view of enrollment administrators and staff (Abston, 2010; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999).

Enrollment goals of public community colleges are set by university systems, or are state determined (Lee, 2010). The effectiveness of the enrollment management division is descriptively responsible for enrollment outcomes (Dempsey, 2009). Although marketing, financial aid, testing, and recruitment exist at each college campus, either
through specific department or in general practice, each college campus has a different makeup of its enrollment management division. The researcher examined the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness, as perceived by employees in the enrollment management division, within a community college. The study addressed the following research questions:

1. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceive their division's organizational climate?
   
   1a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon department?
   
   1b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon job title?
   
   1c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon years of experience?
   
   1d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon level of education?

   Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

   Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perception of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

2. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceived their division to be effective?
2a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon department?

2b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon job title?

2c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon years of experience?

2d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon level of education?

Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employee' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

3. Is there a correlation between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division?

Null hypothesis. There is no relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

Alternative hypothesis. There is a relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

**Research Context**

The selected study site was a public community college located in the northeast United States. To be eligible for this study, the selected institution had to have had a
decrease in enrollment similar to the national average of 10.5% over the course of 3 academic years. The community college used in this study fit that criteria by having an 11.7% decrease over the course of 3 academic years (2013-2016). It has a population of more than 13,000 full and part-time students. Over 35% of students enrolled identify as minority and the average age of the student population is 23-years-old. According to the college's enrollment demographic data, over 60% of students identify themselves as White, while over 30% report themselves as Black, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, or two or more races. There are no students who identify as Native American.

The community college under study offers the same opportunities to its students as other community colleges, such as areas of study that include liberal arts, education, hospitality management, engineering, business, and nursing. These opportunities also include a mission to provide open access to all people, offering low tuition, convenient locations, flexible schedules, an open-door admissions policy, social affairs, and academic programs and services that support students and their families (Dempsey, 2009; Saunders-White, 2014). Like many other colleges in the northeast of the United States, Middle States Commission on Higher Education accredits this institution. In addition to being a fully accredited educational institution offering more than 90 associate degree and certificate programs, the selected community college plays an active role in its community with economic advancements.

This college employs more than 1,500 full-time and adjunct faculty members and administrative professionals. Recruitment for use of the community college and its enrollment population in this study was done through e-mail solicitation; the researcher sent e-mails to multiple community colleges in the northeast United States. The vice
president for student services and the associate vice president for enrollment management at the community college who replied and approved their institution's participation in the study, also agreed to support the researcher in obtaining access to the population.

**Research Participants**

In this study, the employees of the enrollment division were the research participants. The criteria for participation in this study included being an employee of the enrollment management division, and the employee must have been working within the division for at least 3 months prior to the start of the study. Research participants were presented with the Letter of Introduction (Appendix A), and in St. John Fisher College's Informed Consent form (Appendix B).

The enrollment division is committed to inviting potential students through marketing and advertising, and college tours. The division focuses on enhancing the academic experience of students, from the point of their admission through their degree completion. Through preliminary inquiry, the researcher gained clarity on the specific departments that contribute to the enrollment processes and outcomes. These offices collectively work to enroll students, maximize their use of financial and other resources, maintain retention, promote graduation, and provide support services to achieve these goals.

- *Admissions* helps students with the admissions process, answering questions for and supporting freshman, transfer, international, non-degree, and readmit students. There are 23 employees in this department.
- *Advisement* helps students with academic advisement and challenges throughout their time in college. It also assists with intake and advisement
of transfer students. This department establishes a relationship between students' life experiences and academic education, attempting to synthesize social development, interests, and selection of major. There are 19 employees in this department.

- **Financial aid** helps prospective and currently enrolled students, and their families to identify, understand, and obtain financial resources that are needed to attend the college. This department also provides financial aid workshops and assistance with forms and applications related to financial resources. There are 15 employees in this department.

- **Testing** is responsible for administering college entrance exams, which are required of each student, and potential student, who enrolls in this college. There are seven employees in this department.

- **Registrar** registers students for classes after they are admitted to the college, and maintains student admission, registration, graduation, and alumni records. This department also ensures each student's appropriate forms are filed and tuition is paid. There are 14 employees in this department.

These five departments (admissions, advisement, financial aid, testing, registrar) were defined as the enrollment division for this study, with a total of 72 employees who work in the departments within the division. All employees in the enrollment division collectively represented the research population. This provided the most comprehensive reporting from the enrollment division. Job titles in the enrollment division are: vice president, director, associate director, assistant director, specialist, coordinator, secretary,
office assistant, clerk, advisor, counselor, and program manager. The organizational charts in Appendices C and D indicate that the departments and employees of the enrollment division are expected to work in tandem with one another to pursue divisional and institutional goals. Regardless of their position, each enrollment employee, including senior management, interacts with students on a daily basis.

- **Directors** oversee the entire enrollment division and reports to the office of the President of the college; collaboratively with the president's office and the provost's office to oversee divisional activities; meet with the executive director regularly to receive direction; discuss operations of their offices in accordance with divisional and institutional goals. There were nine employees in this group.

- **Managers** carry out day to day managerial duties within each division area, manage administrative support employees, and report directly to directors. There were seven employees in this group.

- **Advisors/counselors** help students define and develop educational and career plans through schedule planning for each semester, assist students with planning programs consistent with their abilities and interests, proactively contact and be available for student advisees on a regular basis, conduct pre-registration advising, provide social/academic counseling and moral support for individuals and groups. There were nine employees in this group.
• *Administrative support* carry out essential administrative duties, and other
duties as assigned, under the direction of the directors and managers;
office support. There were 20 employees in this group.

By nature of their positions, each of these job categories spend varying amounts
of time having direct contact with students. The managers and advisors/counselors groups
can be considered "front-line" employees, as they have the most daily contact with
students. Employees in these groups run comprehensive support programs and other
academic, programmatic, and social initiatives for students. Just as important, advisement
and counseling is often done using group or one-to-one methods; directly involving these
employees with students. The directors group tend to interact with students inadvertently
or if a situation requires it. Administrative support groups are likely to have encounters
with students in which they provide directives or information, but mainly work as direct
reports to the other job titles; especially the directors group.

The associate vice president for enrollment management sent the initial and
follow-up e-mail(s) with the survey invitation and link to the enrollment employees.
Follow-up e-mail invitations were sent every 2 business days until the adequate number
of respondents were achieved. Total population sampling is a purposive sampling
technique, and purposive sampling is one of the most frequently used types of non-
probability sampling (Huck, 2012). Total population sampling, or census, is used when
there is a small total population, and a researcher would like to hear from them. This is
why total population sampling was a fit for the needs of this research because it canceled
out sampling error, providing more accurate representation (Huck, 2012).
**Instruments Used in Data Collection**

The Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA) (Appendix E) survey (Perry et al., 2005), and the Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI) (Appendix F) survey (Banks, 2013) were administered to the research participants on the Internet, via desktop and mobile access, on the secure survey platform, Qualtrics. The WCA and OEI are both reliable and valid tools, as tested by Management Sciences for Health (2002) and Perry et al. (2005), and Banks (2013) respectively. All participants received the online survey link via e-mail from the associate vice president of enrollment management. Before taking the surveys, respondents received the letter of introduction and informed consent form that provided information about the study and gave them the option to consent to or refuse participation in the study. Participants were informed that their responses were voluntary and confidential. Participants were provided the option to go back to Qualtrics as many times as necessary, within the available time, to complete their survey process if they could not do so in one sitting.

**Work group climate assessment (WCA).** The WCA assisted in answering the following research question:

1. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceive their division's organizational climate?
    
    1a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon department?
    
    1b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon job title?
1c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon years of experience?

1d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon level of education?

Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perception of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Management Sciences for Health (2002) developed the WCA because of the need for managers in health services to improve management strategies, improve leadership behaviors, and recognize the effects of these factors on staff and organizational outcomes. "The Work Group Climate Assessment is an instrument for scanning work groups of three or more people and the group’s manager" (Management Sciences for Health, 2002, p.10). Therefore, as a tool that developed based on the climate dimensions found in Litwin and Stringer's (1968) work, the WCA was meant to be comprehensive and adequately cover the aspects of group climate and climate assessment that had become clear, through research, as relevant to work groups. By design, there are three dimensions that the fourteen items address; clarity, support, and challenge. Though they "are not measured as sub-dimensions of climate by the WCA tool, they work together to define the construct of the overall quality of work group climate" (Perry et al. 2005, p.7).
Moreover, Sarah Johnson and Greg Rodway designed the WCA to: have evidence to support that it definitely measures climate, be internationally generalizable across a variety of cultures and organizations, and ask participants about their perception of importance of each item, going beyond perceptions of actual performance. After analyzing several organizational climate questionnaires, surveys, and measurement tools, the researcher decided to use the WCA for this study because it is reliable, valid, and took a reasonable amount of time for the busy respondents to complete. This study maintained all original scales developed by Management Sciences for Health (2002) in their entirety, and the researcher is willing to share anonymous data to add to their norm database now that this study is complete. Participants were informed that it was expected to take no more than 4 minutes to complete the WCA. The WCA tool can be used in almost any work setting where people function in teams or groups, as a part of organizational improvement processes. The WCA survey can be viewed in Appendix E.

The WCA is a 14-item, binary survey with a Likert-like scale of 0-4 on each side, used to collect two sets of data, actual performance and importance. On both the actual performance and the importance sides, the scale is: not at all (0), to a small degree (1), to a moderate degree (2), to a great degree (3), to a very great degree (4). Participants were asked to simultaneously respond to how things are in their work group (department), and how important each item is to their work group (department). The researcher excluded the values of the scale (0-4) and presented only the words of the scale for participants to respond. Administering the survey this way, as a method of collecting as honest a response from participants as possible, meant their responses were less likely to be influenced by their perception of the meaning behind their total numeric score. The Work
Group Climate Assessment (WCA) tool was used to collect data for one of the two dependent variables in this study, organizational climate of the enrollment management division.

**Organizational effectiveness index (OEI).** The OEI assisted in answering the following research question:

2. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceived their division to be effective?

   2a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon department?
   
   2b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon job title?
   
   2c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon years of experience?
   
   2d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon level of education?

Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employee's departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

The OEI in this study was the same tool used in the study by Banks (2013). Banks's (2013) OEI tool was largely influenced by Hoy et al.'s (1991). The OEI was
adapted by Banks (2013) and altered for use in higher education. Previous versions were used in the primary and secondary education sectors. One of the original versions of the tool was known as the Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire (OCDQ), which was used to measure facets of climate in secondary schools, as perceived by teachers. Miskel et. al (1979) were some of the first researchers to make changes to the OCDQ, before Hoy et al. (1991) and Banks (2013). According to Banks (2013), the OEI provides a deeper understanding of the behaviors of study participants and the perceptions they have of the institution. The Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI) dimensions are similar to the components of the Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA) in that they both represent some of the central concepts and schools of study within the field of organizational effectiveness, dating back to the 1950s (Banks, 2013; Patterson et al., 2005; Perry, et al., 2005). The OEI is a survey with high internal reliability with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.90; the common figures for a tool to be considered high in reliability are between .70 and .90 (Banks, 2013).

Participants were informed that it was expected to take no more than 2 minutes to complete the OEI. The OEI survey can be viewed in Appendix F. The Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI) is a Likert-like scale of 0-5: strongly agree (1), agree (2), somewhat agree (3), somewhat disagree (4), disagree (5), and strongly disagree (6); and there are eight items, therefore the lowest possible score is 0 and the highest possible score is 40. The WCA and OEI both answered the third research question:

3. Is there a correlation between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division?
Null hypothesis. There is no relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

Alternative hypothesis. There is a relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

Data Analysis

The participants' responses to the WCA identified their perceptions of the enrollment division's organizational climate, providing perceived actual performance and importance data. Their responses to the OEI reported on their perceptions of the enrollment division's organizational effectiveness. Quantitative methods of analysis were used to interpret the employees' perception data. That included descriptive analyses, concentrating on the standard deviations and means for each of the independent variables, and the dependent variables (Creswell, 2009). The data of descriptive categories (department, job title, years of experience, level of education) were recorded into output tables and visualizations to help the researcher report the study's results. Results from the WCA and the OEI were analyzed in the contexts of participants' descriptive categories within the enrollment division. Descriptive statistics aid in summarizing collected quantitative data, or features of the data, in a meaningful way. This allows for the identification and measure of occurrences among one or various sets of data, referred to as frequency distribution.

The researcher recorded survey measurements, assessed for differences, then assessed for relationships by comparing mean scores and variance levels of descriptive categories, organizational climate, and organizational effectiveness. If relationships were revealed, the extent of the relationship was then determined (Huck, 2012). The statistical
software analysis program, SPSS, was used to test each hypothesis in the study; this revealed whether a relationship or differences existed between and among the variables. Analyses were used in SPSS "to consider situations in which data on two variables have been collected and summarized, with the interest residing in the relationship between the two variables" (Huck, 2012, p.44).

Based on prerequisite testing, the equality of variance among the independent and dependent variables revealed that the data met the criteria for parametric, bivariate testing. The data was also tested for confirmation that it met the assumptions of each statistical analysis used, and two outliers were found among respondents; the researcher accounted for these outliers in the analyses. The specific analyses used were: linear regression for inferential statistics, one-way ANOVA for the level of difference between the climate and effectiveness perceptions of the enrollment employees within different categories, as well as multivariate for within group analyses, and correlation tests.

**Summary**

This study sought to determine the levels of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness within the enrollment management division, informed by descriptive categories, as well as to determine the affect differences in climate perception between and among groups had on effectiveness. A public community college in the northeast United States enduring the national enrollment decline was the research setting, and enrollment management employees were the research participants. Each participant was expected to spend a minimum of 8 minutes for survey completion; 2 minutes to read instructions, fill the consent forms and provide demographic data for descriptive statistics, then 6 minutes for completion of both surveys.
Research participants did the surveys online and they are confidential. The Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA) and Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI) surveys were made available through Qualtrics. Follow-up with the distributor of the survey link was done every 2 business days. The results of this study will inform enrollment employees, other administrative and educational departments at this college, and other community colleges, while they pursue institutional effectiveness in the enrollment space. Chapter 4 will present the results of the study. The researcher arranged Chapter 4 in a manner that answers this study's three research questions surrounding the extent of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division, the differences between and among the descriptive categories (department, job title, years of experience, level of education) of employees, and whether organizational climate and organizational effectiveness have a relationship. A summary of the results will follow.
Chapter 4: Results

Having the college experience has become a staple in United States (U.S.) society; it is one of the expected paths young people take after achieving high school level education (Anderberg, 2014). Four-year institutions have had their challenges, but none like the enrollment decline public, 2-year institutions have faced over the past few years. Even though half of public, 2-year college students never continue to their second year, community colleges are generally perceived as a relevant part of our country's future success. Community colleges play a role in the future success of the nation because of the skills, academic success, and career opportunities they afford the majority of the U.S. population (Freeman-Butler, 2014). Despite the benefits of attending college and the many advantages of community colleges, enrollment at community colleges has been on a national decline (Abston, 2010; Canon & Gascon, 2013; Clark, 2000; Hockey, 2015; Lee, 2010). The researcher addressed this problem by exploring employee perceptions of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness, as determined by descriptive categories (department, job title, level of education, and years of experience), and the effectiveness of and within the enrollment division.

This study was designed to address the following research questions and hypotheses:

1. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceive their division's organizational climate?
   
   1a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon department?
1b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon job title?

1c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon years of experience?

1d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon level of education?

Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perception of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

2. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceived their division to be effective?

2a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon department?

2b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon job title?

2c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon years of experience?

2d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon level of education?
Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employee's departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

3. Is there a correlation between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division?

Null hypothesis. There is no relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

Alternative hypothesis. There is a relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

This chapter provides results of two quantitative surveys; one assessing organizational climate, the Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA), and the other assessing organizational effectiveness, the Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI). The WCA survey can be viewed in Appendix E. The OEI survey can be viewed in Appendix F. Surveys were administered online via Qualtrics to enrollment management employees at a public community college in the northeast United States that is affected by the national enrollment decline. Surveys administered online typically yield a 30% response rate (Huck, 2012), therefore at 61.5%, the surveys used in this study received an above average response rate. The data was collected anonymously. The enrollment management division had a total population of 78 employees, made up of five
interdependent departments: admissions (23), advisement (19), financial aid (15), testing (7), and registrar (14).

Total population is a type of purposive sampling, and was the intended sampling method for this study. However, due to the fact that the entire enrollment division at this community college did not participate in this study, convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling is when participants available to the researcher are those who take part in the study (Huck, 2012). After receiving the initial and follow-up survey invitations, 47 (60.3%) of the total 78 employees responded; one of the respondents chose not to participate. The researcher conducted data cleaning, as well as group collapsing. The researcher collapsed job titles into four groups: 1. Directors, 2. Managers, 3. Advisors/counselors, 4. Administrative support. There were not enough respondents from the financial aid department. Based on ethical and statistical responsibility, and also on the duties of the two departments, the researcher collapsed the financial aid department into the advisement department. The data analysis and findings sections are arranged to report and focus on the research questions and presented in table form. Independent results of the WCA survey, the OEI survey, as well as results of the relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness will be presented. Finally, the chapter will conclude with a summary of the results.

Data Analysis and Findings

Data analyses were conducted in three phases. First, all study variables were presented descriptively. Second, all relationships presented within the research questions/hypotheses were tested using bivariate tests (i.e., one-way ANOVAS and Pearson r zero-order correlations). Lastly, in instance that more than one explanatory
variable was related to an outcome variable (i.e.: organizational climate or organizational effectiveness) at a statistically significant level ($p < .05$) a multivariate analysis was used for hypothesis testing. Specifically, a multiple linear regression was used to model the outcome variable as a function of the explanatory variables. Based on the structure of the variables in this study, it would have been inappropriate to conduct any other statistical procedures than those used in the analyses.

Within the current data analysis all necessary checks of test assumptions for parametric testing were examined, including checks of normality, undue influence of outliers, mulitcollinearity, homoscedasticity, and linearity. The only significant concern was that in the original sample of 47 study participants, two evidenced outlier scores reflecting organizational climate that changed an explanatory variable/outcome variable relationship in terms of statistical significance. An outlier is an extremely high or low score. The mean, or the average score, is based on a bell curve. Thus, the researcher used the "Explore" function in SPSS as the method to identify the problematic outlier scores. SPSS starred these two cases as potentially problematic outlier scores. Additionally, the researcher examined which cases were three standard deviations from the mean, a classic, conservative method of identifying outlier scores. This produced validity in identifying the outliers because both methods identified the same two cases as potentially problematic outlier scores. Subsequently, because these two outlier scores evidenced an undue effect on study findings, these study participants were excluded from analysis. All other test assumptions were satisfied without any modification.

There were no missing data points within this dataset, so this missing data also was not an issue. Regarding statistical power, the G*Power software program indicated
that a multiple regression model incorporating two predictors would detect a medium/large effect size \((f=0.25)\), with power set at 0.80 and alpha set at 0.05, using a sample of 42 study participants. Thus, the current sample of 45 study participants would be sufficient for final multivariate testing. Lastly, the study evidenced sufficient psychometric properties, including adequate internal consistency for the organizational climate (Cronbach’s alpha=.90) and organizational effectiveness (Cronbach’s alpha=.89) measures.

**Descriptive analysis.** Table 4.1 presents a descriptive analysis of categorical study variables. Data indicated the majority of the sample was female \((n=38, 84.4\%)\), in either the department of admissions \((n=16, 35.6\%)\) or advisement \((n=15, 33.3\%)\), had a job title reflecting administrative support \((n=20, 44.4\%)\), reported having 10-19 years of work experience \((n=19, 42.2\%)\), and had a master's level education \((n=23, 51.1\%)\). Table 4.2 presents a descriptive analysis of continuous study variables, which indicated an average organizational climate score of 4.08 (SD=.44, MIN/MAX=3.00-5.00) and organizational effectiveness score of 4.71 (SD=.76, MIN/MAX=2.63-6.00).
Table 4.1

*Descriptive Analysis of Categorical Study Variables (n=45)*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Variable</th>
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<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td>Advisement</td>
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<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Job Title</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
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<td>15.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisors/Counselors</td>
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<td>20.0</td>
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<td>Administrative Support</td>
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<td>44.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 - 4+</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9+</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 19+</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 or more</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 year degree</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 year degree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's level</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>51.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.2

Descriptive Analysis of Continuous Study Variables (n=45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean (SD)</th>
<th>Min/Max</th>
<th>Skew (SE)</th>
<th>Kurtosis (SE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Climate</td>
<td>4.08 (.44)</td>
<td>3.00-5.00&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.37 (.35)</td>
<td>.39 (.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Effectiveness</td>
<td>4.71 (.76)</td>
<td>2.63-6.00&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.52 (.35)</td>
<td>.02 (.70)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>1</sup>Potential Range = 1.0-5.0; <sup>2</sup>Potential Range = 1.0-6.0

Note.

Research Question and Hypotheses 1

1. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceive their division's organizational climate?

   1a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon department?

   1b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon job title?

   1c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon years of experience?

   1d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational climate based upon level of education?

Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perception of organizational climate between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.
Table 4.3 presents a one-way ANOVA examining organizational climate scores. Data indicated that organizational climate scores did not vary at a statistically significant level by department, $F(3, 41) = 2.14, p=.11$, years of experience, $F(4, 40) = .81, p=.53$, or level of education, $F(3, 41) = 1.17, p=.33$. However, data did indicate that organizational climate scores varied at a statistically significant level by job title, $F(3, 41) = 2.83, p<.05$. Bonferroni post hoc test indicated that the mean score for the administrative support group ($M=4.20, SD=.42$) was significantly higher than the advisors/counselors group ($M=3.72, SD=.50$). Specifically, the administrative support group's organizational climate mean within their departments was greater (perceived more positively) than the mean of the employees in the advisors/counselors group.

Conversely, the directors ($M=4.13, SD=.38$) and managers ($M=4.12, SD=.33$) groups were unrelated. Specifically, the mean of both the directors and managers groups were not significantly different from one another, nor were different from the highest in the administrative support group or the lowest in the advisors/counselors group. Therefore, research question/hypothesis one is supported in the context of the statistically significant relationship between job title and organizational climate scores, but not in the context of the other stated relationships.
Table 4.3

One-Way ANOVA Examining Organizational Climate Scores (n=45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
<th>F(df)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>16 (35.6)</td>
<td>4.02 (.34)</td>
<td>2.14 (3, 41)</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisement</td>
<td>15 (33.3)</td>
<td>3.92 (.52)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.27 (.43)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.35 (.37)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.83 (3, 41)</td>
<td>.05¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
<td>9 (20.0)</td>
<td>4.13 (.38)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.12 (.33)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisors/Counselors</td>
<td>9 (20.0)</td>
<td>3.72 (.50)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>20 (44.4)</td>
<td>4.20 (.42)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.81 (4, 40)</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1</td>
<td>4 (8.9)</td>
<td>4.37 (.29)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 4+</td>
<td>8 (17.8)</td>
<td>4.16 (.66)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9+</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.13 (.29)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 19+</td>
<td>19 (42.2)</td>
<td>3.96 (.35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 or more</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.09 (.58)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.17 (3, 41)</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>3 (6.7)</td>
<td>3.86 (.43)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 year degree</td>
<td>12 (26.7)</td>
<td>4.24 (.34)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 year degree</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.18 (.35)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's level</td>
<td>23 (51.1)</td>
<td>4.00 (.50)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ¹Bonferroni post hoc test indicated that the mean score for the administrative support group was significantly higher than the advisors/counselors group.
Research Question and Hypotheses 2

2. To what extent do enrollment management employees perceived their division to be effective?

2a. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon department?

2b. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon job title?

2c. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon years of experience?

2d. Are there differences in enrollment management employees' perceptions of organizational effectiveness based upon level of education?

Null hypothesis. There are no differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Alternative hypothesis. There are differences in perceptions of organizational effectiveness between and among employees' departments, job titles, years of experience, or level of education.

Table 4.4 presents a one-way ANOVA examining organizational effectiveness scores. Data indicated that organizational effectiveness scores did not vary at a statistically significant level by department, $F(3, 41) = 1.60, p=.20$, years of experience, $F(4, 40) = 1.03, p=.40$, or level of education, $F(3, 41) = .64, p=.59$. However, data did indicated that organizational effectiveness scores varied at a statistically significant level by job title, $F(3, 41) = 4.45, p<.01$. Bonferroni post hoc test indicated that the mean score
for the directors group ($M=5.08, SD=.41$) was significantly higher than the advisors/counselors group ($M=4.14, SD=.88$), as well as the administrative support group ($M=4.93, SD=.68$) was significantly higher than the advisors/counselors group ($M=4.14, SD=.88$), while managers ($M=4.32, SD=.69$) group was unrelated. In other words, the mean of managers group was statistically in the middle; not significantly different, nor was it different from the highest or the lowest means of the other groups. Therefore, research question/hypothesis 2 is supported in the context of the statistically significant relationship between job title and organizational effectiveness scores, but not in the context of the other stated relationships.

Table 4.4

One-Way ANOVA Examining Organizational Effectiveness Scores ($n=45$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
<th>F(df)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>1.60 (3, 41)</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>16 (35.6)</td>
<td>4.71 (.61)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisement</td>
<td>15 (33.3)</td>
<td>4.42 (.88)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testing</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.96 (.67)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registrar</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>5.07 (.77)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td>4.45 (3, 41)</td>
<td>.009¹</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
<td>9 (20.0)</td>
<td>5.08 (.41)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.32 (.69)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisors/Counselors</td>
<td>9 (20.0)</td>
<td>4.14 (.88)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support</td>
<td>20 (44.4)</td>
<td>4.93 (.68)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years of Experience</td>
<td>1.03 (4, 40)</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1</td>
<td>4 (8.9)</td>
<td>5.44 (.60)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 4+</td>
<td>8 (17.8)</td>
<td>4.63 (1.01)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - 9+</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.68 (.59)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.4 (continued)

One-Way ANOVA Examining Organizational Effectiveness Scores (n=45)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>n (%)</th>
<th>M (SD)</th>
<th>F(df)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 - 19+</td>
<td>19 (42.2)</td>
<td>4.61 (.70)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 or more</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.68 (.79)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
<td>.64 (3, 41)</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Diploma</td>
<td>3 (6.7)</td>
<td>4.38 (.57)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 year degree</td>
<td>12 (26.7)</td>
<td>4.86 (.74)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 year degree</td>
<td>7 (15.6)</td>
<td>4.91 (.78)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master's level</td>
<td>23 (51.1)</td>
<td>4.61 (.80)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. ¹Bonferroni Post Hoc test indicated that the mean score for the directors group was significantly higher than the advisors/counselors group. Additionally, the mean score for the administrative support group was significantly higher than the advisors/counselors group.

Research Question and Hypotheses 3

3. Is there a correlation between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division?

Null hypothesis. There is no relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

Alternative hypothesis. There is a relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness in the enrollment division.

Table 4.5 presents a correlation analysis examining the relationship between organizational climate with organizational effectiveness scores. Bivariate analysis indicated that higher organizational climate scores were associated with higher organizational effectiveness scores at a statistically significant level, \( r(43) = .75, p<.01. \)
Table 4.6 presents a multiple linear regression analysis examining organizational effectiveness scores. Data indicated that the model was statistically significant, \( F (4, 40) = 18.66, p < .001 \), and explained 65% (\( R^2 = .65 \), Adjusted \( R^2 = .62 \)) of the variance in organizational effectiveness scores. In terms of individual predictors, regarding job title, mean scores for the manager group were significantly lower than the reference group, administrative support, \( B = -.52 \), \( SE = .21 \), \( \beta = -.25 \), \( p < .05 \), while all other groups were unrelated.

Specifically, all other groups were not found to be significant, nor were any of the other groups' means found to be higher or lower than the mean of the administrative support group. Furthermore, higher organizational climate scores remained related to higher organizational effectiveness scores at a statistically significant level, \( B = 1.20 \), \( SE = .18 \), \( \beta = .70 \), \( p < .001 \). In other words, according to probability, the chances that there would be an inaccurate finding in this context is one in one hundred times. Therefore, research question/hypothesis 3 is supported as organizational climate and organizational effectiveness are associated at a statistically significant level in the context of the full multivariate model.

Table 4.5

*Correlation Analysis Examining The Relationship Between Organizational Climate With Organizational Effectiveness Scores (n=45)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Organizational Climate</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>.75**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Organizational Effectiveness</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. **p < .01*
Table 4.6

*Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Examining Organizational Effectiveness Scores*

*(n=45)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B (SE)</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job Title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Support (Reference group)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
<td>.23 (.19)</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td>-.52 (.21)</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advisors/Counselors</td>
<td>-.22 (.21)</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Climate</td>
<td>1.20 (.18)</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Model = $F (4, 40) = 18.66, p<.001, R²=.65, Adjusted R²=.62

**Summary of Results**

This chapter presented the findings related to climate perceptions of enrollment employees, as well as effectiveness between and among their descriptive categories. The surveys administered to the research participants included the Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA) and the Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI). This study focused on identifying the overall quality of the organization climate between and within the descriptive categories (department, job title, years of experience, and level of education) that make up the enrollment division, the type of organizational effectiveness overall between and within the descriptive categories that make up the enrollment division, and if there was a relationship between climate and effectiveness.

The independent variables were the descriptive categories, and the dependent variables were organizational climate and organizational effectiveness. The results of this study show that the organizational climate was overall positive while individual descriptive categories showed highly positive climate as well, particularly in job title.
Organizational effectiveness was supported by the data, both perceived to be at high
levels for the entire enrollment management division. A positive relationship was found
between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness. Statistical significance
was found with the job title category, it was found that the directors and administrative
support groups viewed climate significantly more positively than the other groups,
managers and advisors/counselors. The relationship was found to be highly positive and
statistically significant, indicating that the descriptive categories affect organizational
climate and organizational effectiveness perceptions of the enrollment management
division. To answer research question three, a regression model was used for analysis. In
the context of the regression model, organizational climate was treated as an independent
variable against organizational effectiveness as the dependent variable. This is because
two specific variables had to be chosen to run the regression analysis.

This internal exploratory research provides evidence that the independent
variables, descriptive categories (job title, department, level of education, years of
experience), represent potential explanatory variables that should be further investigated
at this college. The climate data, as it was a binary tool measuring "Actual Performance"
and "Importance," indicated that if something is important to enrollment employees, it
can be an indicator of their climate perception. In other words, the way employees
perceived things to be going now in their areas were high/positive, and how important
they generally thought items were was at an even higher level. This implies that
employees' effectiveness might increase if things they perceive to be important in their
environment (climate) are addressed by the leaders of the organization at the same level
of importance. For example, in response to the WCA (this study's climate measurement
tool), n= 41 (91.1%) of the N=45 participants strongly agreed that it is important to rapidly adapt to circumstances, and they also believe that is what is currently happening, just at a lower level than their view of how important it is. This type of knowledge could be useful at this college when changes must happen, as it could help departmental, or divisional leaders choose tactics that increase buy-in among employees by appealing to what is most important to these employees.

The overall findings of the type of internal assessment done in this study can be looked at against the enrollment data for this institution. The community college used in this study saw their enrollment decrease by over 11% over the course of 3 years, a rate similar to the 10.5% decline the United States has seen over a 3 year period. All data will be stored in the researcher’s possession on a password protected file or in the Qualtrics system for 3 years, at which point all data will be destroyed.
Chapter 5: Discussion

This was a quantitative, exploratory, descriptive case study. The purpose of this study was to explore employee perceptions of organizational climate and effectiveness, as determined by descriptive categories (department, job title, level of education, and years of experience), as well as explain the effectiveness of and within the enrollment division at a public community college in the northeast United States experiencing the national enrollment decline. The divisions’ descriptive categories explained the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment division. Moreover, the organizational climate results, in conjunction with the divisions’ descriptive categories, were used to explain organizational effectiveness. The contexts of each of the descriptive categories, as predictors, revealed the most salient categories influencing effectiveness, as informed by the linear regression, multivariate, and one-way ANOVA statistical analyses. This study identified and explained the significant impact of organizational climate perceptions and descriptive categories, especially job title, on the organizational effectiveness of the enrollment management division at public community college in the northeast United States that is experiencing enrollment decline.

The research was framed by the lens of Kurt Lewin's (1965) field theory, as well as organizational culture, organizational climate, and organizational effectiveness practical and theoretical development concepts from over the last 60 years (Patterson et al., 2005; Schein, 1989, 2010). A review of the literature revealed that many factors including changes in the economy, the price of tuition, and geographic accessibility contribute to the enrollment decline in community colleges. Yet it also revealed that,
since few studies have examined the use of organizational characteristics within an enrollment division to possibly identify barriers to or indicators of divisional or institutional success (Ayers, 2005; Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Toulson & Smith, 1994), the results of this study represent a place community colleges can begin to identify areas of success and areas that need improvement (McKinney, 2011).

Based on recommendations to analyze organizational climate and organizational effectiveness (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Duggan, 2008; Management Sciences for Health, 2002; McKinney, 2011), surveys were used to measure perceptions of enrollment division employees (Dempsey, 2009). The Workgroup Climate Assessment (WCA) and Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI) were the survey instruments used to collect data in this study, and relate to the premise of field theory. This study intended to contribute to foundational information that encourages community college organizations to analyze their enrollment employees' perceptions, as a means to identify potential internal explanatory variables affecting an institution experiencing an enrollment decline. This research is also intended to be encouragement for community colleges in the pursuit of enrollment and institutional effectiveness to look at organizational characteristics as a means to explain their ability, or struggle, to accomplish goals (Banks, 2013; McKinney, 2011).

Information for this study was collected by administering online surveys (WCA and OEI) to enrollment management employees in the enrollment management division at a public community college in the northeast United States. The study surveyed the research participants' perceptions of their work environment and their perceptions of their department/division's productivity in relation to demographic data participants provided.
This purpose was pursued through three distinct processes. First, the researcher determined the nature of organizational climate and organizational effectiveness present within the enrollment division. Second, the researcher assessed for possible differences in organizational climate and effectiveness within each of the departments that make up the enrollment division. Third, the researcher evaluated the extent to which there was a relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness within of the enrollment management division and amongst its department. This chapter will discuss the implications and limitations of the study as well as provide recommendations for future research, as viewed through the lens of the theoretical rationale and the understanding of the enrollment decline phenomenon. Further, the limitations of the study and prospective future research in the area of employee perceptions, their descriptive categories, organizational climate, and organizational effectiveness are presented.

**Implications and Findings**

By exploring organizational climate of the enrollment division, this study and its findings fill a gap in previous research (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; McKinney, 2011), where the assessment of organizational effectiveness in higher education institutions, including workgroups and subunits, has been incomplete because institutional leaders do not use organizational climate measures (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Dempsey, 2009; Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011). This type of exploration is not often done in higher education, and even less often in community colleges (Banks, 2013; Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Dempsey, 2009; Duggan, 2008; Rholdon, 2012), and therefore implies there is value in an institution collecting employees’ perception data.
Executive leaders at the community college used in this study can now choose to conduct this type of internal organizational evaluation on a larger scale, or at other colleges. These findings indicate there is a major benefit of conducting this type of research in higher education institutions.

This research implies that an analysis of organizational characteristics such as organizational climate and organizational effectiveness can be used as a means to identify daily operational challenges of a community college, understand departments' and divisions' ability or struggle to produce, and recognize the affect employees and their environment have on consumer experience and institutional success (Ayers, 2005; Banks, 2013; Duggan, 2008; Morris, 2012; Rholdon, 2012; Schein, 1989; Schein, 2010; Toulson & Smith, 1994). Although this research was done in one critical area in one community college, analyzing organizational characteristics at the divisional and departmental level in community colleges could become common practice in checking for internal explanatory variables in other areas. For example, one finding was that within the job titles category, the directors group mean climate score was significantly higher than the advisors/counselors group. Additionally, the mean effectiveness score for the administrative support group was significantly higher than the advisors/counselors group.

**Major finding 1.** The researcher determined the nature of organizational climate, and assessed for differences between and among descriptive groups that make up the enrollment division. The data indicated that organizational climate scores did not vary at a statistically significant level by department, years of experience, or by level of education. However, the data did indicate that organizational climate scores varied at a statistically significant level by job title, $F(3, 41) = 2.83, p<.05$. This implies that the way
employees in the enrollment division view climate is driven most by their job title. Furthermore, the administrative support group ($M=4.20, SD=.42$) viewed the climate of their areas in the most positive way.

**Major finding 2.** The researcher determined the nature of organizational effectiveness, and assessed for differences between and among descriptive groups that make up the enrollment division. Similar to climate, the organizational effectiveness data indicated that scores varied at a statistically significant level by job title, $F(3, 41) = 4.45, p<.01$, but not significant in any other descriptive category. Moreover, the Bonferroni post hoc test indicated that the mean score for the directors group ($M=5.08, SD=.41$) and the administrative support group ($M=4.93, SD=.68$) group both were higher than those of the advisors/counselors and managers groups. This implies that the way employees of the enrollment division view the organizational effectiveness of their area is driven most by their job title, and likely by the functions of their jobs.

For example, the managers and advisors/counselors group could be feeling more pressure than the directors and administrative support groups because of their daily job duties. Managers and advisors/counselors could be having more one-to-one contact with students, or their job duties might carry the heaviest burden of policy and operations implementation. Additionally, the effectiveness data implies that those in the highest positions are able to perceive effectiveness at higher levels because they likely find relief in their ability to delegate tasks onto their direct reports. The administrative support group, which also had high effectiveness scores, may have their perception because of their positions' relevance to the jobs of the directors group, and may be well looked after by the directors group.
**Major finding 3.** The researcher evaluated the extent to which there was a relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the entire enrollment division. Findings, through bivariate analysis, indicated that higher organizational climate scores were associated with higher organizational effectiveness scores at a statistically significant level, \( r(43) = .75, p<.01 \). This implies that the more positively employees viewed the organizational climate of the division, the higher the level of organizational effectiveness perception. The significance of this correlation was \( F(4, 40) = 18.66, p<.001 \), and explained 65% (\( R^2=.65 \), Adjusted \( R^2=.62 \)) of the variance in organizational effectiveness scores. In other words, the perceptions of organizational climate and the descriptive category of job title, particularly the administrative support group, as an individual predictor, explains 65% of the varied perceptions of organizational effectiveness. Higher organizational climate scores remained related to higher organizational effectiveness scores at a statistically significant level, \( B=1.20, SE=.18, \beta=.70, p<.001 \), even when not considering the administrative support group.

**Limitations**

There were several limitations of this study:

**Time of survey distribution.** The surveys were not distributed at the beginning of the fall academic semester. Though it may have taken longer to collect survey responses because of how busy enrollment employees are around that time, if this research was conducted at the beginning of the academic year, enrollment employees would have been engrossed in their process at the most critical time of the year. Their perceptions of their work environment and level of goal achievement would likely have been affected, and the result even more informative.
**Self-reporting.** The survey instrument required enrollment employees to self-report survey answers. By nature, self reporting is a limitation in any study like this because of natural differences between respondents' interpretations of survey items, and because of response bias. Response bias refers to each individual's tendency to respond to surveys a certain way, filling out rating scales as an extreme, moderate, or conservative responder (Huck, 2012).

**Number of responses.** It was limiting for this research study to not have more responses from each of the departments of the enrollment management division, but especially the financial aid department. There was an underrepresentation of the financial aid department. A higher number of responses from this department, one that is vital to any community college, would have been helpful. Financial hardship is traditionally one of the barriers to students attending college, and rising tuition costs is one of the main causes of the national enrollment decline (Edelman & Hay, 2015; Morris, 2016; White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet, 2015).

**Number of colleges.** This study was conducted using a single community college, as opposed to a group, system, or network of community colleges.

**Non-existent information.** The total respondents were \( N=47 \), and there was no data included on the remaining 30 employees, and no comparisons between those who participated and those who did not participate because it does not exist. The remaining thirty employees did not necessarily refuse to consent, they may have simply never received or opened the link to the survey. Thus there were no t-tests, or other relational/comparison statistical analyses done to establish certain levels of generalizability because it was not plausible to gather that data at the time of the study.
Recommendations

The findings of this study indicated that organizational climate perceptions in the enrollment division are positive and significantly influenced by employees' job titles, $F(3, 41) = 2.83, p<.05$. Findings also indicated that organizational climate impacts organizational effectiveness of the division, where climate explained 65% ($R^2=.65$, Adjusted $R^2=.62$) of the variance in effectiveness scores. The results of this study, combined with the fact that climate is a predictor of performance (Banks, 2013; Patterson et al. 2004; Perry et al., 2005), is evidence that this community college, and others, should seek to understand internal explanatory variables that can inhibit or propel the enrollment division and its operations.

Internal effort 1. Due to the fact that in this study, higher organizational climate scores were related to higher organizational effectiveness scores at a statistically significant level, $B=1.20$, SE=.18, $\beta=.70$, $p<.001$, periodic assessment of organizational cultural characteristics should be embedded as part of community colleges' missions and goals. This data finding makes this a reasonable recommendation, because executive leaders at this community college now know enrollment employees perceive their productivity to be higher, the more they perceived their work environment to be positive and supportive. Organizational climate and organizational effectiveness are organizational culture characteristics worth investigating as part of systematic and systemic institutional reviews (Ayers, 2005; Duggan, 2008; McKinney, 2011; Schein, 2010) because it can inform the organizational policies and procedures that are conducive to enrollment employees' work efforts. Moreover, if it is a part of institutional review, changes in perceptions of climate may become evidenced aspects of changes in
productivity in the future, whether positively or negatively. "While a few community colleges have begun to immerse themselves and their organizations into the assessment of academic programs, many institutions have yet to plan, develop and implement a systematic process" (McKinney, 2011, p.26). There have been movements for restructuring changes, increased accountability and more transparency in community colleges (McKinney, 2011).

**Internal effort 2.** The results of this study indicate that it might be beneficial to the institution if this particular community college's leaders were to implement climate and effectiveness analyses as a part of organizational initiatives for internal continuous improvement (McKinney, 2011). Internal, self-studies are often done in colleges, some of which yield results that become a part of an annual institutional effectiveness report (Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011). "The inclusion of organizational climate into the assessment of institutional effectiveness provides a previously overlooked level of insight that can be employed to more comprehensively inform the creation and implementation of organizational initiatives" (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999, p. 4). This study accomplished that using the enrollment division at a public community college in the northeast United States that is being impacted by the national enrollment decline. The consideration and analysis of organizational climate can be a useful exploratory tool in measuring institutional effectiveness indicators; representing an in-depth look at aspects of colleges' culture that help or hinder institutional goals. One way executive leaders in community colleges can implement a study like this as a standard of practice is to make it a part of annual or biannual self-studies.
**Internal effort 3.** The results of this study showed a statistically significant relationship between organizational climate and organizational effectiveness, at a level of $r(43) = .75, p<.01$. It is recommended institutions implement periodic climate and effectiveness assessments at the selected community college, other colleges, and college systems, to contribute to systemic continuous improvement. There are at least three reasons for executive leaders of community colleges to be interested in doing so: (a) it is a fact that the enrollment division at each college is different, (b) the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of one identified enrollment division is likely to be different each year, and (c) the climate and effectiveness perceptions of enrollment divisions are likely to be different from institution to institution. Admissions, advisement, financial aid, testing, and registrar must each be held accountable to for achieving departmental goals, but community college executive leaders are responsible for being aware of environmental barriers to divisional productivity (Alfred, 2011; Dempsey, 2009; Morris, 2012). Furthermore, it provides a different lens in which to view the concept of communication in community colleges.

**Internal effort 4.** Explaining to new employees the intricate details and processes behind factors that keep the doors of the college open, could help them understand the threat enrollment decline poses to their job security and communities. Recognizing that enrollment employees serve the consumer and their processes are directly linked to consumer and institutional outcomes means that investing in measuring their perceptions is a reasonable value proposition (Brown & VanWagoner, 1999; Demsey, 2009; Duggan, 2008; Schulte et al., 2006; Toulson & Smith, 1994). Community colleges could use this to help new and current employees feel the relevance of their role in the institution,
understand they are consistently a part of something bigger than themselves, feel like
their work matters, increase their personal investment in the workplace, and foster a
cultural commitment to the institution and fight against enrollment decline. If adopted at
the study site used in this research, and at other higher education institutions, taking the
route of exploring the environment and productivity of the enrollment division could
allow for a research-based approach to hiring and training enrollment employees.

**Internal effort 5.** Lastly, community college leaders should make enrollment
effectiveness and enrollment sustainability every employees' concern. Marketing of a
community college and all it has to offer individuals can be infused into each person's
job, regardless of the role in which they are employed on a college campus. For example,
buildings and grounds staff can be hospitable and provide certain types of helpful
information, even if as simple as directions. Faculty and other instructors should be
knowledgeable about campus resources to some degree because they are sometimes the
only consistent point of contact, besides passing members of public safety, for current
and future enrollees. If this way of thinking systemically becomes a part of campus
culture, it could make a difference in planning to be effective. If aspects of campus
culture is explained during the hiring process, is incorporated into new hire orientation
and training, then reiterated through professional development; challenges can be
community colleges stand a greater chance against organizational challenges.

**External efforts.** Considering current events while shaping future practices is one
way to stay ahead of changes that directly affect enrollment at community colleges.
Knowing that public college has ostensibly become completely free in New York State,
but the economy has not yet gone into another decline, it is wise for executive leaders at
community colleges to get out of their comfort zone, literally. Sending instructors, in addition to administrators out into high schools, and even middle schools, would be an executive action that shows interest in students who will potentially one day enroll in a community college.

Choosing to pursue a 2-year degree is a big decision, especially for the low-income, minority demographic community colleges typically serve; they often need a great deal of encouragement in even in their senior years. Therefore, those in charge of internal operations of a community college must recognize that life line of the college and a possible catalyst of the enrollment increase is getting to potential students earlier. A presence in high school where instructors are sent to connect with students so they know a face or group of people they can look forward to seeing within a few short years, could foster a sense of familiarity for the potential students, encourage employees to stay on board while they see the results of their work, and allow a 4 year head start on potential enrollment challenges.

**Recommended enrollment practices.** A mitigating factor between the organizational characteristics (climate and effectiveness) of the enrollment division, and enrollment outcomes could be enrollment practices. There is no standard of best enrollment practices existent in the literature that indicate automatic success because every community college is different (Dempsey, 2009; Ritze, 2006). Moreover, there are major differences in operations and procedures of the enrollment management division at each college, based upon the campus setting and the actual enrollment size of each institution (Dempsey, 2009). Understanding these factors, as well as measuring organizational characteristics, such as climate and effectiveness, may lead to the
development of effective enrollment solutions and strategies at a college (Lee, 2010; Morris, 2012; Saunders-White et al., 2014; Schuttinga, 2011). Therefore, it is vital for the executive leaders at the community college used in this study to be aware of successful practices other community college leaders used to see increases in their enrollment.

The research of Saunders-White et al., (2014) showed that some community colleges have seen increases in enrollment due to successful enrollment practices that focus on specific areas. Some successful enrollment practices other colleges report include: using social media to market to and communicate with potential students and parents; enhancing communication through faculty teaching and mentoring initiatives; creating pre-orientation programs where incoming freshmen spend quality time together and do group activities; implementing committees on the campuses made up of representatives from multiple departments or divisions; and starting bridge programs where freshman students can stay at residential facilities and become acclimated to the campus, staff, and college life (Saunders-White et al., 2014).

Suggestions for future research. After conducting this study, the researcher recognizes a variety of future studies that can be carried out that are similar and different, and which could have some practical applications. Community college executive leaders should begin to consider more in-depth, operational approaches to figuring out how to reverse this looming trend; and future research should address it. This study and its findings highlight the need to have clarity on which departmental and divisional staff see their work sites as having a "positive" or "negative" climate. As a means to identify potential factors affecting larger scale issues, such as enrollment decline, the data
collected and length of this study suggests that longer periods of time, and additional divisions be included in this type of analysis in the future.

**Qualitative.** It seems that a qualitative study to get a deeper understanding of the enrollment decline phenomenon and the needs of the college's enrollment employees would be helpful. Collecting data qualitatively, via interviews or focus groups, with a focus on understanding the way behaviors and perceptions affect goals, is a possible way for any community college to start looking at employees or divisions that may have contributed to its enrollment decline. A researcher investigating the organizational characteristics used in this study via a qualitative method would have the opportunity to question employees who may have a plethora of information vital to understanding how an institution operates in the enrollment space and how it needs to operate. For example, a qualitative inquiry may yield results that show: the adequacy level of academic and comprehensive support programs the college offer to students, whether employees' workplace needs are being met, whether they believe their position is affecting their lives positively or negatively, and if executive leaders of the institution are aware of variables that are critical to its success.

**Pretest/posttest.** Collect climate and effectiveness data from the enrollment division using a pre and post test design with a leadership intervention. Measuring the employees' perceptions at the beginning and end of one semester, or at the beginning and end of one academic collegiate year, may provide a "before and after" understanding of challenges in the environment and to effectiveness. This would then help determine the effectiveness of the leadership training. The leadership training can be informed by the results of surveying current students to determine what prompted their interest in college
and what could have been done better during their interactions with employees, and the processes of enrolling and staying in the institution.

**Faculty/administration comparison.** Investigate enrollment decline by measuring the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the entire college community, maybe assessing faculty departments versus administrative departments in one period of time, or over a long period of time.

**Student perceptions.** Conducting a climate and effectiveness satisfaction study from the perspective of students rather than that of employees might be helpful; particularly if it included questions related to whether they would recommend the college based on their experience of specified departmental operations such as registration or advisement.

**Longitudinal.** A longitudinal study can also be conducted, using the same, or similar, methodology and variables that were used in this study. The data collected over a 3 to 5 year period, for example fall 2018 through fall 2021 or fall 2023, could be compared to the enrollment outcomes of each academic year to assess for a correlation. Conducting a regression analysis of such data might be helpful in identifying potential predictors of better outcomes. Enrollment outcomes of all or specific academic years at a community college may be correlated to organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of an enrollment division, other departments/areas, or the entire college campus. Therefore, if such a correlation were found, it would make the long-term collection of data worthwhile. The organizational goals and standards of improvement for the college used in this study, or for any community college, would then have a research-
based guide to follow if there were significant relationships found through a qualitative, quantitative, or a mixed methods longitudinal study.

**Thoughts, solutions, and comparisons.** Future research should investigate, through quantitative or qualitative methods, why enrollment employees think enrollment has been declining at community colleges and what solutions they would offer (Dempsey, 2009; Manning, 2011). As these questions were not answered in this research, such a study could also be conducted using executive leaders of community college(s), faculty compared to administration, academic versus administrative office, or between all departments measurement approach.

**Climate survey expansion.** A study could expand on current findings of this study, examining the hypothesized relationships in the context of the Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA), exploring Actual Performance scores versus Importance scores.

**Suggestions for replication.** Lastly, options for replicating this study include: using multiple college sites, using an entire system of colleges, or comparing rural institutions to urban institutions.

**Conclusion**

The problem of enrollment decline has been documented across the nation for more than the past 5 years, thus it would be prudent for executive leaders of community colleges to begin documenting new approaches to identifying other potential explanatory variables that can be contributing besides increasing tuition costs, poor geographic locations, and fluctuations in the economy. This study followed the literature and used a model that produced information which can be used to gain answers about whether the
enrollment divisions' employees perceived themselves as meeting the organization's goals. Some might argue that a this study was conducted at one point in time, rather than exploring climate and effectiveness of the division each year, over the course of several academic years and therefore posed a limitation. However, as the study represents a practice community colleges should consider starting, the methodology for this particular study was supported by the literature since "it is instead desirable to examine climate at one point in time as a possible predictor of performance in a subsequent period" (Patterson et al. 2004, p.194).

In any event, attention needs to be given to exploring organizational characteristics that may explain outcomes. This study represents new methods executive leaders can use to do that, as well as a starting point for any community college that needs to stay ahead of the issues that impact internal operations and the ability of the college to be successful. This is especially true, given that one of the main causes of the enrollment decline, rising tuition costs, most recently has an additional component with New York State offering free public college. Free tuition for all in community colleges will now mean one less traditional cause that can excuse the lack of effort in investigating other potential causes of enrollment decline at individual campuses.

The achievement of enrollment targets is consistently challenging because not only is the improvement and steadiness of a "good economy a threat to enrollment in community colleges, but just as important, the economic needs of the student demographic community colleges serve are consistent (Fillion, 2016; Kalleberg & Dunn, 2015; Wong, 2016). There need to be different types of analyses within community colleges experiencing a decline in enrollment; but also in all community colleges as they
may at any time fall victim to the trending national enrollment decline (14% over the last 4 years). An in depth understanding of institutional effectiveness indicators, such as organizational effectiveness of an enrollment division (Alfred et al., 1999; Alfred, 2011), could lead to the development of internal standards. These standards could be found to account for behaviors within the enrollment management division (Banks, 2013; Dempsey, 2009) and could be found to contribute to enrollment outcomes.

Although enrollment management employees take on the assigned task of improving and sustaining enrollment operations, it is everyone’s job to promote the institution. There is a need for faculty, staff, and administrators to be a presence in the community additional to the enrollment division (Saunders-White et al., 2014). Community colleges need to be true to their name by accessing their communities' different institutions, inviting them into the campus and going out to them; this includes churches and synagogues, high schools, civic centers, libraries, specialty pop-up markets, community events, etc (Abston, 2010; Lee, 2010; Morris, 2012; Schuttinga, 2011). Community colleges leaders can use able bodies in the institution and the knowledge of the industry to embrace the important niche market they satisfy, and combat the decline by attempting to make careful change, considering the known causes of decline (geographic location, tuition costs, recovering economy) have not changed. Perhaps higher education is ripe for disruptive innovation (Abston, 2010; Alfred, 2011; Banks, 2013; Dempsey, 2009; Fillion 2016; Manning, 2011; McKinney, 2011; Saunders-White et al., 2014); cheaper and more convenient options are available and the value proposition offered by traditional college no longer works.
Periodic measurement of enrollment employees' perceptions can inform executive leaders on the functions that need to be addressed. This is not to be interpreted as a provisional opportunity for complaints, but rather action research into basic organizational characteristics that can be addressed for the sake of organizational success.

The internal and external marketing of a college should be both organic and institutionalized, with additional expert help. This requires the kind of investment, and re-investment, that uses the analysis of organizational characteristics to contribute to the long-term success of learning organizations.
References


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White House Office of the Press Secretary Fact Sheet. (2015). White house unveils


Appendix A

St. John Fisher College
Letter of Introduction

Title of Research Study: Perceptions of Enrollment Employees in Community College:
An Exploration of Organizational Climate and Organizational Effectiveness

Principal Investigator: Ronish Hamilton, B.S., M.A., Doctoral Student

Greetings! Thank you for your time.

I am a St. John Fisher College doctoral student. You are being asked to participate in this
research study because you are a recognized employee in the enrollment management
division, and your opinion counts. This study is a part of my doctoral program, and its
purpose is to measure the organizational climate and the organizational effectiveness of
the enrollment management division, to assess for a relationship between the two.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to respond to the Work Group Climate
Assessment (WCA) survey and the Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI) survey;
which is a total of 22 questions and should take no more than 8 minutes to complete.
Your participation in this research is voluntary. Your responses will simply represent
those of an individual within the enrollment division, and will be completely confidential.

If you have any questions, you can contact the researcher at reh08985@sjfc.edu or [redacted]. If you have any questions or concerns about the study or your rights as a
research participant, or if you would like to talk to someone other than the researcher,
you can contact Dr. W. Jeff Wallis at [redacted] or Dr. Gilbert Louis at [redacted].

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of St. John Fisher College has reviewed and
approved this study. You may direct any concerns regarding this study, to my
Dissertation Committee Chair, Dr. W. Jeff Wallis, and to your institution's Institutional
Review Board, and to St. John Fisher College's Institutional Review Board. If you
experience emotional or physical discomfort due to participation in this study, please
contact your health care provider for appropriate referrals. Please contact suitable
providers or the SJFC Health and Wellness Center at (585) 385-8280 for appropriate
referrals, if you experience undue stress as a result of participation in this study.
Appendix B

St. John Fisher College
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of study: Perceptions of Enrollment Employees in Community College: An Exploration of Organizational Climate and Organizational Effectiveness

Name(s) of researcher(s): Ronish Hamilton

Faculty Supervisor: Dr. W. Jeff Wallis and Dr. Gilbert Louis Phone for further information: 201-988-2853 and 347-728-4400

Purpose of study: The purpose of this study is to assess the extent to which the potential relationship between the organizational climate and organizational effectiveness of the enrollment management division can be internal explanatory variables in community colleges.

Place of study: A public community college in the northeast United States
Length of participation: Expected 4 weeks maximum

Risks and benefits: The expected risks and benefits of participation in this study are explained below:

The risks involved in conducting or participating in this study are considered to be minimal and will be no more than what would be encountered in a regular work day. This study can help enrollment employees make necessary changes, as they seek to maintain positive organizational climate in their division and to attain enrollment effectiveness. Enrollment employees may be able to identify specific organizational culture characteristics in community colleges that deter or advance institutional effectiveness, and could then better strategize as they move forward. The results of this study may contribute to the positive advancement of: the enrollment division and its processes, this community college, and other colleges.

Method for protecting confidentiality/privacy: Survey data, descriptive statistics, and consent forms will be confidential and only available to the researcher. All data will be stored in the researcher’s possession on a password protected file or in the Qualtrics system for a minimum of three years, at which point all data will be destroyed. The results of the study may be published in journals and/or articles, and may be presented at conferences.

Your rights: As a research participant, you have the right to:
1. Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits fully explained to you before you choose to participate.
2. Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
3. Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
4. Direct any concerns you may have to Dissertation Committee Chair, Dr. W. Jeff Wallis, and to your institution's Institutional Review Board and to St. John Fisher College's Institutional Review Board, without penalty.
5. Contact suitable providers or the SJFC Health and Wellness Center at (585) 385-8280 for appropriate referrals, if you experience undue stress as a result of participation in this study.
6. Be informed of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to you.
7. Be informed of the results of the study.

I have read the above, received a copy of this form, and I agree to participate in the above-named study.

☐ Yes, I consent
☐ No, I do not consent

Condition: No, I do not consent Is Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.
Appendix C

Enrollment Management Division's Organizational Chart in a Public Community College in the Northeast
Appendix D

Organizational Chart of a Public Community College in the Northeast by Position
### Appendix E

#### Work Group Climate Assessment (WCA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual Performance (How are things now in your department?)</th>
<th>Importance (How important is this in your department?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>not at all to a small degree to a moderate degree to a great degree to a very great degree</td>
<td>not at all to a small degree to a moderate degree to a great degree to a very great degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. We are recognized for individual contributions.
2. We have a common purpose.
3. We have the resources we need to do our jobs well.
4. We are developing our skills and knowledge.
5. We have a plan that guides our activities.
6. We strive to improve our performance.
7. We understand each others' capabilities.
8. We are clear about what is expected in our work.
|   | 9. We seek to understand the needs of our clients. | 10. We participate in the decisions of our department. | 11. We take pride in our work. | 12. We rapidly adapt to new circumstances. | 13. Our department is known for quality work. | 14. Our department is productive. |
|---|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
|   | ○                                               | ○                                                    | ○                               | ○                                            | ○                                  | ○                                  |
|   | ○                                               | ○                                                    | ○                               | ○                                            | ○                                  | ○                                  |
|   | ○                                               | ○                                                    | ○                               | ○                                            | ○                                  | ○                                  |
|   | ○                                               | ○                                                    | ○                               | ○                                            | ○                                  | ○                                  |
|   | ○                                               | ○                                                    | ○                               | ○                                            | ○                                  | ○                                  |
|   | ○                                               | ○                                                    | ○                               | ○                                            | ○                                  | ○                                  |
Appendix F

Organizational Effectiveness Index (OEI)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly agree (1)</th>
<th>Agree (2)</th>
<th>Somewhat agree (3)</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree (4)</th>
<th>Disagree (5)</th>
<th>Strongly disagree (6)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The quality of products and services produced in this division is high.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>2. Employees in this division cope well in emergency situations.</td>
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<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The quantity of products and services produced in this division is high.</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>4. Most employees within this division accept and adjust to changes.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>5. Employees in this division are aware of advancements in their field that could impact their jobs.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. When changes are made at this institution, employees in this division accept and adjust quickly.</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Employees in this division anticipate and</td>
<td>○</td>
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8. Employees in this division use available resources efficiently.

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Appendix G

June 30, 2017

Ronish Hamilton
St. John Fisher College

Dear Ronish:

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Institutional Review Board.

I am pleased to inform you that the Board has approved your Expedited Review project, “Perceptions of Enrollment Employees in Community College: An Exploration of Organizational Climate and Organizational Effectiveness.”

Following federal guidelines, research related records should be maintained in a secure area for three years following the completion of the project at which time they may be destroyed.

Should you have any questions about this process or your responsibilities, please contact me at irb@sjfc.edu.

Sincerely,

Eileen Lynd-Balta, Ph.D.
Chair, Institutional Review Board

ELB: jdr
Appendix H

Descriptive Statistics Questions

D1 Which area do you work in?
☑ Admissions
☑ Advisement
☑ Financial Aid
☑ Placement Testing
☑ Registration and Records

D2 What category best fits your job title, according to the college?
☑ Vice President
☑ Director
☑ Associate Director
☑ Assistant Director
☑ Specialist
☑ Coordinator
☑ Secretary
☑ Office Assistant
☑ Clerk
☑ Advisor
☑ Counselor
☑ Program Manager

D3 How long have you worked at the college?
☑ 3 months or less
☑ Less than 6 months
☑ 1 year or more
☑ 5 years or more
☑ 10 years or more
☑ 20 years or more

D4 Level of Education Achieved
☑ High School Diploma
☑ 2 year degree
☑ 4 year degree
☑ Master's level
☑ Doctorate level

D5 I identify as:
☑ Male
☑ Female