Customer satisfaction perceptions of dislocated workers served by WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium

Dava Michelle Washburn

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CUSTOMER SATISFACTION PERCEPTIONS OF DISLOCATED WORKERS
SERVED BY WIN JOB CENTERS IN THE MISSISSIPPI CORRIDOR
CONSORTIUM

By

Dava Michelle Washburn

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in Community College Leadership
in the Department of Leadership and Foundations

Mississippi State, Mississippi

August 2009
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION PERCEPTIONS OF DISLOCATED WORKERS SERVED BY WIN JOB CENTERS IN THE MISSISSIPPI CORRIDOR CONSORTIUM

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The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions of satisfaction of dislocated workers served by WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium. Four WIN Job Centers participated in this study: Northeast Mississippi Community College WIN Job Center in Corinth, Northwest Mississippi Community College WIN Job Center in Oxford, Itawamba Community College WIN Job Center in Tupelo, and the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center in Columbus that is operated by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. This study was concerned with the following variables: facilities, staff, services, self-service facilities, and overall level of satisfaction.

A survey design was employed in this study to collect and analyze the data. From the four WIN Job Centers, a total of 159 surveys were collected in the ten week period. An instrument created and utilized by the North Carolina Employment Security System titled “Customer Satisfaction Survey” was used to collect the data. The instrument was tested for internal consistency, and the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .793.
The data collected from the surveys were tested using the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Among conclusions for this study were the following: each of the four WIN Job Centers rated in the Excellent to Good rating in satisfaction for each of the following areas: staff, facilities, services, self-service facilities, and overall satisfaction; of the five null hypotheses, three were rejected due to there being a statistically significant difference in at least one of the centers with regards to facilities, staff, and services.
DEDICATION

Although I will be unable to express my gratitude in its appropriate form here, I would like to take this time to thank the numerous loved ones who helped me reach this point in my life. I would like to thank my parents, David and Clara, and my in-laws, Richard and Vicki, who provided an encouraging word, helpful advice, and unwavering support in my decision to continue my education.

To my sister who never tired of calling and checking on me and for insisting that “Aunt B.B.” be allowed to watch Peyton while I worked on my dissertation. To my EMCC Workforce family, who never tired of giving me positive words of encouragement, assistance with projects, and the support to help me through the program. Specifically to Dr. Raj, a heartfelt thank you for tirelessly telling me to “get a backbone” and never allowing me to give up on myself or my dreams.

To my cohorts in the program: Janae Hagan, Brent Gregory, Delena Hukle, and Dr. Meredith Park. A big, Texas “Thank you” goes to each of you for allowing me to be your friend both in and out of the classroom. Specifically to Delfi Wilson, thank you for introducing yourself to me in Dr. Stumpf’s class in fall 2005, my first class in the program. You will never know how much our late night chats, constant emails, and friendship made school, work, and life in general, not only easier but much more entertaining these past four years.
Lastly, but certainly not least, to my husband, Matt, who gave me the confidence and love to help me begin, progress, and complete my degree and to Peyton for helping me realize my complete purpose in life and for being an inspiration every day.
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I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank those individuals who assisted me and supported me throughout my doctoral program at Mississippi State. My committee members, Dr. Ed Davis, Dr. Charles Campbell, Dr. Wayne Stonecypher, and Dr. Marty Wiseman for providing me insightful feedback, assistance, and an ever extending outreached hand of support whenever needed. Specifically, Dr. Ed Davis, who both as a professor and chair of my dissertation committee, always had a positive attitude and helpful suggestion as I progressed through the program (and who never tired of my endless phone calls and emails once I moved back to Texas while trying to complete my dissertation).

To East Mississippi Community College as an institution itself and to my EMCC family, without the support, never ending learning experiences, and encouraging words, I would not have gleamed as much from my experience at Mississippi State.

To the WIN Job Centers who participated in the study, thank you for assisting me complete the survey portion of my dissertation.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

For much of the private sector, customer satisfaction plays an intricate part in their sustainability in today’s global market. The U.S. Department of Labor contends that providing high quality customer service has become one of the essential focal points in America (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998). Whereas the private sector has recognized quality customer service in their business plans, the public sector is beginning to perceive and appreciate the customer’s role in the success of the private sector. Scheuing and Christopher (1993) explicate how terms such as customer-focused organization, continuous improvement, and employee involvement are taking root across all levels of government from the local to the federal level. As a society engrossed within the ever expanding global economy, the workforce entities across the nation must begin to recognize the importance of customer satisfaction within their overall goal of providing the necessary services to their customers: dislocated workers and homemakers, individuals in need of skills upgrade and counseling services, and persons seeking resume and interview assistance to only name a few. The various employment and training programs sanctioned through the U.S. Department of Labor are vital members of the service industry. With that said, as customer satisfaction is elemental in helping both to establish better practices and to revise current practices to meet better the customer’s
needs within the private sector, so, too, do the employment and training programs funded through the Workforce Investment Act.

The composition of the U.S. workforce continues to change from year to year. The effects of increased foreign competition along with technological advances in today’s manufacturing facilities have caused numerous plant closings across the United States. Zeiss (1998) and Rouche and Rouche (1998) attribute the changes within the workforce to the following: population shifts; economic changes due to the nation’s shift from a national to a global marketplace; and from a youth-oriented workforce to a middle-aged workforce. As a result of the incessantly expanding global market, on August 7, 1998, Congress approved and passed the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) “to consolidate, coordinate, and improve employment, training, literacy, and vocational rehabilitation and programs in the United States (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998, p.1) The WIA legislation allowed for an atypical framework for a national workforce and employment system to meet the needs of its two primary customers: business owners in need of trained individuals and persons in search of employment, training and educational possibilities, and soft skills upgrade. Although the WIA legislation maintained similar components of previous similar legislation such as the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), WIA constituted the one-stop center concept as an innovative strategy. The design of the one-stop center was to provide business owners and individuals a well-located establishment, where they would find both information and access to job training, education, and employment services housed in one convenient location.
The WIA legislation’s imperative component is its one-stop delivery system to the individual with regards to assistance with skills upgrade, access to potential job opportunities, various types of soft skills training, computer access, etc. Due to the large number of dislocated workers, the One-stop system is a necessary component in fulfilling its customers’ ambitions such as finding sustainable future employment, obtaining counseling services, and entering community college vocational or workforce preparation programs. Within the One-stop Centers, a number of federally funded workforce programs are streamlined to ensure easy access to needed services. Provided through the WIA legislation, fundamental components of the One-stop centers allow individuals to access easily information and services (i.e. employment opportunities and status), to allow adults to obtain practical job training to acquire useful and sustainable employment via Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), and to ensure that all state and local programs meet customer expectations (U.S Department of Labor, 1998).

Table 1.1  Mandatory Partners in a WIA One-stop Center

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unemployment Compensations</th>
<th>Post Secondary Vocational Education</th>
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<tr>
<td>Employment Service</td>
<td>Programs Under Title I (WIP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult Education and Literacy</td>
<td>Community Service for Older American</td>
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<td>Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Housing and Urban Development</td>
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<td>Welfare to Work</td>
<td>Community Services Block Grant</td>
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<td>Veterans Employment Services</td>
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</table>

Within the state of Mississippi, the One-stop Centers are called Workforce Investment Network (WIN) Job Centers, which are managed and operated by the local community college or the Mississippi Development of Employment Security. Since his election in 2004 as the Governor of Mississippi, Governor Haley Barbour has made robust efforts to strengthen the state’s economy and workforce. The fruits of these efforts, as confirmed by the Mississippi’s State Workforce Investment Board, can be seen in the creation of an additional 38,000 jobs from 2004-2007; a 15% growth in per capita income; and an addition of high skill, high wage companies (Mississippi State Workforce Investment Board, 2007). While Mississippi may have one of the lowest average salary and highest unemployment rates in the nation, several key measures have been initiated by the state to help increase the percentage of working age adults participating in the workforce, to assist dislocated workers and homemakers to re-enter the workforce, to retrain incumbent workers for more sustainable employment, and to foster entrepreneurship within Mississippi residents. One such act includes the development of the Mississippi Department of Employment Security (MDES), which consolidated many of the state’s workforce programs as well as its management structure to ensure seamless services to its customers. Due to this restructuring, the U.S. Department of Labor refers to Mississippi as having one of the most fully integrated workforce systems in the United States (Mississippi State Workforce Investment Board, 2007). While Mississippi is at the forefront of creating a viable workforce system, certain measures cited within the WIA legislation may perhaps be overlooked in the state’s Workforce Investment Network that could help the WIN Job Centers better serve their customers.
Within Section 136 of the WIA legislation, Congress included a Performance Accountability System, “to assess the effectiveness of States and local areas in achieving continuous improvement of workforce investment activities” (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998, p. 62). Specified within the Customer Satisfaction Indicators, the legislation denotes that the performance “shall consist of customer satisfaction of employees and participants with services received from the workforce investment activities authorized under this subtitle. Customer satisfaction may be measured through surveys conducted after the conclusion of participation in the workforce investment activities” (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998, p.63). As dictated by the legislation, these performance indicators must be expressed in an “objective, quantifiable, and measurable form,” while at the same time show “progress of the State toward continuously improving in performance” (p. 63). At this current time, Mississippi does not employ a state-wide customer satisfaction performance survey based on actual customer responses; however, it should be noted that failing to obtain customer service ratings from One-stop Operators’ customers is not an uncommon occurrence in many states.

In Mississippi, the state is currently divided into four Local Workforce Investment Areas, which are the local sub-state governance structure for the Workforce Investment Act. The four areas are the Mississippi Partnership, Delta, Twin Districts, and Southcentral Mississippi Works. The four districts are mapped in Figure 1.1.
When WIA passed in 1998, community colleges were given the opportunity to house their local WIN Job Centers on campus and/or manage the centers. Within the Mississippi Partnership Local Workforce Investment Area (LWIA), in 2000 Itawamba Community College first accepted the “Lead Operator” role, and over the course of the next few years, Northeast and Northwest Community Colleges became lead operators of their WIN Job Centers. Currently, a fourth college in the Mississippi Partnership LWIA, East Mississippi Community College, partners with the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center.
in their district but is currently not the lead operator. The Golden Triangle WIN Job Center is operated and managed by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. The Mississippi Partnership LWIA serves 27 counties in Northeast Mississippi. As can be seen in Figure 1.2, the 2008 average unemployment rate in the Mississippi Partnership LWIA is 8.82. The average across Mississippi is 6.9, while the nation’s average is 6.1 (MDES Unemployment Rates Publication, 2008). The unemployment rates for the month of October 2008 across the state can be seen in Figure 1.2. The rates of unemployment are color coded. As can be seen from Figure 1.2, five of the six counties in excess of the average of 11.1% unemployment rate are located in the Mississippi Partnership LWIA (MDES Unemployment Rate Publication, 2008).

A prime component of the success of the Mississippi WIN Job Centers to assist local residents lies largely in part in their ability to provide quality customer service. As with any business, without high quality customer service, a business may not be of assistance to as many new and recurring customers due to the WIN Job Center’s lack of knowledge of what the customers expect of the centers. One instrument currently used by some states to measure the level of customer satisfaction by individuals who have been served through the nation’s One-stop Centers is the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ASCI), which was adopted by the Employment Training and Administration (ETA) to capture state wide results (Ohio Job and Family Services, 2007).
The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ASCI) is the proprietary property of the University of Michigan and Claes Fornell International Group, but the ETA has a license for the use of a state wide ASCI sample of participants and employers. Fornell (2001) contends the legitimacy of the close relationship between customer satisfaction and economic performance of an institution because “sellers should compete for buyers’ satisfaction. Satisfied customers reward companies with, among other things, their repeat business, which has a huge effect on cumulative profits” (p. 121). The U.S. Department of Labor requires the following conditions to be met prior to the results of the ASCI.
being submitted by each state: (a) those surveyed were exclusively those participants who exited services; (b) the participants must be contacted between 60-90 days of exiting services; (c) the survey is conducted via telephone; (d) a minimum of 500 surveys in addition to having a 70% completion rate must be met (Ohio Job and Family Services, 2007). Although the WIN Job Centers do not “sell” a tangible product such as materials, they do provide services to individuals that are intended on assisting the customer in locating new or better employment, gaining pertinent skills for the ever-changing job market practices, etc. At this current time, the state of Mississippi does not employ the ASCI instrument to measure levels of customer satisfaction. However, concern about how well the centers are meeting the needs of their customers should be of great importance to the organization’s mission and structure. In December 2008, the ASCI released the most recent Federal Government scores. While the federal government scores improved for 2008 with an average of 68.9, their satisfaction scores still lag behind the private sector, scoring well below the national average, which is currently 75.0 on a 100 point scale (ASCI, 2009). ASCI noted that while the survey respondents “continue to give high marks of courtesy and professionalism of government personnel,” they do not find that their contact with government entities “particularly easy or timely to transact” (ASCI, 2009).

Due to the concerns about customer satisfaction of their One-stop centers in North Carolina, the North Carolina Employment Security Commission (ESC) created a Customer Satisfaction Project Team comprised of staff from the Governor’s Commission on Workforce Development, the North Carolina Employment Security Commission, and a consultant from the University of Maryland (Deese, 2002). This team was tasked to
develop a sound customer satisfaction survey instrument to measure the level of customer satisfaction in their JobLink Centers (One-stop centers) that were housed within their local Employment Security Commission (ESC) offices. Though the state and the North Carolina ESC aligned their resources in 2000 to develop a survey instrument to measure the customer satisfaction level, the survey was only dispersed to WIA participants who received services from the JobLink Centers managed by the ESC and did not include the JobLink Centers hosted on community college campuses (Deese, 2002); thus the customer satisfaction information gathered only reflected the ratings from a portion of the WIA participants from across the state.

In her dissertation study, Deese (2002) recognized the need to compare the customer satisfaction level of both individuals served by ESC hosted JobLink Centers and JobLink Centers hosted by the community colleges. After conducting her survey research of the JobLink Centers hosted by community colleges, Deese compared the results for each of the five categories (facilities, staff, services, self-service facilities, and overall satisfaction) with the survey results gathered by the North Carolina Employment Security Commission who surveyed only WIA participants who received services from JobLink Centers hosted by the ESC. In the statistical comparison, the researcher found that the JobLink Centers hosted by the community colleges had more favorable ratings in each of the categories compared to the JobLink Centers hosted by the ESC.

Statement of the Problem

Though the Workforce Investment Act included a state level customer satisfaction indicator, a comprehensive and ongoing system of customer satisfaction measurement
has yet to be set in motion in Mississippi. A significant element in the services provided to the WIN Center participants lies with the role of the local community colleges and the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, and in turn, the overall level of customer satisfaction of the services provided. The state of Mississippi continues to lose low wage, low skill manufacturing jobs due to outsourcing to foreign countries. Within the Mississippi Partnership Local Workforce Investment Area, four community colleges, East Mississippi, Itawamba, Northeast, and Northwest, have partnered to create the Mississippi Corridor Consortium (MCC). In 2006, the presidents from Northeast Mississippi, East Mississippi and Itawamba Community Colleges agreed to leverage each of the community college’s resources to strengthen the economic competitiveness of the region. In 2007, Northwest Mississippi Community College partnered with the consortium, which has increased the number of participating counties to 25 counties. Although different in many respects such as size of community college districts and manners of delivering training services, the MCC indicates on its website that it recognizes that through this “collaborative and cooperative efforts, the Consortium can provide services to benefit citizens, businesses, and industries of Northeast Mississippi allowing them to become competitive in the global economy” (Mississippi Corridor Consortium, 2008). Currently, among meetings and discussions with the college presidents, vice presidents, and Workforce and Community Development divisions, the four community colleges share ideas, recommendations, best practices, instructors, and technology in order to create a region that is robust in its industry and dedicated to ensure quality training, information, and opportunities are present for the Consortium’s business and industry community as well as its citizens. Likewise, attempting to determine the
level of customer satisfaction within another shared realm of employment and training opportunities for the Consortium is for the colleges and other entities in the region to have access to what their WIN Job Center customers feel and say about their experiences. The four community college districts are illustrated in Figure 1.3.

Itawamba Community College (ICC), Northeast Mississippi Community College (NEMCC), and Northwest Mississippi Community College (NWMCC) are all lead operators of their WIN Job Centers. Within the WIN Job Center operations, the lead operators of the centers are responsible for ensuring that quality services are available and delivered in a friendly manner and for overseeing the infrastructure in which the services are delivered (Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 2008).

Currently, East Mississippi Community College does not have a part-time or full-time staff person on-site at its comprehensive WIN Job Center in Columbus, whereas ICC hosts several college personnel on-site at their facilities. At this present time, the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center has a part-time GED instructor from East Mississippi Community College. Northeast and Northwest Community Colleges are the lead operators of their local WIN Job Centers and primary service providers of the WIN Job Centers in their college districts and have full time community college staff on-site (Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 2008).
Much like the previously discussed situation in North Carolina, currently there is no instrument employed in Mississippi to measure the level of customer satisfaction at either type of WIN Job Center: those hosted by community colleges or the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. However, potentially valuable information can be
retained by surveying participants served at each of the community colleges primary
WIN locations (ICC-Tupelo, Northeast-Corinth, Northwest-Oxford), and EMCC-
Columbus (MDES operated) to help guide the Mississippi Corridor Consortium’s efforts
in adjusting its service practices to serve better its customers: Those seeking to better
their situation in life by finding sustainable employment, developmental and educational
opportunities, and career guidance.

Over the past several years, Mississippi has seen a massive decline in the low
skilled, low wage jobs in the textile and apparel industry. All four community college
districts in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium have seen massive layoffs in their
respective districts. For Itawamba, the furniture plant closures such as Ashley have
greatly increased the number of potential customers to their WIN Job Centers. In East
Mississippi’s district, the Sara Lee plant located in West Point closed its doors and
approximately 1600 people lost their jobs, many of whom had worked for the plant for
twenty or more years. Looking at data from the Mississippi Department of Employment
Security 2008, in the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Area, a total of 1,144 persons
were affected by plant closures and layoffs between July 2008 and September 2008 (see
appendix E). The ability of the WIN Job Centers, whether hosted by a community
college or the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, in improving and
enhancing the state’s workforce is imperative, and a major component of assisting their
customers is to focus on the customer as a vital member of their operations, whose
concerns and opinions can help guide and structure the WIN Job Centers’ best practices
and facilitate approaches for continuous improvement.
Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if there were differences in customer’s perceptions (level of satisfaction) of WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium, which is operated by ICC, Northeast, Northwest community colleges and the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center operated by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security within East Mississippi Community College’s district (see appendix A) using the survey instrument employed by Stephanie Deese in her 2002 dissertation titled: *Customer Satisfaction: A Comparison of Community College and Employment Security Commission JobLink Career Centers in North Carolina*. While the property of the North Carolina Employment Security Commission, the researcher sought and gained permission from the North Carolina ESC to use their survey for this particular study. An examination of the level of customer satisfaction of WIA participants (dislocated workers) served in all four community college districts may highlight notable areas of customer satisfaction from dislocated workers, and the data from the survey may also suggest new techniques to be used in modifying the manner in which dislocated workers are served in WIN Job Centers. In addition to comparing the customer satisfaction levels among all four WIN Job Centers, the researcher hoped to compare the results between the two WIN Job Center models (community college hosted and MDES hosted) that may provide additional recommendations for one or several of the centers with regards to customer satisfaction of their customers in the WIN Job Centers.
Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to determine whether there are differences in levels of customer satisfaction of WIN Job Center customers who received services by centers (Itawamba, Northeast, and Northwest Community College operated WIN Centers and the Golden Triangle WIN Center operated by MDES) within the Mississippi Corridor Consortium.

The following research questions and null hypotheses were tested in this study:

Research Question 1: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s facilities?

\[ H_0^1: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the facilities between the four WIN Job Centers.} \]

Research Question 2: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s staff?

\[ H_0^2: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the staff between the four WIN Job Centers.} \]

Research Question 3: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s services?

\[ H_0^3: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions for service between the four WIN Job Centers.} \]
Research Question 4: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s self-service facilities?

H₀⁴: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the self-service facilities between the four WIN Job Centers.

Research Question 5: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in overall rating?

H₀⁵: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the overall rating of services between the four WIN Job Centers.

Limitations of Study

This study was subjected to the following limitations:

1. The participants’ honesty and willingness to complete fully the survey.
2. The limited time frame of the availability of the survey (10 weeks).
3. The small sample size of participants from only four WIN Job Centers in four of Mississippi’s community and junior college districts.
4. Study only measures one of the two types of customer satisfaction prescribed by the WIA Performance Indicators: the individual level of customer satisfaction and does not reflect the business’ level of customer satisfaction with the WIN Job Centers.
5. The study was limited by the fact that the perceptions of the dislocated workers were measured solely through the application of a survey instrument.
Delimitations of Study

The study was limited by the following:

1. This study did not compare or contrast levels of customer satisfaction between other community colleges except Itawamba Community College, East Mississippi Community College, Northeast Mississippi Community College, and Northwest Mississippi Community College.

2. This study did not compare levels of customer satisfaction between other Local Workforce Investment Areas across Mississippi except The Mississippi Corridor Consortium located in the Mississippi Partnership.

3. The study will only examine the variables found on the North Carolina Employment Security JobLink Customer Satisfaction Survey.

Significance of Study

This study hoped to provide advantageous insight to several interested entities within the Mississippi framework of the Workforce Investment Act. The focus of this study was to provide the survey instrument to the participants, closely examine the responses given by the participants, and analyze the comparison among three Community College hosted WIN Job Centers and Mississippi Department of Employment Security hosted WIN Job Center (Golden Triangle Job Center-Columbus) ratings. From the data gathered and analyzed from the survey, research findings and recommendations will be extended to Itawamba Community College, East Mississippi Community College, Northeast Mississippi Community College, Northwest Mississippi Community College,
Golden Triangle WIN Job Center staff, Mississippi Department of Employment Security, and Three Rivers Workforce Investment Area personnel. These findings and recommendations will be shared, so the concerned parties can implement future and ongoing strategies for continuous improvement in providing customer satisfaction to their customers. The overall reaching goal for this study was to provide sound data to the WIN Centers located in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium in order for the centers to distinguish the elements of their Centers that were meeting or failing to meet the expectations of their customers.

Operational Definitions

The following terms were operationally defined for purposes of providing clarity and understanding relative to the focus of the present research.

Community College - Institutions of higher education sometimes referred to as junior colleges or two-year schools that grant an A.A. degree, A.S. degree, or vocational certificate. For the purposes of this study, unless otherwise specified, community colleges will refer to those institutions of higher learning located in Mississippi only (Cohen & Brawer, 2006).

Customer - Those individuals who directly benefit from the services provided (Kotler, 1994).

Customer Satisfaction - The degree in which an agency meets or exceeds the expectations of the individual job/training seeker (ASCI, 2009).
Dislocated Worker - An individual who has been laid off or terminated from a job through no fault of his/her own (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

Lead Operator - Core supervisor and operator of WIA activities within the WIN Job Center (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

Mississippi Corridor Consortium - Partnership of four Mississippi Community Colleges (Northeast, Northwest, Itawamba, and East Mississippi) to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of individuals, businesses, and industries within their twenty-five county area (Mississippi Corridor Consortium, 2008).

Mississippi Department of Employment Security - Federally funded state agency that oversees the monies provided for by the federal government from the Wagner-Peyser Act and Workforce Investment Act. Also provides labor information for the state of Mississippi (Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 2008).

Mississippi Partnership Local Workforce Investment Area - Board responsible for establishing and maintaining the highest quality of workforce for the area. Accountable for establishing local performance standards, the operation of One-stop WIA providers, selecting qualified service providers, and monitoring performance (Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 2008).

One-stop Centers – The given term for the comprehensive centers that provide access to training and employment opportunities in each state (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

Self-Services- Materials available for use within the WIN Job Centers with little or no assistance needed from staff. Materials may include the Internet, career inventory software, job postings, and copy/fax machines (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).
State Board of Community and Junior Colleges - The board provides general coordination of the public community and junior colleges, and assembles reports and other duties as may be prescribed by law. Created July 1, 1986 by Mississippi code to receive and distribute funds appropriated by the Legislature for the use of the public community and junior colleges from federal and other sources that are transmitted through the state governmental organization to the colleges (Miss. Code Section 37-4-3).

State Workforce Investment Board – State board that coordinates all training programs and funds in the state. The board is comprised of an Executive Director appointed by the governor and committee members who are various business members of the state (Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 2007).

Workforce Investment Act – Federally funded legislation authorizing the state and local agencies to develop a new workforce delivery system through One-stop Career Centers U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

Workforce Investment Network (WIN Job Centers) – User friendly facilities that provide job seekers and business owners access to a variety of employment and training services in one convenient location. In Mississippi, these are the One-stop Centers (Mississippi Department of Employment Security, 2008).
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of related literature that pertains to the major facets of this study regarding customer satisfaction, the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, the Mississippi Comprehensive Workforce Training and Education Consolidation Act, the Workforce Innovation Network of Mississippi, and the role of Community Colleges and Workforce Preparation. The intent of this literature review was to illustrate the importance of the state of Mississippi’s workforce training endeavors through its community colleges, WIN Job Centers, and WIA programs in regards to the needs of dislocated workers and their relationship to community development in relation to the necessary examination of customer satisfaction in order for the state’s efforts to be successful in retraining individuals to compete in today’s global economy.

A Review of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998

Replacing the Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA), The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998 was the first reform of the nation’s training program in fifteen years. WIA established a state-driven workforce system to meet the training and workforce needs of business and industry in addition to training service providers, dislocated workers, and also individuals wishing to upgrade their workplace skills. Within the WIA legislation of 1998, the following denote the legislation’s five key principles as: (a)
Business Leadership that pertains to how the business community to play an active role in preparing individuals for current and future jobs; (b) local management that includes training and employment programs specifically to train individuals at the local level; (c) one-stop convenience entails that both job seekers and employers should have convenient access to employment, education, and training; (d) individual choice includes the customers being able to steer their own career training and have options in selecting their training services; and (e) accountability that includes the customers have the right to receive information about how well training providers are preparing individuals for employment (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998). In addition, the WIA legislation made fundamental changes to current funding streams, the populations targeted by the Act, accountability measures, short and long term planning initiatives, labor market information delivery, and governance structures. Within the WIA legislation, governors were tasked with designating local workforce investment areas who would oversee the designation of the local workforce boards (U.S. Department of Labor).

A fundamental difference between the Workforce Investment Act and its predecessors such as the JTPA is the eligibility requirement. Unlike previous programs where an eligibility requirement based on either income or unemployment status must have been met in order for an individual to be served, in the WIA program all individuals have a right to core services. Core Services can include assistance with finding information about job training, financial aid, and training opportunities (John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, 2002).
Mississippi Comprehensive Workforce Training and Education Consolidation Act of 2004

Under the leadership of Governor Haley Barbour, the state of Mississippi passed the Mississippi Comprehensive Workforce Training and Education Consolidation Act of 2004, which changed several components from the previous Workforce Innovation Act of 1994/1998 and the Mississippi Comprehensive Workforce Training and Education Consolidation Act of 1999. The Governor’s intent for the 2004 legislation was to establish a more cohesive workforce system in the State of Mississippi.

The purpose of the Act is to:

Provide workforce activities, through a statewide system that maximizes cooperation among the state agencies, that increases the employment, retention and earnings of participants, and increases occupation skills attainment by participants and as a result, improve the quality of workforce, reduce welfare dependency and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the State of Mississippi” (State of Mississippi Two Year Strategic Plan, 2007, p.5). In the same vein, the Act also “provided for incentives to community and junior colleges to participate more actively in the State’s one-stop system. (p. 5)

The 2004 legislation reduced the number of Workforce Investment Areas from six to four, which currently are defined as the: (a) Mississippi Partnership, (b) Delta, (c) SouthCentral Mississippi Works, and (d) Twin Districts (Figure 2.1). These four Local Workforce Investment areas receive grants to administer various local programs through the WIN Job Centers, local community colleges, and other entities. As devised by the
WIN system, a Board of Supervisors of each area establish a Local Workforce Investment Board, which is comprised of local business and public sector representatives (industry, K-12 schools, community colleges, etc) who are tasked for designing local WIN services to meet the needs of their community (WIN in Mississippi, n.d.). Partners within the WIN Mississippi construct include:

- MS Department of Employment Security
- MS Department of Human Services
- Local Workforce Investment Areas
- MS Department of Rehab Services
- Local Elected Officials
- MS Development Authority
- State Board for Community and Junior Colleges
- U.S. Dept of Housing and Urban Development

One-Stop Centers

The development and success of the one-stop center concept was a primary goal of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The law envisioned a process where individuals and businesses in need of services would have access to a streamline of services available in one location. However, the Workforce Development Center at Rutgers University acknowledged in their study that although co-location of services perhaps makes the customer’s visit more convenient, it doesn’t necessarily coordinate the various services. In this same study, the researchers visited numerous sites throughout the country that were proactive in co-locating physically in the same building. The researchers found that
some sites who had integrated their services had also successfully: (a) reduced some
duplication in services; (b) provided better quality services; (c) improved customer
satisfaction; (d) provided greater availability of services; and (e) a raised level of staff
morale (John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development, 2002). Continuing in this
2002 report to the Department of Labor, the study reports that in order to achieve this
integration, staff, administrators, and one-stop designers in these local areas believe it is
important to:

1. Be guided by customer needs, customer satisfaction, and customer
   success;
2. Build a culture of collaboration that will outlast staff and management;
3. Bridge the knowledge gap – increase inter-agency knowledge; and
4. Invest – spend the staff time needed to work out the details.

As illustrated in Table 2.1, the Workforce Investment Act specified that three levels
of services be made available at its One-stop Career Centers, which are core, intensive,
and training services (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998). All adults are eligible for free
core services provided by the WIN Job Center. Depending on the individual’s
circumstances, the person can become eligible for the intensive and training services also
provided by the WIN Job Center and other institutions such as community colleges or
proprietary schools in order to receive training or skills upgrade.
Table 2.1 Matrix of Services Available in a One-stop Center

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORE SERVICES</th>
<th>INTENSIVE SERVICES</th>
<th>TRAINING SERVICES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility determination</td>
<td>Comprehensive assessments</td>
<td>Occupational skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach, recruitment</td>
<td>Individual employment plans</td>
<td>Combined workplace/Classroom training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial assessment</td>
<td>Group counseling</td>
<td>Private sector training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor market information</td>
<td>Individual counseling</td>
<td>Skills upgrading and Retraining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance and cost</td>
<td>Case management</td>
<td>Entrepreneurial training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information on training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>providers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on available</td>
<td></td>
<td>Job-readiness training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>supportive services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on filing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Customized training by employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unemployment insurance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>claims</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Follow-up services for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>twelve months</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

A Review of the Workforce Innovation Network in Mississippi

The WIA legislation of 1998 helped to establish the Workforce Innovation Network (WIN) in Mississippi. As defined by the 2006 WIN Report, the WIN in Mississippi is comprised of comprehensive WIN Job Centers, which serve as a single source for employment and training services for both job seekers and area business and industry (WIN In Mississippi, 2008). Together with federal, state, and community
workforce development programs, WIN Job Centers are intended to be a comprehensive location for a variety of services, which have been mandated by the Mississippi Strategic Workforce Plan for Title I of the Workforce Innovations Act of 1998 and Wagner-Peyser.

Customers of the local WIN Job Centers receive the full range of labor exchange services available. These services include (a) self-service, (b) facilitated self-help service, and (c) staff-assisted service. WIN Job Centers offer resource rooms for self service and facilitated self-services that include personal computers (PCs) with Internet access to search jobs, to write and post resumes and cover letters, to explore wage and job trends to research job and labor market information, and to view specific jobs listed by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. Resource rooms also offer printed materials on job search and work-related skills. Telephones, fax machines, copiers, and printers are also available. Resource rooms may also offer TV/VCRs with job search, career and work-related videos, as well as videos and printed materials on interviewing tips (State of Mississippi Two Year Strategic Plan, 2007).

Within the 1998 WIA legislation, the Act authorized three types of services to be available through the One-stop Centers: core, intensive, and training. Core services, as specified by the 1998 Act are available to all adults with no eligibility requirements. These service include job search and placement assistance (including career counseling), access to labor market information (identifying job vacancies and/or skills needed for jobs), initial assessment of skills and needs, information about available services (including Veteran benefits or disability benefits), and additional follow-up services to assist customers on keeping their jobs once they are placed (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998). In the Act, intensive services are provided to individuals who are unemployed and
who are not able to find sustainable employment and who need more assistance in finding and/or keeping a job. Intensive services include more comprehensive assessments, development of individual employment plans, group and individual counseling, case management, and short-term pre-vocational services. An extensive list of core, intensive, and training services is found in Table 2.1. In such cases where qualified (unemployed) individuals are not able to find jobs after receiving both core and intensive services, they may be eligible for training services. These training opportunities may include occupational skills training (i.e. community college or proprietary school), on-the-job training at a local industry/business, skill upgrading, job readiness training, and adult education and literacy activities in conjunction with other necessary training (U.S. Department of Labor, 1998).

Dislocated Workers

Technological changes in today’s manufacturing along with increasing foreign competition with U.S. industries has caused numerous plant closings in many states, resulting in large numbers of dislocated workers. As defined by the U.S. Department of Labor, a dislocated worker is an individual who:

- Has been terminated or laid off, or has received a notice of termination or layoff from employment;
- Is eligible for or has exhausted unemployment insurance;
- Has demonstrated an appropriate attachment to the workforce, but not eligible for unemployment insurance and unlikely to return to a previous industry or occupation;
Has been terminated or laid off or received notification of termination or layoff from employment as a result of a permanent closure or substantial layoff;

Is employed at a facility, where the employer has made the general announcement that the facility will close within a 180 days;

Was self-employed (including employment as a farmer, a rancher, or a fisherman) but is unemployed as a result of general economic conditions in the community or because of a natural disaster; or

Is a displaced homemaker who is no longer supported by another family member. (U.S. Department of Labor, 2009, p. 98)

The retraining and assisting of the dislocated population in today’s economy is an imperative component in preparing tomorrow’s workforce. After being laid-off from employment, numerous obstacles must be faced in order to find a new job. Eberts (2005) argues that one of the major obstacles faced by dislocated workers is the importance of “recognizing and dealing with the emotions that laid-off workers need to overcome in getting back on their feet” (p. 75). After the grieving process is completed, as termed by Eberts, he states that the following steps should be fulfilled in order to help dislocated workers find new sustainable employment. The dislocated worker must have: (a) knowledge of available job prospects; (b) understanding of the qualifications of the job positions; and (c) the capability of communication with the employer. This type of knowledge base can be provided through the Mississippi WIN Job Centers. However, for many adults, especially those experiencing losing a job, these steps can be quite difficult and confusing. Although not specifically spelled out in the WIA 1998 legislation, a bit of
“hand holding” may be required to assist these workers through the retraining and reemployment process.

Jacobson, LaLonde, and Sullivan (2005) examine various literature that discusses the consequences and potential benefits of retraining dislocated workers specifically in Washington State. The authors detail the differences between displaced workers and others who lost their job, retraining as a productive output of laid off workers and society, and the incentives to obtain training differ among displaced workers. The research provided by the authors detail sufficient material for Jacobson et al. (2005) to state that policy makers need to make larger investments in workers’ skills to offset fully the lost income incurred by displaced workers, especially the older population. The authors charge that the public investments now in place are too small to cover adequately the earning losses of this population. The article concludes with the detailing of federal retraining initiatives such as WIA and Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) and the role of community colleges. The authors specify the impact and effects of community college training to dislocated workers and address the need for policy makers to look cautiously at the effects of retraining and the results for the individual, the community, and the economy.

Ting (1991) provides information regarding the various impacts of multiple job training programs specifically designed for dislocated workers. The data utilized in this research were taken from the 1984 CPS Displaced Worker Survey and targeted individuals who had lost their jobs within the previous five years. The researchers limited the sample to individuals between the ages of 20 and 65 and were dislocated from full time agriculture jobs. The author explains his use of the human capital theory of earnings
determination in his study that focuses on earnings and employment probabilities as they are determined by productivity, which is influenced by the individual’s ability, education, and training. The results of the author’s research indicated that dislocated workers who received basic skills training, job skills training, or On-The-Job training provided a higher probability with regards to reemployment. In addition, Ting (1991) argues the idea that more importance should be given to classroom training programs in order for job training programs to be successful in increasing the worker’s human capital. Again, these aspects of retraining dislocated workers for future employment can all be found within a Mississippi WIN Job Center and local community college if the dislocated worker understands where to locate these services and is assisted properly.

Customer Satisfaction in Service Industries

Customer satisfaction is important to any business whether it is a retail business or a non-profit service provider such as a community college. Kotler (1994) argues that the ultimate source of customer preservation is customer satisfaction. The quality of the product being purchased or gained through a service provider is imperative to gaining a customer’s trust. In the ever expanding competitive global market, large corporations understand that they will not remain competitive in the market if they do not provide quality customer service (Osbourne & Gaebler, 1992).

The importance of customer satisfaction has been intensely discussed and researched with regards to its importance to customer retention in the global market place. Gronroos (1994) and Sheth and Parvatiyar (1994) explain that during the 1990s, a shift from transactional marketing to relationship marketing has gained new attention
within the concept of customer satisfaction. Morgan and Hunt (1994) define relationship marketing as “all marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchange” (p. 30). The link between customer satisfaction and long-term retention of customers is guided by “marketing practitioners and scholars in a rather categorical way, and is therefore treated as the starting point, rather than the core question of analysis” (Henning-Thurau & Klee, 1997, p. 739).

Many argue as to how customer satisfaction can be measured and the profitability of such analysis. Because customer-centered companies aim to better understand their customers’ wants and needs, these companies are better capable of providing the specified wants and needs of the customers (Li & Li, 2007).

Li and Li claim that based:

On present literature, customer satisfaction is defined as the result of cognitive and affective evaluation, where some comparison standard is compared to the actual perceived performance. If the perceived performance is less than expected, customers will be dissatisfied. On the other hand, if the perceived performance exceeds expectations, customers will be satisfied. Otherwise, if the perceived expectations are met, customers are in an indifferent or neural stage. (p. 4)

The authors continue by stating that customer satisfaction is subjective, and therefore, hard to measure.

For the many entities found in the service industry sector, the term “customer” has different denotations. A customer can be viewed as a frequent buyer of goods from the restaurant or retail sector; however, for the WIA program, a customer is someone who
directly benefits from simply one service of the WIN Program in Mississippi, whether
this is assistance with completing a resume or receiving ITA funds for re-training at the
local community college. Customer satisfaction can be defined as the degree in which an
agency meets or exceeds the expectations of the individual job or training seeker (U.S.
Department of Labor, 1998). The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ASCI) model
is a self-weighting model that attempts to illustrate the correlation between customer
satisfaction and customer loyalty. Three indices, perceived quality, perceived value, and
customer expectations, and their impacts are all drivers of customer satisfaction, thus are
contributors to customer complaints and customer loyalty (ASCI, 2009).

As noted by the ASCI:

A customer expectation is a measure of a customer’s anticipation of the
quality of a company’s products or services. Perceived quality is a
measure of the customer’s evaluation via recent consumption experience
of the quality of a company’s products or services, and perceived value is
a measure of quality relative to price paid (ASCI, 2009).

As indicated by the ASCI, customer loyalty to an institution is a direct indication of a
customer’s level of satisfaction with the product. The ASCI (2009) characterizes
customer loyalty as a merging of a customer’s likelihood to repurchase from the same
business and the same product despite fluctuating prices. Customer loyalty is vital for the
WIN Job Centers to remain a focal point of information, training, and assistance for
dislocated workers.
Within the state’s WIA program:

Mississippi has developed and implemented a mystery shopper program that focuses on customer-driven service quality and accountability by collecting, analyzing, and using real time customer service data to support high standards and continuous improvement (State of Mississippi Strategic Plan, 2007, p. 56).

As detailed by the 2007-2009 state plan, the mystery shoppers are given a set of appropriate questions to ask, and specific scenarios were developed to examine the quality of service provided to all clients: business owners, job seekers, and unemployment insurance claimants. The 2007-2009 state plan also indicates that the mystery shopper design will continue on a regular basis “with refinements added to the process as necessary” (p. 56).

Mississippi Community College: Traditional Mission and Rural Workforce Preparation

According to Cohen and Brawer (2003), there are 1100 two year colleges in the United States, with 15 located in Mississippi. The Mississippi Community College system dates back to 1922 with the passing of Senate Bill 251, which allowed state agriculture high schools to expand their curriculum to include college courses. Pearl River County Agriculture High School and Hinds County Agriculture High School were the first to provide this opportunity to their students in Mississippi.

Within the community college system, these institutions are able to offer the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and the Associate of Applied Science as its
highest degree (Cohen & Brawer, 2003) & (Vaughan, 2000). The services that each community college provides depend primarily on the needs of its local community, which includes the individual students, business and industry, and local organizations. Community colleges are distinguished from other institutions of higher learning by their commitment to the values of open access and community building (Vaughan, 2000).

According to Vaughan, these colleges work toward their goal of:

- Providing Open Access;
- Fostering Lifelong Learning;
- Offering Community Services;
- Providing Comprehensive Education; and
- Teaching and Learning

Even today, many fail to see the importance of community colleges within their small towns and cities. Townsend and Twombly (2001) argue that “community colleges provide status and income to the towns and counties that support them, as well as low-cost access to higher education and job training for literally millions of individuals” (p. ix). The authors continue by writing that in the 21st century, numerous forces are aligning to catapult community colleges to the center of the federal and state educational policy agendas (Townsend & Twombly). Adelman (1999) argues that “among these forces is the rapidly globalizing economy, with its insatiable demand for information and technical education, the largest factor for expansion of the higher education system since the 1970s” (p. 23).

With the vast number of lost manufacturing businesses in the Northeast Mississippi area, the vital importance of retraining and educating the dislocated worker is
imperative in this ever-expanding global economy. Losing 33% of manufacturing jobs (1993-2003) in Mississippi due to overseas competition, such as in the furniture industries, has had negative impacts that must be counteracted at the community college level. Community colleges are actively involved in providing pre-employment training to a wide variety of students, both traditional and nontraditional who can include dislocated workers or recent high school graduates.

These types of pre-employment training encompass the very nature of fostering lifelong education for Mississippi residents. The need for community colleges to provide more than postsecondary education has been argued by many beginning with Edmund Gleazer, Jr., president of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges from 1958 until 1981. Providing retraining and skill upgrades to communities is a vital function in Mississippi especially with the future needs of high growth/high demand industries as well as the necessity of nurturing local entrepreneurs and their talents. Doughtery (2001) cites several arguments against community colleges providing workforce training and preparation classes, which include the following: (a) community colleges will continue to face an information gap concerning the training needs for future employment needs and (b) many argue that providing workforce training undermines a community college’s goal to their more traditional mission. While Doughtery (2001) acknowledge these detractors, he argues that when analyzed closer “community colleges play an absolutely crucial role in the total system of workforce preparation” (p. 128). He continues with the example that for many persons of working age, “community colleges are the main portals of entry into important occupations” (p. 128).
Today’s economy continues to demand more and more education, whether technical, vocational, workforce, or academic, in order to prepare for the jobs of today and tomorrow. The Mississippi community colleges are attempting to answer this call by offering distance learning classes, evening and Saturday classes, and satellite classes that offer flexible hours in order to meet better the needs of working, non-traditional students.

As noted above, rural Mississippi has been in the midst of a crisis with plant closures and layoffs. In a 2004 study commissioned by the MidSouth Partnership for Rural Community Colleges, the researchers found an important link between community vitality and the community college system. In the study, Cejda, Leist, Green, Rubin, Lincoln, Fluharty, and Ziembroski (2004) reported that “if communities are to survive and prosper in today’s rapidly changing economy, they need innovative institutions to help them adapt to change and become more entrepreneurial and competitive” (p. 1).

These particular researchers have identified community colleges as one such institution. In this report, five strategic imperatives for rural development were branded:

- Building human capital by raising the education and skills of the community;
- Nurturing social capital and strong, health communities which forge more resourceful, resilient, and adaptable communities;
- Working regionally with neighboring communities where resources can be joined together to compete in a global economy;
- Finding a competitive niche where communities specialize in their own special, unique assets; and
• Promoting a culture of entrepreneurship is grown from within by people of the community. While each of these recommendations are important to the growth and sustainability of a community, building human capital is the most imperative for a community college with regards to meeting its’ overall mission within the community. (p.5)

Henderson and Abraham (2004) analyze a multitude of factors essential to rural knowledge-based activity in America, which they denote as high skilled labor, colleges and universities, vibrant business networks, and infrastructure. The authors cite that while traditional economic growth increased due to physical resources and production of materials, today’s rural economies are growing as a result of knowledge, which permits stimulation of new ideas and innovations that add to the creation of new products, new firms, new jobs, and new wealth. Indirect measuring of knowledge-based activity is comprised of two approaches. The first is to measure the number of people in occupations who use high levels of knowledge to perform their specific tasks; the second approach is based on the number of occupations at the industry level (Henderson & Abraham, 2004). “Roughly one in every four rural counties in 2000 high-knowledge occupations accounted for less than 20 percent of all occupations” (Henderson & Abraham, 2004, p. 83). The authors state the following factors that support knowledge activities in rural America: high quality labor force, college or universities, local amenities, infrastructure, size, and remoteness. The authors conclude by stating that in order to build a rural knowledge economy for the 21st century, rural communities need to be fostering and innovate, regional, entrepreneurial partnership of people, businesses, communities, and institutions.
Stauber (2004) explains the importance of creating new rural development strategies specifically tailored to the role of non-profits (community colleges). The author cites that a major disadvantage to rural communities is the loss of population of those people in their maximum earning and optimal child bearing years. In conjunction with population loss, economic decline and increasing poverty “emphasize the need to move swiftly in developing new strategies for rural communities” such as initiating multidimensional approaches (Stauber, 2004, p. 93). Stauber also cites three fundamental factors that are critical in understanding and eliminating the decline of rural communities: (a) communities and firms without cooperative advantage will not prosper; (b) nations, communities, and firms that prosper will continually invest in creating new competitive advantage rather than protecting old advantage; and (c) economic improvement and growth alone are not adequate enough to sustain communities. Important in relation to entrepreneurial growth, the author argues that despite the fact that most of our rural economic development institutions are designed to support commodity production and branch plants, they need to be concerned with building entrepreneurship in the area, which Stauber cites as the greatest opportunity. Stauber (2004) lists the following as gaps that limit the ability of regional nonprofits to be successful in rural revitalization: lack of flexibility in federal funding; lack of major institutional supports; inability of rural regions to understand how their economy operates; and the lack of systematic ways to learn from each other and to build on the research of others.

Markley (2006) suggests that while traditional economic activities such as routine manufacturing, agriculture, and natural resource-based activities have been somewhat successful in rural areas, the past 20 years has seen these types of activities struggle to
remain competitive within the global market. The author argues that entrepreneurship is simply more than building a support system, but rather a strategy of transformation. “In searching for new sources of competitive advantage, communities and regions must identify and build on their unique local assets and take a proactive approach to determining their futures” (p. 4).

The Mississippi Corridor Consortium and Its Partners

The partnership between the four community colleges in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium (MCC) is built on the idea that there is strength in numbers. Each of the four colleges has its strengths within their own districts, whether this includes the institution’s various types of specialized training, expert trainers, or state-of-the-art technical training facilities. Each of the four college districts has also endured its share of plant closings and layoffs due to the global economy. The MCC’s premise is the ability of the four colleges to levy their individual strengths for the benefit of their region. Within this framework, the Consortium is able to provide workforce solutions to its customers: individuals and business and industry. Under MCC’s scope of providing Employment Services, they offer recruitment, assessment, pre-employment training, and the use of the Applicant Management system. The training aspect of their partnership supplies area business and industry the availability to utilize expert trainers in areas such as Leadership, Continuous Improvement, Customer Service, Manufacturing, and Health and Safety. In addition, the Mississippi Corridor provides various types of funding assistance to help train their employees (www.mscorridorconsortium.com).
• Itawamba Community College: In 1920, Itawamba Community College (ICC) became an extension of Itawamba Agriculture High School, and in 1948-1949, the first full freshman college curriculum was offered at Itawamba Junior College. The college changed its name to Itawamba Community College in the fall of 1987 in order “to more adequately reflect its mission and purpose.” ICC currently serves Pontotoc, Itawamba, Lee, Monroe, and Chickasaw counties and has two campuses in Fulton and Tupelo. Between its two campuses, ICC serves approximately 8300 students in its credit program and 32,000 non-credit students (Adult Basic Education, Continuing Education, Industrial Training, etc) (www.iccms.edu).

• Northeast Mississippi Community College: Northeast Mississippi Community College (NEMCC) was established in 1948 and serves the following counties: Alcorn, Prentiss, Tippah, Tishomingo, and Union. Due to its geographical location, NEMCC provides opportunities not only to its district’s residents but also to the neighboring state of Tennessee. Between its campuses in Booneville and satellite campuses in New Albany, Tishomingo, and Corinth, Northeast Mississippi Community College has an enrollment of more than 3200 (www.nemcc.edu).

• Northwest Mississippi Community College: Northwest Mississippi Community College (NWMCC) first began as Tate County Agricultural High School in 1915, and in 1926 was offering college credit classes on campus. In 1928, although under a different name, Northwest was approved by the Mississippi State Board of Community and Junior Colleges as a junior college and enrolled its initial fifty
nine students. Northwest Mississippi Community College serves 6600 students enrolled in their classes at the following locations: Senatobia, Southaven, Oxford, Ashford, and Olive Branch. Northwest’s district includes Desoto, Marshall, Benton, Tunica, Tate, Quitman, Panola, Lafayette, Tallahatchie, Yalobusha, and Calhoun (www.northwestms.edu).

- East Mississippi Community College: In 1912, East Mississippi Community College (EMCC) was organized and approved by the Mississippi SBCJC in 1927. EMCC serves approximately 4,000 students through its academic and career technical programs offered at Scooba, Mayhew, Macon, Columbus AFB, Naval Station at Meridian, and West Point campuses. The college’s district includes Lowndes, Oktibbeha, Clay, Noxubee, Kemper, and Lauderdale (www.eastms.edu).
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of dislocated workers who have sought assistance from the four Mississippi WIN Job Centers (whether they were operated by the local community college or Mississippi Department of Employment Security) within the Mississippi Corridor Consortium. This was done by using a survey instrument previously utilized in North Carolina to measure the level of customer satisfaction within their state’s JobLink Centers. This chapter described the methods and procedures used in this study. Discussion in this chapter was divided into seven major areas: (1) Research Design, (2) Population and Sampling Procedure, (3) Instrumentation, (4) Validity of the Instrument, (5) Reliability of the Instrument, (6) Data Collection, and (7) Statistical Analysis.

Research Design

This study utilized a descriptive survey instrument design, which is helpful when surveying a large sample population. Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) define a descriptive survey as a survey that asks “the same set of questions (often prepared in the form of written questionnaire or ability test) to a large number of individuals either by mail, by telephone, or in person” (p. 12).
Although helpful in surveying a large number of the sample population, Fraenkel and Wallen (2006) purport that descriptive surveys do have their obstacles to overcome: (a) ensuring that the questions are clear and not misleading, (b) getting respondents to answer questions thoroughly and honestly, and (c) getting a sufficient number of the questionnaires completed and returned to enable making meaningful analyses. The major characteristics that surveys possess include that the survey information is collected from a group of people in order to describe some aspects or characteristics (such as abilities, opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and/or knowledge); the central matter in which to collect information is through asking questions and the answer given by the respondents are the research’s data; and the information collected is from a sample rather than every member of the population.

For this study, the researcher selected a likert-type survey used by the state of North Carolina to gather information about their own employment service system. Hayes (1992) surmised that using a likert-type format scale has an advantage when measuring public attitudes because the survey allows variability in the participant’s answers/scores on the survey’s topic rather than only allowing them to only answer a “yes” or “no” type question. Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias (1992) suggest that survey methodology is one of the most critical data collection methods in the social sciences due to the necessity of increased accountability pressures mounting on government. These types of surveys have become more cost effective and are now a widely used data collection instrument in governmental institutions.

A Customer Satisfaction Project Team, comprised of staff from the Governor’s office along with members from the North Carolina Employment Security Commission
(ESC), worked with a consultant from the University of Maryland to devise a reliable customer survey instrument for the North Carolina JobLink Centers (Deese, 2002). The survey used in this study replicates the exact questions used in the North Carolina study apart from amending simple wording such as JobLink Centers to WIN Job Centers. Permission has been sought and provided by the North Carolina Employment Security Commission to use the questions from the survey for this study.

As Table 3.1 illustrates, a series of questions are raised under each of the five sections.
Table 3.1  Survey Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Services</th>
<th>Self-Service Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How the Center looked</td>
<td>1. How quickly you were served</td>
<td>1. How easy it was to get the services you needed</td>
<td>1. How easy equipment and materials were to use</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Whether the center offered enough privacy so to speak freely with the staff</td>
<td>2. How friendly the staff was to you</td>
<td>2. How long it took to receive the services you needed</td>
<td>2. How easy it was for you to get the needed information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How convenient the center’s hours were for you</td>
<td>3. How respectful and polite the staff was to you</td>
<td>3. How well the provided services met your needs</td>
<td>3. How helpful the information was to you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How convenient the location of the center was for you</td>
<td>4. How well the staff helped provide the information and services you needed</td>
<td>4. How well the provided information was to you</td>
<td>4. The length of time you waited to use the resources and/or materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How easy it was to find and get to the services you needed in the building</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The survey employed in this study was divided into five different sections and may be found as Appendix A. The survey is based on a Likert-type scale (Likert, 1939) for the reason that the participants were able to choose from a selection of five categories to each of the questions. For the 20 questions found on the survey, the responses for each range from “excellent” to “not acceptable” with a “good,” “fair,” and “poor” response within the previous denoted range. In addition to the participant’s response to each
question, the respondent was also asked to indicate how important each of the services was to them on a personal level. The range for the importance questions were as follows: very important, important, and not important. The survey instrument asked specific questions about the following: environment (facilities), staff responsiveness (reception), staff-assisted services, self-service facilities, and satisfaction response of his/her’s overall satisfaction level of the entire experience within the WIN Job Center. Section F of the survey asked for the respondent to include any additional comments about the services he/she received during his/her visit.

Population and Sampling Procedure

The population sample for this study was dislocated workers who received WIA services via their local WIN Job Center. Four WIN Job Centers located within the Mississippi Corridor Consortium agreed to participate in the study. These four sites were asked based upon their difference in WIN Job Center structure and their membership within the Mississippi Corridor Consortium. Itawamba Community College, Northeast Mississippi Community College, and Northwest Mississippi Community College are Lead Operators of their WIN Job Centers, which means the community college supervises personnel, coordinates activities, and has full time community college personnel on site in their respective primary WIN centers. East Mississippi Community College does not host the WIN Job Center in its district and does not have a part time person located in the comprehensive Golden Triangle WIN Job Center though the college partners with the center. All four community colleges associated with this research provided written consent from the presidents (see appendix B).
Instrumentation

A 20 question survey instrument using open and closed ended questions was utilized (see appendix A). The instrument, titled *Mississippi Corridor Consortium WIN Job Center Customer Satisfaction Survey* was distributed to dislocated workers who were provided services at one of the participating WIN Job Centers: Itawamba WIN Job Center (Tupelo), Northeast WIN Job Center (Corinth), Northwest WIN Job Center (Oxford), or the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center (Columbus). This modified instrument was used by Stephanie Deese (2002), in her unpublished dissertation: *Customer Satisfaction: A Comparison of Community College and Employment Security Commission hosted JobLink Centers in North Carolina*. The original instrument was developed by the Customer Satisfaction Project team (comprised of members of the Governor’s Commission on Workforce Development and the North Carolina Employment Security Commission with the assistance of a consultant from the University of Maryland.) Permission to use the questions from the North Carolina study was granted by Bob Collett of the North Carolina Employment Security Commission. The survey included a cover letter from the researcher explaining the needs and scope of the survey (see appendix C).

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The researcher maintained the original 20 questions and content of the survey as developed by the North Carolina Employment Security and Governor’s Commission on Workforce Development Board devised team, the Customer Service Project team. Due to the same survey instrument being used, the researcher was able to maintain the reliability
of the Five Item Test, which is shown in Table 3.2. As stated previously, the North Carolina Employment Security Commission partnered with the University of Maryland to devise the survey instrument items, as well as tested for reliability and validity of the instrument.

Table 3.2  Reliability Analysis for a Five Item Test

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>.7815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized item alpha</td>
<td>.7939</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Internal validity, external validity, and the reliability of the instrument are paramount for successful obtainment of practical and informative research. Howell (2002) and Frankel and Wallen (2006) assert that the internal validity is the degree to which observed differences on the dependent variable are in direct relation to the independent variable, not to uncontrolled variables. Frankel and Wallen (2006) state that a systematic consideration of possible threats to internal validity receives the least attention of all the aspects of planning a study. Identifying possible threats during the planning stage of a study can often lead researchers to design ways of eliminating or at least minimizing these threats.

The external validity describes the degree to which the results of the study are able to be generalized to groups and environment outside of the research study (Frankel & Wallen, 2006; Howell, 2002). With respect to reliability, Frankel and Wallen (2006) posit that reliability is the degree to which the scores obtained with a research instrument
are consistent measures of whatever the instrument measures. As stated previously in Table 3.2, the Standardized item alpha for the five item test was .7939. Frankel and Wallen (2006) posit that the reported reliability coefficients for many commercially available achievement tests are typically .90 or higher; however, they acknowledge that for research purposes, the reliability should be at least .70, and the survey instrument constructed by the North Carolina Employment Security Commission used in this study met this criterion. The calculation of the alpha is based on the number of items on the survey and the ratio of the average inter-item covariance to the average item variance (Cronbach, 1951).

Data Collection

Prior to beginning the research, the author received the required approval from Mississippi State University’s Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (see appendix G). All forms and approvals were completed and in the researcher’s possession before any surveys were conducted. The surveys were sent to the respective WIN Job Centers, where the WIN Job Center staff asked customers (dislocated workers) who were exiting the WIN Job Centers to complete a survey. The WIN Job Center staff provided a letter to the participants to explain the purpose of the survey, how the data would be collected, and what the data results would be used for at the conclusion of the study (see appendix C). Participation was voluntary, and consent was implied by the return of the survey. The participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and that their anonymity would be maintained.
Initially, the survey was available at the WIN Job Centers for a total of four weeks in which to allow dislocated workers the opportunity to visit the WIN Job Center, receive services, and complete a survey. The researcher followed the same procedures as Stephanie Deese and her study in North Carolina. Deese (2002) stated that she asked for JobLink Center staff’s assistance with handling the surveys (instead of mailing them) due to the following: (a) in effort to increase the response rate; (b) in order to avoid inaccuracies in the final data analyses; (c) and to decrease the limitations of using a mailed survey.

Each participating WIN Job Center was asked to gather completed surveys and mail to the researcher on a weekly basis (see appendix D). The researcher anticipated that approximately 100-150 surveys would be completed by participants at the WIN Job Centers within the four week time table. Initially, the researcher sent each WIN Job Center site 45 surveys to begin dispersing to the customers. The surveys were available to the customers starting the week of January 26, 2009 with an anticipated end date of Friday, February 20, 2009. Due to events such as slow dislocated worker traffic and a large number of layoffs and plant closures in some of the college districts, which created emotional and time constraints, the researcher was unable to gather a sufficient number of surveys from each site within the four week time frame. In order to help remedy this, the researcher gained permission from the four WIN Center sites to extend the time frame for an additional six weeks. The availability of the surveys ended on Friday, April 3, 2009.

In addition to asking the WIN Job Centers to make the surveys available in their centers, identify dislocated workers for this particular study, and mail the sealed and completed surveys at the conclusion of each week to the researcher, the four WIN Job
Center site were also asked to prepare and submit to the researcher a WIN Job Center profile that asked specific questions concerning their particular center (see appendix F). The profile asked the WIN Centers the following questions:

1. Describe the Center’s location. Briefly describe how the center looks?
2. List the Center’s hours of operation.
3. Describe the resource room and the equipment and materials available to the customers (dislocated workers).
   a. Does the resource room have a full-time staff person? If yes, is this person a community college person or a partner agency person?
   b. How many staff are available to assist the customers (dislocated workers)?
4. How many computers are available to assist the customers (dislocated workers)?
5. How long does an average customer (dislocated worker) have to wait to be seen by the WIN Job Center staff?
6. Upon their arrival, how are the customers (dislocated workers) informed of the services/resources, contact persons, and referral information available to them?
7. Are the self-service facilities clearly marked? How?
8. How does a customer know if they are receiving self-services?
9. How long does a customer have to wait to use the self-service facilities?
10. What tools has your WIN Job Center developed to identify services needed for job seekers?
11. Does the comprehensive center provide federally required core services specified in section 134(d) (2) of the law? (Please check all that apply)

☐ Eligibility Determination  ☐ Outreach  ☐ Assessment

☐ One-stop Performance Information  ☐ UI Claims  ☐ Financial Aid Information

☐ Training Information  ☐ Follow-Up  ☐ Job Search, Placement, and Counseling

☐ Job Information  ☐ Referrals

12. Does your WIN Job Center have a community college representative at your site? If yes, is this individual present at your center part time/full time and what are his/her responsibilities? If no, how does your site communicate/partner with your local community college?

Statistical Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze each of the five survey research questions. A parametric procedure was used due to the survey instrument yielding interval scaled data for the dependent variable and nominal data for the independent variable. The parametric procedure used was the One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). According to Kerlinger (1986) the ANOVA is a statistical technique, which examines the effects of one independent variable on a dependent variable. The null hypotheses were rejected at $p < .05$ level of significance. The responses from the survey were compiled and analyzed using the Statistical Package for
Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequency and percentage tables were generated using SPSS Version 16.

The following research questions and null hypotheses were tested in this study:

Research Question 1: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s facilities?

\[ H_0^1: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the facilities between the four WIN Job Centers.} \]

Research Question 2: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s staff?

\[ H_0^2: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the staff between the four WIN Job Centers.} \]

Research Question 3: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s services?

\[ H_0^3: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions for service between the four WIN Job Centers.} \]

Research Question 4: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s self-service facilities?

\[ H_0^4: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the self service facilities between the four WIN Job Centers.} \]
Research Question 5: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in overall rating?

H₀⁵: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the overall rating of services between the four WIN Job Centers.

This study was guided by five research questions found above, which in turn generated five separate null hypotheses. As previously discussed, the survey questions were divided into five separate areas and designed to investigate the customer’s overall impression as to his/her Center’s Facilities, Staff, Services, Self-Service Facilities, and Overall rating of satisfaction. For the purpose of this study, response data were aggregated for each section or research questions: Part A (Facilities), Part B (Staff), Part C (Services), Part D (Self-Service Facilities) and Part E (Overall). For each question, the respondent was given the following available response options: Does Not Apply, Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, and Not Acceptable. The researcher assigned a “1” for Does Not Apply, a “2” for Excellent, a “3” for Good, a “4” for Fair, “5” Poor, and a “6” for Not Acceptable. The frequency count of response for each survey question with a Does Not Apply (1), Excellent (2), Good (3), Fair (4), Poor (5), or Not Acceptable (6) within the research question was multiplied by the assigned weight described above. The sum of the product from weighted responses was divided by the sum of the responses for the research question’s mean. This same procedure was used for all five parts of the survey.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

In this chapter, the researcher reported the results of the data collected in this particular study and their analyses. Survey response rates as well as descriptive data that demonstrated the representativeness of the sample were also provided. In addition, demographic data collected from the four participating community colleges were presented. In conclusion, the results of the five null hypotheses tested in this study were reported. For privacy reasons, the WIN Job Centers will be referred to as WIN Job Center A, B, C, and D.

Survey Respondents

Data collection was successfully achieved through surveys being dispersed on-site to the WIN Job Center customers (dislocated workers) at the four selected centers. As stated in Chapter 3, Marshall and Rossman (1999) recommend that the researcher seek a close approximation to what can be described as an ideal state. In addition to being members of the Mississippi Corridor Consortium, each site was examined for the following: (1) entry to the site is accessible and possible, (2) a high probability exists to gather completed survey documents, and (3) the researcher had reasonable assurances that quality data can be obtained. Each of the participating sites met this criterion. The sites selected for this study were one WIN Job Center in each of the four community
college districts in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium. Although each district has more than one WIN Center location in its district, the largest four comprehensive sites were asked to participate. The following WIN Job Centers were selected to participate in the study:

1. Northwest Mississippi Community College WIN Job Center (Oxford)
2. Northeast Mississippi Community College WIN Job Center (Corinth)
3. Itawamba Community College WIN Job Center (Tupelo)
4. Golden Triangle WIN Job Center (Columbus, which is located in EMCC’s district)

These sites were selected based upon a number of factors. First, each site is located within the Mississippi Corridor Consortium, which consists of Northwest Mississippi Community College, Northeast Mississippi Community College, Itawamba Community College, and East Mississippi Community College. In addition, each of the four sites expressed their willingness to have access to the results of the data in order to implement corrective measures that may be illustrated in their level of customer satisfaction from the results gathered. As Table 4.1 indicated, each of the four WIN Job Centers was sent 45 copies of the survey instrument to administer to customers (dislocated workers) of the WIN Job Centers. All surveys were appropriately color coded to identify the college/site returning the surveys.
Table 4.1  Numbers of Surveys Submitted by Colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participating Colleges</th>
<th>Number of Surveys Sent to Sites</th>
<th>Number of Surveys Returned from Sites</th>
<th>% of Surveys Returned by Sites</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northwest CC (Oxford)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast CC (Corinth)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itawamba CC (Tupelo)</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Triangle WIN Job Center</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sites were asked to accumulate the surveys on a weekly basis and mail the completed surveys to the researcher in order for the data to be keyed into SPSS in a timely manner. Weekly emails and/or phone calls were sent by the researcher to remind each site to mail surveys and provide additional assistance or supplies if needed. The time period in which the survey was administered was for nine weeks beginning the week of January 26th and concluded the week of April 4th. Due to numerous issues such as slow traffic in the WIN Centers, customer’s unwillingness to complete the surveys, and numerous late plant layoffs and closures within the survey availability timeframe, an insufficient number of surveys from each of the four sites was collected in the original four week time frame. Due to these unforeseen occurrences, an additional five weeks was provided in order to obtain additional surveys. All surveys were submitted and keyed into SPSS by April 8th. A total of 180 surveys were sent to the four sites with a total of 159
surveys being returned from the sites. This yielded a response rate of 88.3% on the surveys that were returned.

Demographic Profile of the Participants in the Study

In this section of Chapter IV, the demographic data collected from the returned 159 surveys was reported. There were four demographic questions asked in the surveys. These five questions provided information on race, age, gender, and educational status. The purpose for such questions on the survey was to provide a description of who the respondents were and how representative they were of the population.

Race

Table 4.2 showed the race composition of the four sets of respondents (Northwest, Northeast, Itawamba, and Golden Triangle).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.2 Race of Survey Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did Not Respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In all but one (WIN Job Center A) of the populations, Whites represent the largest subset of the respondents. Table 4.2 illustrated that 64.1% (102) of the respondents from the four WIN Job Center sites were White and 33.3% (53) of the respondents were African American, while 1.8% (3) were Hispanic (one survey respondent from WIN Job Center C did not respond).

**Age**

Table 4.3 identified the age of the respondents. The least number of the respondents from all four sites fell into the 19-20 age categories constituting 7.0% (11) of the respondents. The 21-30 age category had 22.0% (35) of the total number of respondents while the 31-40 and 41-50 age categories had 27.7% (44) and 23.3% (37) of the population respectively. The Over 50 category had 19.5% (31) of the total respondents. One respondent from WIN Job Center C did not respond.

Table 4.3  Ages of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did Not Respond</th>
<th>19-20</th>
<th>21-30</th>
<th>31-40</th>
<th>41-50</th>
<th>Over 50</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Gender**

Table 4.4 identified the gender of the 159 survey respondents from the four sites. Some differences were noted from the data. The combined four sites had a slightly higher female response rate of 50.3% (80) than male respondents with 49.1% (78). One respondent from WIN Job Center C did not provide gender information.

Table 4.4  Gender of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did Not Respond</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employment Status**

Table 4.5 identified the employment status of the 159 survey respondents from the four sites. Some differences were noted from the data. The four WIN Job Center locations had a combined 84.3% (134) of their respondents who were unemployed and looking for career or training information. 1.9% (3) of the respondents chose Other, while one respondent from WIN Job Center C did not provide employment information.
Table 4.5  Employment Status of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Did Not Respond</th>
<th>Unemployed/Looking for career or Training Information</th>
<th>Employed/Looking for career or Training Information</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education Level

Table 4.6 identified the education status of the 159 survey respondents from the four sites. Some differences were noted from the data. The combined four WIN Job Center locations had a combined 57.9% (92) of their customers responded that they had a high school diploma or GED as their highest level of education. 24.5% (48) of the respondents indicated that they had either a two or four year college education. 10.7% (17) of those surveyed responded that they had less than a high school diploma. One respondent from WIN Job Center C did not provide education information.
Table 4.6  Education Status of Survey Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Did Not Respond</th>
<th>Less than HS</th>
<th>High School or GED</th>
<th>2-year College Degree</th>
<th>Bachelor's Degree</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visits to WIN Job Center

In Table 4.7, the frequency distribution of the number of times the survey respondents had visited the center can be seen. With regards to the number of visits to the WIN Job Center, 47.2% (75) of respondents from the survey indicated that they had visited the WIN Job Center between 1-5 times. 20.1% (32) responded that the visit in which he/she completed the survey was his/her first visit to the WIN Job Center. 15.1% (24) of the respondents indicated that they had visited the WIN Job Center between 6-10 times, while 5.7% (9) had visited the center between 11-15 times. 9.4% (15) of the respondents had visited the center 16-20 times, while 1.9% (3) had visited the WIN Job Center more than 20 times. One respondent from WIN Job Center C did not provide an answer for this question.
Table 4.7  Number of Visits to WIN Center

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WIN Job Center</th>
<th>Did Not Respond</th>
<th>1st Time</th>
<th>1-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16-20</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings

For a complete list of the survey questions, please refer to Table 3.1. For purposes here, a brief summation of the questions was re-stated below with each related research question and corresponding hypothesis. In order to begin the comparison of ratings between the four WIN Job Center sites, the first step in the process was to summarize the data by constructing frequency distributions. The frequencies for each of the five questions in Part A of the survey were converted to proportions by dividing the frequency category by the total number of responses in the distribution. The proportion then became a percentage when multiplied by 100. These proportions reflect the relative weight of a specific category in the distribution. By using percentages, two or more frequency distributions can be compared. This process was repeated for each of the five research questions.
Examination of Research Question 1

Research Question 1: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s facilities?

$H_0$: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the facilities between the four WIN Job Centers.

In this particular section of the survey, the participants were asked to answer five separate questions in Part A: Facilities. Survey respondents were asked to rank each of the five questions as well. In short, Part A of the survey asked the following questions (QAR 1) how the center looked; (QAR 2) whether the center offered enough privacy; (QAR 3) the convenience of the hours of operation; (QAR 4) convenience of the center; and (QAR 5) if services were easy to find and get to in the building.

Table 4.8 illustrated the frequency distributions of each of the weighted responses from Part A of the survey from each of the four WIN Job Center sites. WIN Job Center A reported an overall average of its facilities with a 2.62. WIN Job Center B reported an overall average of 2.82 of its facilities, while WIN Job Center C reported a 2.33 overall average of its facilities. WIN Job Center D reported an overall average of 2.56 for its facilities. All averages were based on responses from survey respondents.
Table 4.8  Summary of Frequency Distributions and Overall Average of WIN Job Center Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Not Acceptable</th>
<th>Total Number Of Responses</th>
<th>Total Weight from Part A divided by Total # of Responses</th>
<th>Overall Average of Survey Part A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>521/199</td>
<td>2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>550/195</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>466/200</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>512/200</td>
<td>2.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>2049/794</td>
<td>2.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported in Table 4.9 are the Analysis of Variance results between the four job centers and their respondents’ perceptions of customer satisfaction with the WIN Job Center’s facilities. Statistically significant differences were found between perception scores of the Facilities (F= 7.572, df=3/155 and p <.05) with regard to the four WIN Job Centers at the .05 level.
Table 4.9  Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Customer’s Perceptions of Customer Satisfaction with the WIN Job Center’s Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>119.858</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>39.966</td>
<td>7.572</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>818.065</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>5.278</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>937.962</td>
<td>158</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant at the .05 level

Referring to Table 4.10, further data analysis using the Scheffe’ as a Multiple Comparison test revealed that customers from WIN Job Center C had more favorable perceptions of the center’s facilities than customers from WIN Job Center B. No other mean differences were observed.
Table 4.10   Scheffe’ Results Regarding the Customers’ Perceptions of Facilities by WIN Job Center

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WIN Job Center Site</th>
<th>Comparison Between other WIN Centers</th>
<th>Observed Mean Differences</th>
<th>$P$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>-1.078</td>
<td>0.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>1.375</td>
<td>0.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>0.225</td>
<td>0.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>1.078</td>
<td>0.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>2.453</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>1.303</td>
<td>0.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>-1.375</td>
<td>0.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>-2.453</td>
<td>.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>-1.150</td>
<td>0.176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>-0.225</td>
<td>0.979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>-1.303</td>
<td>0.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>1.150</td>
<td>0.176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant at the .05 level

Examination of Research Question 2

Research Question 2: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s staff?
H₀²: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the staff between the four WIN Job Centers?

In this particular section of the survey, the participants were asked to answer four separate questions in Part B: Center Staff. Survey respondents were asked to rank each of the four questions as well. In short, the Part B of the survey asked the following questions (QBR 1) how quickly you were served; (QBR 2) how friendly the staff was; (QBR 3) how respectful/polite the staff was to you; and (QBR 4) how well the staff provide the information or services needed.

Table 4.11 Summary of Frequency Distributions and Overall Average of WIN Job Center Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Not Acceptable</th>
<th>Total Number of Responses</th>
<th>Total Weight from Part A divided by Total # of Responses</th>
<th>Overall Average of Survey Part A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>2.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>636</td>
<td>1479</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11 illustrated the frequency distributions of each of the weighted responses from Part B of the survey from each of the four WIN Job Center sites. WIN
Job Center A reported an overall average of its facilities with a 2.31. WIN Job Center B reported an overall average of 2.69 of its facilities, while WIN Job Center C reported a 2.26 overall average of its facilities. WIN Job Center D reported an overall average of 2.26 for its facilities. All averages were based on responses from survey respondents.

Reported in Table 4.12 are the Analysis of Variance results between the four job centers and their respondents’ perceptions of customer satisfaction with the WIN Job Center’s staff. Statistically significant differences were found between perception scores of the staff (F= 7.007, df =3/155 and p <.05) with regard to the four WIN Job Centers at the .05 level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>78.537</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26.179</td>
<td>7.007</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>579.086</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>3.376</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>657.623</td>
<td>158</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Significant at the .05 level

Referring to Table 4.13, further data analysis using the Scheffe’ as a Multiple Comparison test revealed that customers from WIN Job Center B had the least favorable customer perception’s staff score than WIN Job Centers A, C, and D. No other mean differences were observed.
Table 4.13 Scheffe’ Results Regarding the Customers’ Perceptions of Staff by WIN Job Center

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WIN Job Center Site</th>
<th>Comparison Between other WIN Centers</th>
<th>Observed Mean Differences</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>-1.419</td>
<td>.016**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>.300</td>
<td>.923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>.275</td>
<td>.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>1.419</td>
<td>.016**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>1.719</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>1.694</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>-.300</td>
<td>.923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>1.719</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>-.025</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>-.275</td>
<td>.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>-1.694</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant at the .05 level

Examination of Research Question 3

Research Question 3: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s services?

H₀³: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions for service between the four WIN Job Centers.
In this particular section of the survey, the participants were asked to answer five separate questions in Part C: Services. Survey respondents were asked to rank each of the four questions as well. In short, Part C of the survey asked the following questions (QCR 1) how easy it was to get to the services; (QCR 2) how long it took to receive services; (QCR 3) how well the services provided met customer’s needs; and (QCR 4) how helpful information provided was to customers.

Table 4.14 illustrated the frequency distributions of each of the weighted responses from Part C of the survey from each of the four WIN Job Center sites. WIN Job Center A reported an overall average of its services with a 2.50. WIN Job Center B reported an overall average of 2.79 of its services; while WIN Job Center C reported a 2.40 overall average of its services. WIN Job Center D reported an overall average of 2.39 for its services. All averages were based on responses from survey respondents. For Part C of the survey, WIN Job Center B had three customers respond “Not Applicable”; WIN Center C had one customer respond “Not Applicable”; WIN Center D had four customers respond “Not Applicable.”
Table 4.14  Summary of Frequency Distributions and Overall Average of WIN Job Center Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Not Acceptable</th>
<th>Total Number of Responses</th>
<th>Total Weight from Part A divided by Total # of Responses</th>
<th>Overall Average of Survey Part A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>400/160</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>435/156</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>382/159</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>372/156</td>
<td>2.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>1589/631</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported in Table 4.15 are the Analysis of Variance results between the four job centers and their respondents’ perceptions of customer satisfaction with the WIN Job Center’s services. Statistically significant differences were found between perception scores of the Services (F= 9.298, df=3/155 and p <.05) with regard to the four WIN Job Centers at the .05 level.
Table 4.15  Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Customer’s Perceptions of Customer Satisfaction with the WIN Job Center’s Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>73.422</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>24.474</td>
<td>6.298</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>602.352</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>3.886</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>675.774</td>
<td>158</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Significant at the .05 level

Referring to Table 4.16, further data analysis using the Scheffe’ as a Multiple Comparison test revealed that customers from WIN Job Center C and WIN Job Center D had statistically significant more favorable perceptions of the center’s services than customers from WIN Job Center B. No other mean differences were observed.
Table 4.16 Scheffe’ Results Regarding the Customers’ Perceptions of Services by WIN Job Center

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WIN Job Center Site</th>
<th>Comparison Between other WIN Centers</th>
<th>Observed Mean Differences</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>-1.104</td>
<td>0.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>.475</td>
<td>.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>0.650</td>
<td>.539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>1.104</td>
<td>.107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>1.579</td>
<td>.007**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>1.754</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>-.475</td>
<td>.762</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>-1.579</td>
<td>.007**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>.175</td>
<td>.984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>-.650</td>
<td>.539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>-1.754</td>
<td>.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>-.175</td>
<td>.984</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant at the .05 level

Examination of Research Question 4

Research Question 4: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s self-service facilities?

$H_0^4$: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the self service facilities between the four WIN Job Centers.
In this particular section of the survey, the participants were asked to answer six separate questions in Part D: Self-Service Facilities. Survey respondents were asked to rank each of the six questions as well. In short, Part D of the survey asked the following questions (QDR 1) how easy equipment/materials were to use; (QDR 2) how easy it was to get to the information needed; (QDR 3) how helpful information was; and (QDR 4) length of time waited to use resources/materials. Two additional questions were asked if the customer required staff assistance while using self-service facilities: (QDR 5) staff being able to help and (QDR 6) staff’s knowledge of resources.

Table 4.17 illustrated the frequency distributions of each of the weighted responses from Part D of the survey from each of the four WIN Job Center sites. WIN Job Center A reported an overall average of its self-service facilities with a 2.42. WIN Job Center B reported an overall average of 2.55 of its self-service facilities, while WIN Job Center C reported a 2.32 overall average of its self-service facilities. WIN Job Center D reported an overall average of 2.42 for its self-service facilities. All averages were based on responses from survey respondents. For Part D of the survey, Win Job Center A had eight (8) customers respond “Does Not Apply”; WIN Job Center B had eleven (11) customers respond “Does Not Apply”; WIN Job Center C had twenty (20) customers respond “Does Not Apply” and WIN Job Center D had twenty-six (26) customers respond “Does Not Apply.”
Table 4.17 Summary of Frequency Distributions and Overall Average of WIN Job Center Self-Service Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Not Acceptable</th>
<th>Total Number of Responses</th>
<th>Total Weight from Part A divided by Total # of Responses</th>
<th>Overall Average of Survey Part A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>552/228</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>568/223</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>511/220</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>517/214</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>885</td>
<td>2148/885</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported in Table 4.18 are the Analysis of Variance results between the four job centers and their respondents’ perceptions of customer satisfaction with the WIN Job Center’s self-service facilities. No statistically significant differences were found between perception scores of the Self-Service Facilities (F= 1.799, df=3/155 and p >.05) with regard to the four WIN Job Centers at the .05 level.
Table 4.18   Analysis of Variance Summary Table Regarding the Customer’s Perceptions of Customer Satisfaction with the WIN Job Center’s Self-Service Facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variance</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>54.999</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.333</td>
<td>1.799</td>
<td>0.150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>1579.227</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>10.189</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1634.226</td>
<td>158</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Significant at the .05 level

Examination of Research Question 5

Research Question 5: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in overall rating.

$H_0^5$: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the overall rating of services between the four WIN Job Centers.

In this particular section of the survey, the participants were asked to answer one question in Part E: Overall Rating of Services. In short, Part E of the survey asked the following question (QER 1) rate your overall experience with the center.

Table 4.19 illustrated the frequency distributions of the weighted response from Part E of the survey from each of the four WIN Job Center sites. WIN Job Center A reported an average of its Overall Rating with a 2.33. WIN Job Center B reported an average of 2.49 of it Overall Rating, while WIN Job Center C reported a 2.37 average of its Overall Rating. WIN Job Center D reported an average of 2.33 for its Overall Rating.
All averages were based on responses from survey respondents. For Part E of the survey, Win Job Center C had two (2) customers respond “Does Not Apply.”

Table 4.19  Summary of Frequency Distributions and Overall Average of WIN Job Center Overall Rating

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Not Acceptable</th>
<th>Total Number of Responses</th>
<th>Total Weight from Part A divided by Total # of Responses</th>
<th>Overall Average of Survey Part A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center A</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>93/40</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center B</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>97/39</td>
<td>2.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center C</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>90/38</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIN Job Center D</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>93/40</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>373/157</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reported in Table 4.20 are the Analysis of Variance results between the four job centers and their respondents’ perceptions of customer satisfaction with the WIN Job Center’s Overall Rating. No statistically significant differences were found between perception scores of the centers’ overall rating (F= 1.016, df=3/155 and p >.05) with regard to the four WIN Job Centers at the .05 level.
Summary of Research Questions

There were five research questions formulated and tested in this investigation. All five were tested for differences between the variables. Of the five research questions tested in this study, three were found to have significant differences. They were research questions 1, 2, and 3 (See Table 4.21 for results).

The results from research question 1 revealed that customers from WIN Job Center C had more favorable ratings of their center’s facilities than the WIN Job Center B customers who responded to the same questions. No other significant differences were found between the centers with regards to research question 1.

With regards to research question 2, the results indicated that customers from WIN Job Center B responded with the least favorable rating of the center’s staff than WIN Job Centers A, C, and D. No other significant differences were found between the centers with regards to research question 2.
The results from research question 3 illustrated that customers from WIN Job Centers C and D had more favorable ratings that were significantly different for services provided to customers than survey respondents from WIN Center B.

Table 4.21 Summary of Research Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.752</td>
<td>3/159</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.007</td>
<td>3/159</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.298</td>
<td>3/154</td>
<td>.000**</td>
<td>Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.799</td>
<td>3/155</td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.016</td>
<td>3/155</td>
<td>.387</td>
<td>Not Significant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Significant at .05**
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher reported the results from the data collected in this study and their analyses. Survey response rates and descriptive data, which demonstrated the representativeness of the sample, were also provided. The results from the five null hypotheses tested in this study were reported.

Data collection was achieved through surveys given on-site to customers (dislocated workers) to four WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium (Northeast Community College WIN Job Center in Corinth, Northwest Community College WIN Job Center in Oxford, Itawamba Community College WIN Job Center in Tupelo, and the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center in Columbus). These colleges were selected to participate in this study due to their membership in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium and their willingness to implement measures to correct potential problem areas that may arise from the data analysis. An instrument entitled “Customer Satisfaction Survey” was used to gather data for this research. The North Carolina Employment Security Commission validated the survey instrument. Permission to use this specific instrument was granted by Mr. Bob Collett of the North Carolina Employment Security Commission. The survey consisted of 20 questions that were
divided into five areas: facilities, staff, services, self-service facilities, and overall rating of satisfaction.

As Table 4.1 indicated, the four WIN Job Center sites were sent 45 copies of the survey instrument to administer to their customers. All surveys were color coded as to identify the WIN Job Center returning the survey and then numbered upon its return to the researcher. The return rate for the surveys was 88.3%.

The research questions and null hypotheses tested in this study were:

Research Question 1: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s facilities?

$H_0^1$: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the facilities between the four WIN Job Centers.

Research Question 2: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s staff?

$H_0^2$: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the staff between the four WIN Job Centers?

Research Question 3: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s services?

$H_0^3$: There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions for service between the four WIN Job Centers.
Research Question 4: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in the center’s self-service facilities?

\[ H_0^4: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the self service facilities between the four WIN Job Centers.} \]

Research Question 5: Are there any statistically significant differences between the four WIN Job Center sets of data as measured by the customer satisfaction perceptions in overall rating?

\[ H_0^5: \text{There are no significant differences in the customer satisfaction perceptions in the overall rating of services between the four WIN Job Centers} \]

The data collected from the 159 returned surveys were tested through the application of the One Way Analysis of Variance and the Scheffe’ Multiple Comparison test. Each of the five research questions was tested at the .05 significance level.

**Findings**

Based on the results of this study, the following findings were observed:

1. The level of customer satisfaction in regards to facilities (hours of operation, locations of the center, appearance of the center, and privacy) was significantly different between WIN Job Center C and WIN Job Center B.

2. The level of customer satisfaction in regards to staff (friendliness, prompt service, ability to answer WIN Center related questions) was significantly different between the four WIN Job Centers. WIN Job Center B had the least favorable rating of the four sites.
3. The level of customer satisfaction in regards to services (length of wait time, helpfulness of services, how well services met customer’s needs) was significantly different between WIN Job Centers C and D who had more favorable ratings than WIN Job Center B.

4. The level of customer satisfaction in regards to self-service facilities (materials/equipment, length of wait time to use facilities, how easy the materials were to use) was not significantly different between the four WIN Job Centers.

5. The overall level of customer satisfaction was not significantly different between the four WIN Job Centers.

Conclusions

The findings from the study should prove to be beneficial to the individual WIN Job Centers on multiple levels. Although there were no significant differences in the customers’ overall rating of satisfaction between the four centers, some areas of improvement were captured by the results when paired with the responses from the WIN Job Centers themselves on the Mississippi WIN Job Center Profile. Per the answers provided on the Profile, all four WIN Job Centers are open for the same hours of operation: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:00 am -5:00 pm and Wednesday from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm. Similar answers were given for the materials and equipment available to the customers (dislocated workers) in the resource room: fax machine, printer, tables, chairs, disability phones, information concerning how to dress and prepare for interviews, etc. In addition, for all four sites, the average wait time to be
seen by a WIN Job Center staff person was around 15 minutes; however, some noticeable differences were observed on the profile as well.

With regards to facilities, WIN Job Center B had the least favorable ratings for Part A: Facilities. One additional comment on the survey was provided by a WIN Job Center B respondent, which stated that “the WIN Center was not easily accessible to him because of the driving distance; not convenient.” Although the location of the center cannot easily be modified, the knowledge that a number of their customers feel out of touch with no longer having a local WIN Job Center in their hometown might assist the WIN Job Center staff in acknowledging the additional burden to their customers of driving to Columbus for WIN Center services.

With regards to Part B: Staff on the survey, a statistically significant difference was found between the centers. WIN Job Center B had the least favorable rating of the center staff than WIN Job Centers A, C, and D. No additional comments were provided by the responding customers on the survey, but the WIN Center Profile completed by the WIN Job Centers indicate some probable reasons for the least favorable rating. For Question 5 on the WIN Job Center Profile, which asked “upon their arrival, how are the customers (dislocated workers) informed of the services/resources, contact persons, and referral information available to them?” WIN Job Centers A, C, D provided answers such as “they are greeted and asked how may we help them. They are then directed to the right person or persons to help them.” For the same question, WIN Job Center B answered “there is a menu of service on the front counter at the reception area.” WIN Job Center B might have a similar protocol of reception as WIN Job Centers A, C, and D, but it was not specified by the answer provided on the profile sheet. If customers are only provided a
menu of services that are not explained to the customer as he/she enters the center, WIN Job Center B should consider altering their mode of introducing their customers to the facility.

For Part C, facilities of the survey, statistically significant differences were found between the WIN Job Centers. From the responses provided by the customers, WIN Job Centers C and D had a more favorable rating of their services than WIN Job Center B. On the WIN Job Center profile, the noted differences in responses between WIN Job Centers C and D compared to WIN Center B included that Centers C and D use instruments such as the TABE test and interest inventories in addition to counseling one-on-one with a WIN Job Center Staff person in order to identify the appropriate services needed for their customers. For the same question, WIN Job Center B explained that they identify services for their customers by having a “Q&A between the interviewer and the customer.” Depending on the number of staff, degree of customer traffic, and space constraints, WIN Job Center B might have adequate justification for not providing additional tools in accessing the needs of their customers; however, it may be advisable for WIN Job Center B to consider modifying this process to meet better the needs of their customers.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the findings of this study, there are several recommendations for further research. First, WIN Job Centers in Mississippi should become more focused on customer satisfaction. This would entail making greater strides in accumulating their customers’ thoughts and opinions on the services provided to them on a regular basis.
This could include having a suggestion box, mailing surveys, or having one-on-one conversation with customers. The customers in this research were specifically dislocated workers, who are persons laid off from their employment through no fault of their own. However, the WIN Job Center sees a diversity of customers ranging from business/industry owners looking for potential hires to employed persons looking to upgrade their skills or find assistance in updating their resume.

With that said, the data collected from this research were only from four comprehensive WIN Job Centers in the state of Mississippi specifically located in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium. Three of the WIN Job Centers are operated by their local community college (Northeast, Northwest, and Itawamba) while the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center is operated by the Mississippi Department of Employment Security. To obtain more information about how well the WIN Job Centers (whether operated by the community college or Mississippi Department of Employment Security) are meeting the needs of their customers (dislocated workers), this study should be replicated to include all WIN Job Centers throughout the state. Having the ability to identify gaps in services and designing methods for closing gaps in services should be of the utmost importance to the WIN Job Centers. Having additional data from across the state would provide a better framework for identifying the ways and means of strengthening the services provided by all WIN Job Centers, whether they are full time or part-time operations.

As stated before, not all customers of the WIN Job Centers are specifically dislocated workers although these customers are a significant aspect of the WIN Job Center’s operations. Additional research could be conducted to gain information on the
business/industry customer’s side of the WIN Job Center’s operations. Again, without obtaining important customer satisfaction information from the various types of customers the WIN Job Center provides services to on a regular basis, the ability of the WIN Job Centers to meet or exceed their customer satisfaction objectives will become difficult and their ability to help the state of Mississippi successfully meet the future employment demands will be problematic.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY INSTRUMENT
Mississippi Corridor Consortium  
WIN Job Center Customer Satisfaction Survey

Your opinion is important to us. Please read each statement below and give us your opinion by checking one box in the RATING SECTION, and then tell us how important each item is to you by checking one box in the IMPORTANCE SECTION. PLEASE BE SURE TO CHECK TWO BOXES FOR EACH STATEMENT. If a statement does not apply, please indicate by checking the DOES NOT APPLY box. Please continue to the next statement. Please complete and seal the survey in the envelope provided and leave in the drop box located at the WIN Center’s exit. Thank you for your participation.

PART A: FACILITIES  
*Please rate the Center’s Facilities on the following items:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATING (check one)</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE (check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply A</td>
<td>Excellent B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. How the Center looked…

2. Whether the center offered you enough privacy so you could speak freely with our staff…

3. How convenient the center’s hours were for you…

4. How convenient the center’s location was for you…

5. How easy it was to find and get to the services you needed in the building…
PART B: STAFF

*Please rate the Center's Staff on the following items:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATING (check one)</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE (check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. How quickly you were served…</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How friendly the staff was to you…</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How respectful/polite the staff was to you…</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How well the staff helped provide the information or services you needed…</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### PART C: SERVICES

*Please rate the Center’s Services on the following items:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATING (check one)</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE (check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply A</td>
<td>Excellent B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Acceptable F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Important 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Important 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **How easy it was to get to the services you needed…**

2. **How long it took to receive the services you needed…**

3. **How well the services provided met your needs…**

4. **How helpful the information provided was to you…**
**PART D: SELF-SERVICE FACILITIES**
*(If you did not use the self-service facilities – skip to PART E)*

*Please rate the Center’s Services on the following items:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATING (check one)</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE (check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply A</td>
<td>Excellent B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Acceptable F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. How easy equipment and materials were to use…

2. How easy it was to get the information you needed…

3. How helpful the information was to you…

4. The length of time you waited to use the resources and/or materials
If you required staff assistance while using the self-service facilities, please rate on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATING (check one)</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE (check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply A</td>
<td>Excellent B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Acceptable F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Important 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Important 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Staff being able to help you…
   - [ ] A
   - [ ] B
   - [ ] C
   - [ ] D
   - [ ] E
   - [ ] F
   - [ ] 1
   - [ ] 2
   - [ ] 3

2. Staff’s knowledge of resources…
   - [ ] A
   - [ ] B
   - [ ] C
   - [ ] D
   - [ ] E
   - [ ] F
   - [ ] 1
   - [ ] 2
   - [ ] 3

PART E: OVERALL RATING OF SERVICE(S)

Please rate your overall experience with our services…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RATING (check one)</th>
<th>IMPORTANCE (check one)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply A</td>
<td>Excellent B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fair D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Acceptable F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Important 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Important 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not Important 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Overall experience
   - [ ] A
   - [ ] B
   - [ ] C
   - [ ] D
   - [ ] E
   - [ ] F
   - [ ] 1
   - [ ] 2
   - [ ] 3
PART F: DEMOGRAPHICS (Please check the appropriate boxes)

1. Gender: □ Male  □ Female

2. Age: □ 19-20  □ 21-30  □ 31-40  □ 41-50  □ over 51

3. Race:
   □ White  □ African American
   □ Hispanic  □ Asian
   □ American Indian  □ Other (Please describe) ________________

4. Education Status: (Please check the high education attainment)
   □ less than high school  □ 2-year college degree
   □ high school or GED  □ 4-year bachelor’s degree
   □ other (Please describe) ____________________________________

5. How many times have you visited the WIN Job Center?
   □ 1st time  □ 11-15
   □ 1-5  □ 16-20
   □ 6-10  □ other (Please describe)

6. Are you currently:
   □ unemployed, looking for career or training information
   □ employed, looking for career or training information
   □ other: (Please describe)

PART G: COMMENTS (Please record any comments regarding our services)

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
APPENDIX B

PERMISSION LETTERS FROM COLLEGES
East Mississippi Community College

Dear Dr. Rick Young:

I am in the final stages of my coursework at Mississippi State University, and I am working on my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is “Customer Satisfaction: Perceptions of Dislocated Workers Served by WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium.” Itawamba, Northeast, Northwest, and East Mississippi have been selected from the state’s fifteen community and junior colleges to participate in the study. I am requesting assistance from your college’s WIN Job Center (Columbus) in gathering data for my research. I have already spoken with Dr. Raj Shuunak and Mr. Bill Minns with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, and they have agreed to help me in my study.

Attached is a survey that I am requesting that the center’s staff provide to all dislocated workers on a voluntary basis, without threat of punishment or denial of services, as they exit your center. I am requesting that all customers (dislocated workers) be given the opportunity to complete the survey.

Also attached is a copy of the statement that the center staff will distribute to the dislocated workers that explains the purpose of the research, whom to contact with questions, and assurances about their participation. The letter also describes why the data is being collected, what the data will be used for, and how the data will be stored. The letter also ensures the participant that his/her confidentiality will be maintained during all parts of the research process.

Along with the surveys and statement letter, I will be providing an envelope for each survey. In the letter, the participant has been asked to enclose his/her completed survey and seal the envelope. I will provide a drop box for the participants to leave the
survey as they exit your center. I am requesting that the completed and sealed surveys be mailed to me on a weekly basis in the self-addressed stamped envelopes I will provide. I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (903) 271-5862 or email me at dwashburn@acastus.edu.

Best regards,

David Washburn

I agree with the above request.

Dr. Rick Young, President
Past Mississippi Community College

Start early with your search.
Dear Dr. David Cole:

I am in the final stages of my course work at Mississippi State University, and I am working on my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is “Customer Satisfaction Perceptions of Dislocated Workers Served by WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium.” Itawamba, Northeast, Northwest, and East Mississippi have been selected from the state’s fifteen community and junior colleges to participate in the study. I am requesting assistance from your college’s WIN Job Center (Tupelo) in gathering data for my research. I have already spoken with Mr. James Williams and Mr. Bill Miers with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, and they have agreed to help me in my study.

Attached is a survey that I am requesting that the center’s staff provide to all dislocated workers on a voluntary basis, without threat of punishment or denial of services, as they exit your center. I am requesting that all customers (dislocated workers) be given the opportunity to complete the survey.

Also attached is a copy of the statement that the center staff will distribute to the dislocated workers that explains the purpose of the research, whom to contact with questions, and assurances about their participation. The letter also describes why the data is being collected, what the data will be used for, and how the data will be stored. The letter also ensures the participant that his/her confidentiality will be maintained during all parts of the research process.

Along with the surveys and statement letter, I will be providing an envelope for each survey. In the letter, the participant has been asked to enclose his/her completed survey and seal the envelope. I will provide a drop box for the participants to leave the
survey as they exit your center. I am requesting that the completed and sealed surveys be mailed to me on a weekly basis in the self addressed stamped envelopes I will provide. I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (903) 271-5862 or email me at dwashburn@castms.edu.

Best regards,

Dava Washburn

I agree with the above request.  

Dr. David C. Cole, President
Itawamba Community College

[Signature]

1/17/09  Date
Northeast Mississippi Community College

Dear Dr. Johnay L. Allen:

I am in the final stages of my course work at Mississippi State University, and I am working on my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is “Customer Satisfaction Perceptions of Dislocated Workers Served by WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium.” Itawamba, Northeast, Northwest, and East Mississippi have been selected from the state’s fifteen community and junior colleges to participate in the study. I am requesting assistance from your college’s WIN Job Center (Corinth) in gathering data for my research. I have already spoken with Ms. Nadara Cole and Mr. Bill Mims with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, and they have agreed to help me in my study.

Attached is a survey that I am requesting that the center’s staff provide to all dislocated workers on a voluntary basis, without threat of punishment or denial of services, as they exit your center. I am requesting that all customers (dislocated workers) be given to the opportunity to complete the survey.

Also attached is a copy of the statement that the center staff will distribute to the dislocated workers that explains the purpose of the research, whom to contact with questions, and assurances about their participation. The letter also describes why the data is being collected, what the data will be used for, and how the data will be stored. The letter also ensures the participant that his/her confidentiality will be maintained during all parts of the research process.

Along with the surveys and statement letter, I will be providing an envelope for each survey. In the letter, the participant has been asked to enclose his/her completed survey and seal the envelope. I will provide a drop box for the participants to leave the
survey as they exit your center. I am requesting that the completed and sealed surveys be mailed to me on a weekly basis in the self addressed stamped envelopes I will provide. I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (903) 271-5862 or email me at dwashburn@eastms.edu.

Best regards,

Dava Washburn

I agree with the above request.

Dr. Johnny L. Allen, President
Northeast Mississippi Community College

Date 1/12/09
Northwest Mississippi Community College

Dear Dr. Gary Lee Spears:

I am in the final stages of my course work at Mississippi State University, and I
am working on my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is "Customer Satisfaction
Perceptions of Dislocated Workers Served by WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi
Corridor Consortium." Itawamba, Northeast, Northwest, and East Mississippi have been
selected from the state’s fifteen community and junior colleges to participate in the study.
I am requesting assistance from your college’s WIN Job Center (Oxford) in gathering
data for my research. I have already spoken with Mr. David Bledsoe and Mr. Bill Minns
with the Mississippi Department of Employment Security, and they have agreed to help
me in my study.

Attached is a survey that I am requesting that the center’s staff provide to all
dislocated workers on a voluntary basis, without threat of punishment or denial of
services, as they exit your center. I am requesting that all customers (dislocated workers)
be given the opportunity to complete the survey.

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parts of the research process.

Along with the surveys and statement letter, I will be providing an envelope for
each survey. In the letter, the participant has been asked to enclose his/her completed
survey and seal the envelope. I will provide a drop box for the participants to leave the
survey as they exit your center. I am requesting that the completed and sealed surveys be mailed to me on a weekly basis in the self-addressed stamped envelopes I will provide. I am looking forward to your response to this request. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (903) 271-5862 or email me at dwashburn@nmcconnx.edu.

Best regards,

Dava Washburn

I agree with the above request.

Dr. Gary Lee Spears, President
Northwest Mississippi Community College

1-30-09 Date
APPENDIX C

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS
Dear Survey Participant:

The ****** Job Center has been asked to participate in a survey of Mississippi WIN Job Centers. I am going to ask you to complete this survey based upon your experience today in this Win Job Center.

This study is limited to dislocated workers who are serviced by WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium (Itawamba, Northeast, and Northwest Community Colleges WIN Job Centers and the Golden Triangle WIN Job Center – Columbus). Your participation is both appreciated and vital to the successful outcome of this study. The survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

Please allow me to make some assurances about your participation in this research study. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may elect to decline to participate, and this decision will have no bearing on your eligibility of receiving services from the WIN Job Center. Only aggregate data will be reported in this study; individual responses will not be reported. You are no under no obligation to complete this questionnaire. Completion and submission of this questionnaire will indicate your consent to participate in this study and to use the data for research purposes. Attached to the survey is an envelope. Once you have completed the survey, please enclose the survey and seal the envelope. A drop box is located at the WIN Job Center exit for you to leave the envelope.
Thank you in advance for your participation in this study. I greatly appreciate your time.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about this study, please feel free to contact either myself or Dr. Ed Davis, my dissertation director. Our contact information is provided below.

Dava Washburn
Doctoral Candidate
Mississippi State University
Email: dwashburn@eastms.edu
Phone: 903-271-5862

Dr. Ed Davis
Mississippi State University
Email: jed11@colled.msstate.edu
Phone: 662-325-9258

If you have any questions regarding human subject research, please contact Mississippi State University Office of Regulatory Compliance at 662-325-5220 or via email at irb@research.msstate.edu

Best regards,
APPENDIX D

LETTER TO THE WIN JOB CENTER
December 17, 2008

Dear ***** WIN Job Center:

I am in the final stages of my coursework at Mississippi State University, and I am working on my dissertation. The topic of my dissertation is Customer Satisfaction of Dislocated Workers Served in WIN Job Centers within the Mississippi Corridor Consortium (MCC). I am requesting assistance from your WIN Job Center in gathering data for my research.

Attached is a survey that I am requesting that the center’s staff provide to all dislocated workers on a voluntary basis, without threat of punishment or denial of services, as they exit your center. I am requesting that all customers (dislocated workers) be given to the opportunity to complete the survey.

Also attached is a copy of the statement that the center staff will distribute to the dislocated workers that explains the purpose of the research, whom to contact with questions, and assurances about their participation. The letter also describes why the data is being collected, what the data will be used for, and how the data will be stored. The letter also ensures the participant that his/her confidentiality will be maintained during all parts of the research process.

Enclosed please find 150 copies of the survey document and letters that need to be provided to the customers (dislocated workers) who choose to complete the survey. I am providing an envelope for each survey. In the letter, the participant has been asked to enclose his/her completed survey and seal the envelope. I will provide a drop box for the participants to leave the survey as they exit your center. I am requesting that the completed sealed surveys be mailed to me on a weekly basis in the self addressed
stamped envelopes I will provide. If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (903) 271-5862 or email me at dwashburn@eastms.edu.

Best regards,

Dava Washburn
APPENDIX E

MDES WARN JULY – SEPTEMBER 2008 DATA
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Notice</th>
<th>Company Name</th>
<th>ZIP Area</th>
<th>SIC Code – Description</th>
<th>Type of Action</th>
<th>Date of Action</th>
<th>Reason / Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/1/08</td>
<td>Tower Automotive Madison (Madison) 39110</td>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>8714 – Motor vehicle parts and accessories</td>
<td>Layoff</td>
<td>7/08</td>
<td>Warn. Rapid Response activities provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/7/08</td>
<td>Johnson Control Madison (Madison) 39110</td>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>8714 Manufactures motor vehicle parts and accessories</td>
<td>Layoff</td>
<td>6/08</td>
<td>Non-Warn. Rapid Response activities provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/8/08</td>
<td>Yorozu Automotive Vicksburg (Warren) 39180</td>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>8714 – Motor vehicle parts and accessories</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>7/08</td>
<td>Non-Warn. Rapid Response activities provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/24/08</td>
<td>University Hospital Lexington (Holmes) 39095</td>
<td>MS Delta</td>
<td>8062 General medical and surgical hospitals</td>
<td>Layoff</td>
<td>7/08</td>
<td>Non-Warn. Rapid Response provided by MS Delta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/29/08</td>
<td>Whirlpool Oxford (Lafayette) 38655</td>
<td>MS Partnership</td>
<td>3632, 3567, 3634 – Manufactures household refrigeration appliances, electric cooking appliances, industrial furnaces and ovens, wholesale electrical major appliances.</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>8/09</td>
<td>Non-Warn. – Rapid Response On-Site was conducted.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/31/08</td>
<td>Tower Automotive Meridian (Lauderdale) 39307</td>
<td>Twin District</td>
<td>8714 – Motor vehicle parts and accessories</td>
<td>Layoff</td>
<td>8/08</td>
<td>Warn. Rapid Response activities provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/1/08</td>
<td>Oxford Industries/Lanier Clothes Tupelo (Lee) 38804</td>
<td>MS Partnership</td>
<td>2311,2325 – Mfg men’s and boys coats and suits . Mfg men’s and boys trousers and slacks</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>12/08</td>
<td>Non-Warn. Rapid Response activities provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8/20/08</td>
<td>Milwaukee Electric Tool Jackson (Hinds) 39209</td>
<td>South Central</td>
<td>3546 &amp; 3423 – Manufactures hand power tools</td>
<td>Layoff</td>
<td>10/08</td>
<td>Warn. Rapid Response activities provided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/12/08</td>
<td>Richardson Molding Twin Districts</td>
<td>8089 – Plastic Injection Molding</td>
<td>Layoff</td>
<td>9/08</td>
<td>Non-Warn. Rapid</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Company Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Industry Description</td>
<td>Type</td>
<td>Notice &amp; Event Details</td>
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<td>----------</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/24/08</td>
<td>Faurecia Automotive Seating</td>
<td>Cleveland (Bolivar) 38732</td>
<td>MS Delta 2531 – Manufactures foam car seats</td>
<td>Layoff</td>
<td>9/08 Non-Warn. Rapid Response activities pending.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/24/08</td>
<td>Airvent</td>
<td>Quitman (Clarke) 39355</td>
<td>Twin Districts 3429 - Hardware</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>12/08 Non-Warn. Rapid Response On-Site provided. Activities pending</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/04/08</td>
<td>Constar</td>
<td>Hinds (Jackson)39209</td>
<td>South Central 3085 – Manufactures of plastic bottles</td>
<td>Layoff</td>
<td>11/08 &amp; 12/08 Warn. Rapid Response activities offered.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7/17/08</td>
<td>Hickory Hills Furniture Co</td>
<td>Fulton (Itawamba) 38843</td>
<td>Ms Partnership 2512 – Manufactures of upholstered household furniture</td>
<td>Closure</td>
<td>7/08 Non-Warn. Rapid Response activities provided.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**SUMMARY – First Quarter – July-September 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Notices Received</th>
<th># Of Notices Received</th>
<th># Affected</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># WARN Notices Received</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#NON-WARN Notices Received</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1,746</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2,108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX F

WIN JOB CENTER PROFILE
Mississippi WIN Job Center Profile

Center Name: ___________________________________________

Staff Contact: ___________________________________________

Please answer the following questions concerning your WIN Job Center (where the surveys were dispersed).

13. Describe the Center’s location. Briefly describe how the center looks?

14. List the Center’s hours of operation.

15. Describe the resource room and the equipment and materials available to the customers (dislocated workers).

   a. Does the resource room have a full-time staff person? If yes, is this person a community college person or a partner agency person?

   b. How many staff are available to assist the customers (dislocated workers)?

16. How many computers are available to assist the customers (dislocated workers)?

17. How long does an average customer (dislocated worker) have to wait to be seen by the WIN Job Center staff?

18. Upon their arrival, how are the customers (dislocated workers) informed of the services/resources, contact persons, and referral information available to them?
19. Are the self-service facilities clearly marked? How?

20. How does a customer know if they are receiving self-services?

21. How long does a customer have to wait to use the self-service facilities?

22. What tools has your WIN Job Center developed to identify services needed for job seekers?

23. Does the comprehensive center provide federally required core services specified in section 134(d)(2) of the law? (Please check all that apply)

- Eligibility Determination
- One-stop Performance Information
- Training Information
- Job Information
- Outreach
- UI Claims
- Follow-Up
- Referrals
- Assessment
- Financial Aid Information
- Job Search, Placement, and Counseling

24. Does your WIN Job Center have a community college representative at your site? If yes, is this individual present at your center part time/full time and what are his/her responsibilities? If no, how does your site communicate/partner with your local community college?

THANK YOU!
APPENDIX G

IRB CERTIFICATION LETTER
January 21, 2009

Dava Washburn
126 Shenandoah Drive
Corrancha, TX 76442

RE: IRB Study #08-346: Customer Satisfaction Perceptions of Dislocated Workers
Served by WIN Job Centers in the Mississippi Corridor Consortium

Dear Ms. Washburn:

The above referenced project was reviewed and approved via administrative review on 1/21/2009 in accordance with 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2). Continuing review is not necessary for this project. However, any modification to the project must be reviewed and approved by the IRB prior to implementation. Any failure to adhere to the approved protocol could result in suspension or termination of your project. The IRB reserves the right, at anytime during the project period, to observe you and the additional researchers on this project.

Please note that the MSU IRB is in the process of seeking accreditation for our human subjects protection program. As a result of these efforts, you will likely notice many changes in the IRB's policies and procedures in the coming months. These changes will be posted online at http://www.crc.msstate.edu/human/ah/pp.php.

Please refer to your IRB number (#C8-346) when contacting our office regarding this application.

Thank you for your cooperation and good luck to you in conducting this research project. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at cwilliams@research.msstate.edu or call 662-325-3220.

Sincerely,

[For use with electronic submissions]

Christine Williams
IRB Compliance Administrator

cc: James Ed Davis