

1998

# Effects of Locus of Control and Timing of Retirement on Retirement Satisfaction

Denise A. Lathrop

*Eastern Illinois University*

This research is a product of the graduate program in [Psychology](#) at Eastern Illinois University. [Find out more](#) about the program.

---

## Recommended Citation

Lathrop, Denise A., "Effects of Locus of Control and Timing of Retirement on Retirement Satisfaction" (1998). *Masters Theses*. 1758.  
<https://thekeep.eiu.edu/theses/1758>

This is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Theses & Publications at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact [tabruns@eiu.edu](mailto:tabruns@eiu.edu).

## THESIS REPRODUCTION CERTIFICATE

TO: Graduate Degree Candidates (who have written formal theses)

SUBJECT: Permission to Reproduce Theses

The University Library is receiving a number of request from other institutions asking permission to reproduce dissertations for inclusion in their library holdings. Although no copyright laws are involved, we feel that professional courtesy demands that permission be obtained from the author before we allow these to be copied.

PLEASE SIGN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University has my permission to lend my thesis to a reputable college or university or the purpose of copying it for inclusion in that institution's library or research holdings.



Author's Signature

6-24-98  
Date

I respectfully request Booth Library of Eastern Illinois University **NOT** allow my thesis to be reproduced because:

---

---

---

\_\_\_\_\_  
Author's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

EFFECTS OF LOCUS OF CONTROL AND TIMING  
OF RETIREMENT ON RETIREMENT SATISFACTION  
(TITLE)

BY

DENISE A LATHROP

**THESIS**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS  
IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1998  
YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS THESIS BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING  
THIS PART OF THE GRADUATE DEGREE CITED ABOVE

6-24-98  
DATE

6/24/98  
DATE

[REDACTED]

ADVISER

[REDACTED]

DEPARTMENT HEAD

Running Head: EFFECTS OF LOCUS OF CONTROL AND TIMING

**Effects of Locus of Control and Timing of Retirement  
On Retirement Satisfaction**

**Denise Lathrop**

**Eastern Illinois University**

### Abstract

Previous research to determine which factors predict one's satisfaction with retirement documents varying results. 200 retired Eastern Illinois University professors were surveyed to determine the effects of two factors, locus of control and timing of retirement, considered important on retirement satisfaction. A comparison was made between internal and external locus of control subjects who were placed into three conditions: those who retire early (before age 61), those who retire within the normal or average range (ages 62-66), and those who retire late (later than age 67). The first hypothesis was that those who retire early will have the highest level of satisfaction. Those who retire late will have the lowest level of satisfaction; average age retirees will fall in the middle range. The second hypothesis tested was that retirees with an internal locus of control will be more satisfied with retirement than those with an external locus of control. In addition, covariates of self-efficacy and length of retirement were introduced to strengthen the analysis. No significant differences were found for retirement satisfaction and these factors. Limitations and implications for further research are discussed.

### Acknowledgments

I wish to thank my committee first and foremost for their participation and input with my thesis. The recommendations of Dr. Chris McCormick and Dr. William Kirk were instrumental in the development of my thesis. Special thanks to Dr. Genie Lenihan and Dr. William Bailey for co-chairing my work and assisting me in the completion of my thesis. Lastly, I wish to thank my parents for their constant support and dedication to my career.

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	2
Acknowledgments.....	3
Introduction.....	5
Method.....	12
Results.....	15
Discussion.....	17
References.....	24
Appendices.....	27

## Effects of Locus of Control and Timing of Retirement On Retirement Satisfaction

This study examines the effects of locus of control and timing of retirement on an adult retiree's satisfaction with his/her retirement. Some approaches to aging view retirement as an event which may have a major impact on subsequent adjustment. With an expected surge of "baby boomers" retiring, it is important to understand the variables that affect this adjustment.

The theories underlying the development of the retirement satisfaction measures and the idea that retirement is a transition in life that requires some level of adjustment are life span development theory and life span transition theory (Floyd, Haynes, Doll, Winemiller, Lemsky, Burgy, Werle, & Heilman, 1992). These theories hypothesize that people go through a series of developmental stages during their life span, and also that people go through a series of transitions brought about by experiences; the most significant experiences for promoting change are major life events, such as retirement. The importance of retirement as a life transition is supported by cross-sectional and longitudinal studies (Floyd et al., 1992). Some form of adjustment to the transition of retirement should be expected; however, many factors or experiences may influence how well each individual weathers this transition (Floyd et al., 1992).

Retirement satisfaction may be influenced by factors such as health, financial comfort, or social support. Palmore, Burchett, Fillenbaum, George, & Wallman, (1985) report that those who retire due to poor health suffer more negative consequences than those who either retire voluntarily or for other compulsory reasons. Even self-perceived health is strongly related to retirement satisfaction in rural retirees (Dorfman & Rubenstein, 1993). Dorfman (1992) describes research which found that good health and higher income were positively related to life satisfaction of retired academics (Conner, Dorfman, & Tompkins, 1985). O'Brien (1981) cited other research which found



retirement satisfaction among Australian retirees to be determined in part by economic status (Chatfield, 1977). Social activities have also been cited as significant predictors of life satisfaction for retirees across the United States (Palmore et al., 1985). Other personal factors which have been shown to influence this ability to transition into retirement include locus of control and self-efficacy (Carter & Cook, 1995; Abel & Hayslip, 1986; O'Brien, 1981; Davis-Berman, 1989). Two external factors, timing of retirement and length of retirement, have also been shown to have an impact on retirement satisfaction (Hanks, 1990; Knesek, 1992; Kremer, 1984; MacLean, 1983; Floyd et al., 1992).

This study will focus on the effects of locus of control and age of retirement on retirement satisfaction while keeping constant the effects of self-efficacy and length of retirement. Locus of control is a personal factor which cannot be easily altered; however, if it can be determined to be a contributing factor to satisfaction with retirement, steps can be taken to help prepare those retirees who could encounter personal control problems. Investigating the effects of timing of retirement on retirement satisfaction could suggest when it is best to retire for most retirees. Self-efficacy and locus of control are both internal resources used to adapt to change, thus it is important to consider the effects of self-efficacy.

Locus of control can be defined as a person's attribution of the cause of events that affect his/her life (Pankow, 1996). An individual who believes that he/she can control many events in his/her life is said to have an internal locus of control. Someone with an external locus of control believes that life's outcomes are the result of luck and are not under their personal control (Carter & Cook, 1995).

Locus of control has been shown to be linked to a positive adjustment to life transitions such as retirement because the individual has developed positive coping

strategies and wellness (O'Brien, 1981; Abel & Hayslip, 1986; Carter & Cook, 1995; Fitch & Slivinske, 1988). Studies have shown that aging often decreases the perception of control; therefore, those who have an internal locus of control may be more satisfied with retirement, based on the expectancy of controlling outcomes associated with retirement (Abel & Hayslip, 1987).

Most of the research dealing with locus of control in regard to retirement has examined the effects of it on either life satisfaction or retirement satisfaction (Abel & Hayslip, 1986; O'Brien, 1981; Baur & Okun, 1983). Previous researchers used such instruments as the Rotter's Locus of Control Scale (O'Brien, 1981; Shapiro et al., 1993; Baur & Okun, 1983), the Desired Control Measure-Short Form (Abel & Hayslip, 1986), the Levenson's Locus of Control Scale (Shewchuk, Foelker, & Niederehe, 1990; Shewchuk, Foelker, Camp & Blanchard-Fields, 1992; Pankow, 1996), or the Adult Nowicki-Strickland Scale (Hale, Hedgepeth, & Taylor, 1985; Fitch & Slivinske, 1988). However, none of these instruments were shown to be accurate measures of locus of control for a geriatric population. Nowicki-Strickland has constructed and published the Children's Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External control scale, the Adult Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External control scale (ANSIE), and the Pre-school and Primary form of the CNSIE (S. Nowicki, personal communication, November 26, 1997). These researchers also saw the need for a specialized test for older adults. Therefore, the Adult Nowicki-Strickland Scale - Geriatric Form (ANSIE-G) was developed. It is used in this study because it is specifically designed to identify locus of control in a geriatric population (Duke, Shaheen, & Nowicki, 1974).

Research has also indicated that the timing of retirement may have an impact on whether the individual returns to work or remains retired, which may be related to their level of satisfaction with retirement (Hanks, 1990). Timing of retirement, refers to when

the individual retired compared to traditional retirees. Early is defined here as 61 years of age or younger, Normal retirement as 62-66 years of age, and Late as 67 years of age or older because although the traditional retirement age is 65, the average age of retirement is 62 (Riker & Myers, 1990). Therefore, those who retire before this age are defined as retiring early. More people are retiring early or before age 65, and it is important to discover how this may affect their post-retirement life (Feldman, 1994).

Knesek (1992) found no significant differences between early and regular retirees with regard to life satisfaction, but suggested that more research be done in this area. According to Kremer (1984), the mandatory retirement age of 65 may entail withdrawal from a central life role. This withdrawal is considered one negative aspect of having a fixed age for retirement. Those who retire late may feel forced to retire and not be as satisfied with retirement. On a more positive side, those who did not hold their work in high esteem may choose retirement to relieve stress and allow for time to pursue personal interests (Kremer, 1984). Therefore, these work-stressed individuals who retire earlier may desire and be more satisfied with retirement. However, some who may retire early may do so due to poor health (Palmore, Fillenbaum, & George, 1984).

Hanks (1990) investigated the timing of retirement as a predictor of retirement adjustment. However, Hanks examined early retirement due to retirement incentives using retirees who accepted retirement incentives from one of three corporations in Delaware. The influence of these incentives may yield different results from the current study. Another study looked specifically at faculty and found that 58% of those who retired early, at ages 55 to 64, were very satisfied with retirement compared with the 39% of those who retired at the age of 67 or later (Patton, 1977).

This current study addresses two additional factors related to retirement satisfaction. These two factors, self-efficacy and length of retirement (how long one has

been retired), have been shown to have an impact on retirement satisfaction (Carter & Cook, 1995; Floyd et al., 1992). Self-efficacy is defined as a sense that one is competent and effective. Those with a higher self-efficacy have been shown to be better able to make the transition to retirement (Carter & Cook, 1995). Previous studies have shown that one's strength of self-efficacy may have an effect on satisfaction (Carter & Cook, 1995; Fretz, Kluge, Ossana, Jones, & Merikangas, 1989; Davis-Berman, 1989). The stronger an individual's self-efficacy or sense of competence, the more satisfied he/she is with retirement. Some studies have examined self-efficacy as a predictor of adjustment to retirement, but not as a covariate or complicating factor (Carter & Cook, 1995; Hanks, 1990). Previous research used the General Self-Efficacy Inventory (Davis-Berman, 1989) or a single question. The General Self-Efficacy Inventory provides a more complete measure of one's level of self-efficacy (Sherer, M., Maddux, J., Mercandante, B., Prentice-Dunn, S., Jacobs, B., & Rogers, R., 1982).

Length of retirement is defined as how many months the participant has been retired. According to MacLean's report (1983), in Achtle's data (1982b, 1994), subjects tend to be happier with retirement in the earlier months of retirement. Achtle (1982b, 1994) proposes five stages of retirement: honeymoon, rest and relaxation, disenchantment, reorientation, and routine. According to Achtle (1982b, 1994), a retiree will begin his/her retirement in the honeymoon stage where everything is new and exciting. Then, the retiree will realize that retirement is not as exciting as he/she thought and eventually become disenchanted with it. Eventually, the retiree will develop routines and settle into their new life stage. Therefore, those in the honeymoon stage may report higher satisfaction with retirement, on the other hand, those in the disenchantment stage may report lower satisfaction with retirement (MacLean, 1983). Other research indicates that the length of retirement may have an impact on retirement satisfaction for

retirees, retired women school teachers, and retired professors (Floyd et al., 1992; Cherry et al., 1984; Conner et al., 1985). Research reviewed by Dorfman (1992) found that length of retirement was negatively related to life satisfaction for retired professors (Kratcoski et al., 1974).

Level of satisfaction with retirement, refers to how well one adjusts to the transition of retirement, the retiree's satisfaction with life, current sources of enjoyment, pre-retirement work functioning, reasons for retirement, and leisure and physical activities (Floyd et al., 1992). Researchers have used such measures as the Life Satisfaction Index (Soumerai & Avon, 1983; MacLean, 1983), the Retirement Descriptive Index (Dorfman & Rubenstein, 1993; Knesek, 1992), the Satisfaction with Retirement Scale (Cherry et al., 1984; Hanks, 1990), or the Retirement Satisfaction Survey (Anderson & Weber, 1993) to determine satisfaction with retirement. The Retirement Satisfaction Inventory is a relatively new tool which has been used in only a few studies (Floyd et al., 1992). However, it is a comprehensive tool which examines the different aspects of retirement, such as reasons for retirement, sources of enjoyment, as well as retirement satisfaction. This range of information offers a broader picture of the lives of the retirees.

To summarize, researchers have found that retirees are not only retiring earlier, but are more satisfied with life when they do (Knesek, 1992; Palmore et al., 1984). Researchers have studied the effects of locus of control on retirement preparation with those preparing to retire from a southwestern corporation and have found that those adults with an internal locus of control demonstrate a better adjustment to the transition of retirement (Carter & Cook, 1995; Abel & Hayslip, 1987). One study (Abel & Hayslip, 1986) looked at the relationship between locus of control and attitudes toward retirement in these southwestern corporation retirees and found no significant differences; however,

this study did not explore the relationship between locus of control and retirement satisfaction. O'Brien (1981) discovered a positive relationship between internal locus of control and satisfaction with life in retirement for Australian retirees. O'Brien (1981) did not, however, study retirement satisfaction but life satisfaction using ten questions previously used by Emery and Philips (1976). Finally, no studies were found in which the Retirement Satisfaction Inventory was used, possibly due to the novelty of the instrument.

In an attempt to clarify some of the results of previous research in this area, this study examines four factors which may impact retirement satisfaction: locus of control, age at retirement, self-efficacy, and length of retirement. Two hypotheses are tested. First, those who retire early (at age 61 or younger) will have the highest level of satisfaction. Those who retire late (67 or older) will have the lowest level of satisfaction; normal retirees (62-66 years of age) will fall between these levels. The second hypothesis is that retirees with an internal locus of control will be more satisfied with retirement than those with an external locus of control. The effects of self-efficacy and length of retirement are held constant because they are shown to be related to retirement satisfaction and this study attempts to isolate the relationship among locus of control and timing on retirement satisfaction. Subjects in this study are retired Eastern Illinois University professors who were mailed questionnaires to determine their satisfaction with retirement, their locus of control, timing of retirement, strength of self-efficacy, and length of retirement.

## Method

### Participants

200 retired Eastern Illinois university professors for whom addresses were available were asked by mail to complete the questionnaire and instruments measuring the defined variables important to this study. Respondents were assigned to one of six conditions: External-Early, Internal-Early, External-Normal, Internal-Normal, External-Late, and Internal-Late.

### Materials

The materials included a letter of intent (see Appendix A), demographic information including age at time of retirement and how long the respondent has been retired (see Appendix B). Also included in each packet was the Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Scale - Form G [ANSIE-G (see Appendix C)], the Retirement Satisfaction Inventory [RSI (see Appendix D)], and the General Self-Efficacy Inventory (see Appendix E).

The ANSIE - Form G consists of 37 items that are administered in a paper-pencil format. The questions are answered either yes or no. The respondent receives a point for each question answered in the externally controlled direction. Therefore, the higher the score, the more the respondent demonstrates an external locus of control. The measure was normed on a group of 66 elderly persons (age range 65 to 90) whose mean score was 8.74 ( $sd = 3.59$ ). This was not significantly different from the mean score for college-age adults ( $\bar{X} = 9.06$ ;  $sd = 3.89$ ). The measure has good discriminative and construct validity (S. Nowicki, personal communication, November 26, 1997). The split-half reliabilities were reported in the .60s; the test-retest reliability over a six-week period was .83 (Nowicki & Duke, 1974).

The Self-Efficacy Inventory consists of 23 items which can be divided into two subscales: General self-efficacy (17 items) and Social self-efficacy (6 items). The reliability coefficients of the two subscales are .86 and .71, respectively. The inventory's reliability and validity were determined using 376 introductory psychology students. The higher the score on the instrument, the higher were self-efficacy expectations (Sherer et al., 1982). There was good construct (-.29) and criterion validity. In tests of criterion validity, scores on the General self-efficacy scale predicted past success in vocational, educational, and military goals (Sherer et al., 1982).

The Retirement Satisfaction Inventory (RSI) with 51 items was developed using two different studies (Floyd, et al., 1992). The first interviewed 126 older persons in order to eliminate ambiguities in the items and to select internally consistent sets for each section. The second study normed the RSI on a sample of 402 retired individuals who volunteered from the American Association of Retired Persons. They were recruited from a large urban area, a medium-sized urban area, and several small towns throughout the Midwest. The RSI has been shown to have internally consistent subscales as well as moderate test-retest reliability (mean  $r = .68$ ). The validity coefficients were highly significant and indicated that the RSI scores share from 9% to 41% of variance with a Satisfaction With Life Scale and the Marital Satisfaction Questionnaire for Older Persons. However, some components of the questionnaire may only be relevant for a recent cohort of retirees (Floyd et al., 1992). The RSI is separated into three sections: reasons for retirement, satisfaction with life in retirement, and sources of enjoyment. Each section receives a score (from 1 to 5) which is the average of the individual item's scores. There is no overall score for the RSI. For the retirement satisfaction section, the higher the score, the more satisfied the respondent is with retirement (Floyd et al., 1992).

### Procedure



A list of all retired Eastern Illinois university professors for whom addresses were available ( $n=200$ ) was obtained. The questionnaires were mailed with a participation request (see Appendix A). As the forms were returned, the subjects were assigned to their appropriate conditions based on their locus of control scores and their age at retirement, and the appropriate statistical test was performed. The respondents were defined as either internally or externally controlled by using a split-half method of assignment ( $X = 7.4$ ). Therefore, those who received a score of 8 or higher were labeled externally controlled, and those who received a score of 7 or lower were labeled internally controlled. A demographic questionnaire was examined to identify information on other variables.

### Analysis

This is a descriptive study with a between-subjects design. A two-way ANOVA was performed with the retirement satisfaction scores as the dependent variable; self-efficacy and length of retirement were covariates; locus of control scores and timing of retirement are the independent variables.

## Results

Of the 200 survey sent out, 46% (91) were completed and returned. Another 16% (32) of the surveys were returned incomplete and deemed invalid. Of the 91 valid surveys, 26 respondents were female and 65 were male. The average age of this group was 72 with a range of 59 to 87. The average time since retirement was 10 years 5 months with a range of 2 years 5 months to 25 years 5 months. A t-test for independent means was run using the mean locus of control scores for the internal and the external groups. The results showed that there was a significant difference between the two groups ( $p=.000$ ) demonstrating that the two groups were distinct. However, each of the means (internal = 5.08, external = 10.46) are located toward the internal side of the continuum. The average score on the Retirement Satisfaction Inventory (RSI) for those designated as having an internal locus of control was 4.72. The average RSI score for those designated as having an external locus of control was 4.68. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of the respondents into their appropriate category as well as their mean scores on the RSI (see Table 1). The grand mean for the RSI was 4.68. There is also the overall score question which the respondents are asked at the end of the inventory ("Overall, how satisfied are you with your retirement right now?"). The average for the overall score question (5.5) was higher than the average score for the retirement satisfaction section (4.73).

The hypotheses were tested using two-way analysis of variance. Results of the analysis are presented in Table 2. Neither locus of control nor age at retirement were related to retirement satisfaction. The prediction that a retiree with an internal locus of control would be more satisfied with retirement was not supported. The prediction that those retirees who retire early would have the highest level of satisfaction with retirement

was also disconfirmed. A further two-way ANOVA was done using the overall satisfaction question score alone which yielded similar results, indicating no significant relationship. The two-way analysis of variance was also run without controlling for the covariates; locus of control and timing of retirement were not significant factors in determining satisfaction with retirement.

## Discussion

Results indicated no significant relationship between locus of control or age of retirement to satisfaction with retirement for this sample of retired academics. These findings in regard to locus of control are inconsistent with the literature. O'Brien (1981) found a positive relationship between internal locus of control and satisfaction with life in retirement. The literature also suggested locus of control was related to positive attitudes toward retirement as well as a better adjustment to retirement (Abel & Hayslip, 1986; Carter & Cook, 1995). However, these researchers used the Life Satisfaction Index rather than directly measuring satisfaction with retirement. Also, Abel & Hayslip (1986) studied pre-retirees from a large southwestern corporation which might yield different results than the population studied here. Similarly, O'Brien looked at Adelaide retirees who were a more heterogeneous group.

The findings here regarding timing of retirement are consistent with some of the literature. Knesek (1992) found no significant differences between early and regular retirees regarding life satisfaction in a sample randomly drawn from a large Midwestern manufacturing facility and from Indiana University. Palmore, Fillenbaum, & George (1984), suggested that poor health might be a factor in one's early retirement and this may be negatively related to satisfaction with retirement. On the other hand, other research suggested that those who retire early would be more satisfied with retirement because they were not feeling forced into the decision (Kremer, 1984). Timing of retirement with this group of retired professors appears to be unrelated to overall satisfaction with their retirement. This may be because timing of retirement is a complicated construct which is associated with too many adjacent factors to be considered as a singular independent variable.

Controlling the length of retirement had little impact on the results ( $p = .25$ ). This may be due to the non-linear influence of length of retirement. Atchley's theory suggests that satisfaction would decrease in time until the acceptance stage, at which it may increase again slightly (MacLean, 1983). However, self-efficacy was found to be a significant variable ( $p = .05$ ). This suggests that one's level of self-efficacy could have an impact on how satisfied one is at the time of retirement. This is consistent with the literature demonstrating that one's level of self-efficacy has a positive impact on retirement satisfaction (Carter & Cook, 1995; Fretz et al., 1989; Floyd et al., 1992). Self-efficacy may be a more powerful variable that would provide more insight if used in future research; especially as it may be closely related to locus of control.

One possible limitation of this study was the use of the RSI. The RSI is helpful as a comprehensive retirement tool, offering information on reasons for retirement and sources of enjoyment. However, the section of the RSI which measured satisfaction was relatively short with only eleven items. It was also inconsistent with the overall score question which the respondents are asked at the end of the inventory ("Overall, how satisfied are you with your retirement right now?"). Therefore, it is possible that the retirement satisfaction section does not adequately portray a true score, or it is possible that the respondents simply scored the overall score question higher because of other unmeasured factors. Consequently, this section of the RSI may be better supplemented with an additional life satisfaction questionnaire.

Another limitation may be the length of the questionnaires. If the survey had been shorter in length, it is possible that there would have been more respondents. Perhaps eliminating the RSI and substituting a shorter life satisfaction questionnaire would yield more accurate responses.

It might have been interesting to see how the scores would alter if the analysis had been done differently. Instead of an ANOVA, it is possible to keep the data in its original interval/ratio format and perform a correlational analysis. This might yield more detailed results.

The number of subjects in each cell may have also been a limitation to this study. There were fewer later-retiring retirees than other types, which impacted the error variance for the study. Increasing each cell to at least 20 subjects may alter the results and decrease the error variance.

Failure to find significant differences may indicate that there are important unmeasured variables, such as health, social support, or financial comfort (Palmore et al., 1985; Dorfman, 1992; O'Brien, 1981). Since there are many factors which have been shown to have an impact on retirement satisfaction, it is possible that the factors which were chosen for this study were not the most critical in measuring satisfaction with retirement of academics.

A brief glance at each subject's responses showed that very few professors reported having two or fewer close friends or family members. However, those who did report having two or fewer close friends did not seem to have different retirement satisfaction scores when compared with the rest of the respondents. Similarly, the average retirement satisfaction score of the four respondents who reported that poor health was an important factor in their retiring was not significantly higher or lower than the average score of all the respondents. These findings may be influenced by the small number of respondents which deviated from the sample group in these areas. If a more representative sample had been taken, the results may have been altered.

Another possible limitation could be that this sample of Eastern Illinois University professors is quite likely not representative of the general population.

Professors are a unique population. It is possible that they are members of a more homogenous group than those in other populations. They may be more social and healthier as a group. Many benefit from the State University Retirement System which provides a higher income after retirement and generously subsidized comprehensive health care compared to other occupations or even professors from private schools. This added financial comfort may have had an impact on these results, although no data about their financial status was gathered. Professors are also more highly educated and may enjoy more social supports due to their higher income and more comfortable social environment. There were only slight differences among the retirement satisfaction scores for both internal and external locus of control groupings when grouped by age at retirement. Surveying a more representative group may yield different results.

Finally, it is possible that the professors who were not as satisfied with retirement did not return their questionnaires. The daughter of one participant called to inform me that her mother could not fill out the survey because of failing health and a depression which has occurred since she was retired. Because this is a self-selected voluntary sample, it is possible that only the more satisfied and capable retired professors returned their surveys.

With the projected increase of individuals retiring, it is important that further research be done in the area of retirement satisfaction. Understanding which factors are the most important in predicting satisfaction with retirement could be helpful in increasing the well-being of these retirees. Knowing this information may help retirement specialists to develop new pre-retirement programs which are more focused on those factors which have the most impact on a more successful transition to retirement. Furthermore, those planning for retirement need to learn about the critical

factors in order to take early steps to enhance their satisfaction level well before they move toward this important life transition.



Table 1

Retirement Satisfaction of Retiree Respondents Among the Six Specified Conditions

	Internal <u>Locus</u>	RSI <u>X</u>	External <u>Locus</u>	RSI <u>X</u>
Age Categories	n = 50		n = 41	
Early	27	4.70	12	4.63
Normal	19	4.70	21	4.58
Late	4	4.78	8	4.83

Table 2

Analysis of Variance for Retirement Satisfaction

	Source	df	E	Significance
Main Effects	Locus of Control (LOC)	1	.03	.86
	Age at Retirement (Age)	2	1.19	.31
2-Way Interaction	LOC x Age	2	.18	.84

$p < .05$ .

## References

- Abel, B.J. & Hayslip, B. (1986). Locus of control and attitudes toward work and retirement. The Journal of Psychology, 120, 479-488.
- Abel, B.J. & Hayslip, B. (1987). Locus of control and retirement preparation. Journal of Gerontology, 42, 165-167.
- Anderson, C.E. & Weber, J.A. (1993). Preretirement planning and perceptions of satisfaction among retirees. Educational Gerontology, 19, 397-406.
- Baur, P.A. & Okun, M.A. (1983). Stability of life satisfaction in late life. The Gerontologist, 22, 261-265.
- Blank, A.M., Ritchie, P.J. & Ryback, D. (1983). Lack of satisfaction in post-retirement years. Psychological Reports, 53, 1223-1226.
- Carter, M.T. & Cook, K. (1995). Adaptation to retirement: role changes and psychological resources. The Career Development Quarterly, 44, 67-82.
- Cherry, D.L., Zarit, S.H., & Krauss, I.K. (1984). The structure of post-retirement adaptation for recent and longer-term women retirees. Experimental Aging Research, 10, 231-236.
- Conner, K.A., Dorfman, L.T., & Tompkins, J.B. (1985). Life satisfaction of retired professors: the contribution of work, health, income, and length of retirement. Educational Gerontology, 11, 337-347.
- Davis-Berman, J. (1989). Physical self-efficacy, perceived physical status, and depressive symptomatology in older adults. Journal of Psychology, 124(2), 207-215.
- Dorfman, L.T. (1992). Academics and the transition to retirement. Educational Gerontology, 18, 343-363.
- Dorfman, L.T. & Rubenstein, L.M. (1993). Paid and unpaid activities and retirement satisfaction among rural seniors. Physical & Occupational Therapy in Geriatrics, 12, 45-62.
- Duke, M.P., Shaheen, J., and Nowicki, S. (1974). The determination of locus of control in a geriatric population and a subsequent test of the social learning model for interpersonal distances. Journal of Psychology, 86, 277-285.

- Duke, M.P. & Nowicki, S. (1973). Personality correlates of the Nowicki-Strickland locus of control scale for adults. Psychological Reports, 33, 267-270.
- Emery, F. & Philips, C. (1976). Living at Work. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Services.
- Feldman, D.C. (1994). The decision to retire early: a review and conceptualization. Academy of Management Review, 19, 285-311.
- Fitch, V.L. & Slivinske, L.R. (1988). Maximizing effects of wellness programs for the elderly. Health and Social Work, Winter, 61-67.
- Floyd, F.J., Haynes, S.N., et.al. (1992). Assessing retirement satisfaction and perceptions of retirement experiences. Psychology and Aging, 7, 609-621.
- Fretz, B.R., Kluge, N.A., Ossana, S.M., Jones, S.M., & Merikangas, M.W. (1989). Intervention targets for reducing preretirement anxiety and depression. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 36, 301-307.
- Guarnera, S. & Williams, R.L. (1987). Optimism and locus of control for health and affiliation among elderly adults. Journal of Gerontology, 42, 594-595.
- Hale, W.D., Hedgepeth, B.E., & Taylor, E.B. (1985). Locus of control and psychological distress. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 21, 1-8.
- Hanks, R.S. (1990). The impact of early retirement incentives on retirees and their families. Journal of Family Issues, 11, 424-437.
- Knesek, G.E. (1992). Early versus regular retirement: differences in measures of life satisfaction. Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 19, 3-34.
- Kremer, Y. (1985). Predictors of retirement satisfaction: a path model. Aging and Human Development, 20, 1984-5.
- MacLean, M.J. (1983). Differences between adjustment to and enjoyment of retirement. Canadian Journal of Aging, 2, 3-8.
- Nowicki, S. & Duke, M.P. (1974). A locus of control scale for college as well as non-college adults. Journal of Personality Assessment, 9, 48-56.
- O'Brien, G.E. (1981). Locus of control, previous occupation and satisfaction with retirement. Australian Journal of Psychology, 33, 305-318.

- Palmore, E.B., Burchett, B.M., Fillenbaum, G.G., George, L.K., & Wallman, L.M. (1985). Retirement: Causes and Consequences. New York: Springer Publishing Company.
- Palmore, E.B., Fillenbaum, G.G., & George, L.K. (1984). Consequences of retirement. Journal of Gerontology, 39, 109-116.
- Pankow, L.J. (1996). Applicability of Levenson LoC scale to the lives of geriatric nursing home residents. Journal of Psychology and Theology, 24, 323-333.
- Patton, C.V. (1977). Early retirement in academia: making the decision. The Gerontologist, 17, 347-354).
- Riker, H.C. & Myers, J.E (1990). Retirement Counseling: A Practical Guide for Action. New York: Hemisphere Publishing Corp.
- Schaie, K.W. & Willis, S.L. (1996). Adult Development and Aging - 4th Ed. Harper Collins College Publishers.
- Shapiro, D.H., Potkin, S.G., Jin, Y., Brown, B., Carreon, D., & Wu, J. (1993). Measuring the psychological construct of control: discriminant, divergent, and incremental validity of the shapiro control inventory and rotter's and wallstons' locus of control scales. International Journal of Psychosomatics, 40, 35-46.
- Sherer, M., Maddux, J., Mercandante, B., Prentice-Dunn, S., Jacobs, B., & Rogers, R. (1982). The Self-Efficacy Scale: Construction and validation. Psychological Reports, 51, 663-671.
- Shewchuk, R.M., Foelker, G.A., Camp, C.J., & Blanchard-Fields, F. (1992). Factorial invariance issues in the study of adult personality: an example using Levenson's locus of control scale. Experimental Aging Research, 18, 15-23.
- Shewchuk, R.M., Foelker, G.A., & Niederehe, G. (1990). Measuring locus of control in elderly persons. International Journal of Aging and Human Development, 30, 213-224.
- Soumerai, S.B. & Avorn, J. (1983). Perceived health, life satisfaction, and activity in urban elderly: a controlled study of the impact of part-time work. Journal of Gerontology, 38, 356-362.

Appendix A

June 24, 1998

Denise Lathrop  
Eastern Illinois University  
Psychology Department  
Charleston, IL 61920

Dear Retiree:

I am a graduate student in Psychology at Eastern Illinois University conducting a study for my thesis in which I will examine the possible effects of the timing of retirement on certain personal variables. Your participation would be greatly appreciated. Please complete the attached questionnaire and return in the enclosed envelope at your earliest convenience. Your completion and return of the questionnaire indicates that you are giving me permission to use your questionnaire for my study. Your name will not be included on the questionnaire or a return address. Your responses will remain confidential. If you wish, you may receive a copy of the results of this study by contacting me at the above address.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Denise Lathrop

Appendix B

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: \_\_\_\_\_M \_\_\_\_\_F

Marital Status:

\_\_\_\_\_Single/NeverMarried \_\_\_\_\_Married \_\_\_\_\_Widowed  
\_\_\_\_\_Divorced/Separated

Age at time of retirement: \_\_\_\_\_

How long have you been retired? \_\_\_\_\_(Years & Months)

Number of close family members: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of close friends: \_\_\_\_\_0-2 \_\_\_\_\_3-5 \_\_\_\_\_6-10 \_\_\_\_\_11+

## Appendix C

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please check whether you agree ("YES") or disagree ("NO") with the following questions.

YES NO

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Do you believe that most problems will solve themselves if you just don't fool with them?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Do you believe that you can stop yourself from catching a cold?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Are some people just born lucky?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Most of the time did you feel that getting good grades meant a great deal to you?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Are you often blamed for things that just aren't your fault?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Do you believe that if somebody studies hard enough he or she can pass any subject?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Do you feel that most of the time it doesn't pay to try hard because things never turn out right anyway?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Do you feel that if things start out well in the morning that it's going to be a good day no matter what you do?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Do you feel that most of the time children listen to what their parents have to say?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Do you believe that wishing can make good things happen?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Most of the time do you find it hard to change a friend's (mind) opinion?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Do you think that cheering more than luck helps a team to win?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Did you feel that it was nearly impossible to change your parent's mind about anything?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Do you believe that parents should allow children to make most of their own decisions?



- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Do you feel that when you do something wrong there's very little you can do to make it right?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Do you believe that most people are just born good at sports?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Are most of the other people your age and sex stronger than you are?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Do you feel that one of the best ways to handle most problems is just not to think about them?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Do you feel that you have a lot of choice in deciding whom your friends are?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. If you find a four leaf clover, do you believe that it might bring you good luck?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Did you often feel that whether or not you did your homework had much to do with what kind of grades you got?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. Do you feel that when a person your age is angry at you, there's little you can do to stop him or her?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. Have you ever had a good luck charm?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Do you believe that whether or not people like you depends on how you act?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. Do your children usually help you if you ask them to?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. Have you felt that when people were angry with you it was usually for no reason at all?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. Most of the time, do you feel that you can change what might happen tomorrow by what you do today?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. Do you believe that when bad things are going to happen they just are going to happen no matter what you try to do to stop them?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. Do you think that people can get their own way if they just keep trying?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. Do you feel that when good things happen they happen because of hard work?

\_\_\_\_\_ 31. Do you feel that when somebody your age wants to be your enemy there's little you can do to change matters?

\_\_\_\_\_ 32. Do you feel that it's easy to get friends to do what you want them to do?

\_\_\_\_\_ 33. Do you feel that when someone doesn't like you there's little you can do about it?

\_\_\_\_\_ 34. Did you usually feel that it was almost useless to try in school because most other children were just plain smarter than you are?

\_\_\_\_\_ 35. Are you the kind of person who believes that planning ahead makes things turn out better?

\_\_\_\_\_ 36. Most of the time, do you feel that you have little to say about what your family decides to do?

\_\_\_\_\_ 37. Do you think it's better to be smart than to be lucky?

## Appendix D

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please answer the following questions as carefully as possible. You may choose not to answer some questions, but you are encouraged to answer as many as possible.

1. Before retirement, how gratifying did you find your job compared to other areas of your life?

1	2	3	4	5	6
very	<u>un</u> gratifying	somewhat	somewhat	gratifying	very
<u>un</u> gratifying		<u>un</u> gratifying	gratifying		
gratifying					

2. Before retirement, how satisfied were you with your job?

1	2	3	4	5	6
very	<u>dis</u> satisfied	somewhat	somewhat	satisfied	very
<u>dis</u> satisfied		<u>dis</u> satisfied	satisfied		
satisfied					

3. Before retirement, how satisfied did you expect to be with retirement?

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

How important were each of the following in your decision to retire? (If a question does not apply to you, mark "very unimportant.")

4. I reached mandatory retirement age.

1	2	3	4	5	6
very	<u>un</u> important	somewhat	somewhat	important	very
<u>un</u> important		<u>un</u> important	important		important

5. I was in poor health.

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

6. My spouse was in poor health.

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

7. I could finally afford it.

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

8. I was laid off, fired, or my hours were cut back.

1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---

9. I was experiencing difficulties with people at work.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I was pressured to retire by my employer.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I was offered incentives to retire by my company.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I wanted to spend more time with my family.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I wanted more time to pursue my interests (such as hobbies and travel).	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I wanted to make room for younger people.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I disliked my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I experienced too much stress at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. I had difficulty handling the physical demands of my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. My spouse wanted me to retire.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Other considerations (please explain:)	1	2	3	4	5	6

Please indicate your current level of satisfaction with the following areas of your life:

20. My marriage	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
	<i>not applicable</i>	<i>very <u>dissatisfied</u></i>	<i><u>dissatisfied</u></i>	<i>somewhat <u>dissatisfied</u></i>	<i>somewhat satisfied</i>	<i>satisfied</i>	<i>very satisfied</i>
21. My financial situation	1	2	3	4	5	6	

22. My physical health  
1 2 3 4 5 6
23. The health of my spouse  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
24. The quality of my residence  
1 2 3 4 5 6
25. Relationships with other family members (such as children, siblings, cousins, nieces and nephews)  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
26. My level of physical activity  
1 2 3 4 5 6
27. My access to transportation  
1 2 3 4 5 6
28. Services from community agencies and programs  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
29. Services from government aid programs (such as social security, Medicare, subsidized housing, and nutrition programs)  
0 1 2 3 4 5 6
30. My personal safety  
1 2 3 4 5 6
31. After retirement, how easy or difficult were the first few months?  
1 2 3 4 5 6  
*very difficult difficult somewhat difficult somewhat easy easy very easy*
32. Overall, how does your life since retirement compare with your life before retirement?  
1 2 3 4 5 6  
*much worse worse somewhat worse somewhat better better much better*
33. How often do you participate in leisure activities with friends?  
1 2 3 4  
*never seldom sometimes often*

34. How often do you participate in leisure activities with your family?

1 2 3 4

35. How often do you participate in physical activities (such as dancing, bicycling, or walking)?

1 2 3 4

How important is each of the following in making your retirement enjoyable?

36. Freedom to pursue my own interests

1	2	3	4
<i><u>un</u>important</i>	<i>slightly <u>un</u>important</i>	<i>moderately important</i>	<i>very important</i>

37. Not having to work

1 2 3 4

38. Spending more time with my family

1 2 3 4

39. Spending more time with my friends

1 2 3 4

40. More control over my own life

1 2 3 4

41. No boss

1 2 3 4

42. More travel

1 2 3 4

43. Less stress

1 2 3 4

44. Being with a group of other retired persons

1 2 3 4

45. More time for activities

1 2 3 4

46. Participation in volunteer organizations

1	2	3	4		
47. Being carefree					
1	2	3	4		
48. More time to think					
1	2	3	4		
49. More relaxed					
1	2	3	4		
50. Can be alone more					
1	2	3	4		
51. Overall, how satisfied are you with your retirement right now?					
1	2	3	4	5	6
very	<u>dissatisfied</u>	somewhat	somewhat	satisfied	very
<u>dissatisfied</u>		<u>dissatisfied</u>	satisfied		satisfied

## Appendix E

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Please answer the following questions by circling the number which best describes you using the scale:

-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**Strongly disagree—Disagree—Agree—Strongly agree**

1. When I make plans, I am certain I can make them work.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2. One of my problems is that I cannot get down to work when I should.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3. If I can't do a job the first time, I keep trying until I can.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4. When I set important goals for myself, I rarely achieve them.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5. I give up on things before completing them.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6. I avoid facing difficulties.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7. If something looks too complicated, I will not even bother to try it.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8. When I have something unpleasant to do, I stick to it until I finish it.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9. When I decide to do something, I go right to work on it.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10. When trying to learn something new, I soon give up if I am not initially successful.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11. When unexpected problems occur, I don't handle them well.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12. I avoid trying to learn new things when they look too difficult for me.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13. Failure just makes me try harder.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14. I feel insecure about my ability to do things.



- 7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15. I am a self-reliant person.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16. I give up easily.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17. I do not seem capable of dealing with most problems that come up in life.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18. It is difficult for me to make new friends.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
19. If I see someone I would like to meet, I go to that person instead of waiting for him or her to come to me.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
20. If I meet someone interesting who is hard to make friends with, I'll soon stop trying to make friends with that person.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
21. When I'm trying to become friends with someone who seems uninterested at first, I don't give up easily.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
22. I do not handle myself well in social gatherings.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
23. I have acquired my friends through my personal abilities at making friends.  
-7 -6 -5 -4 -3 -2 -1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7