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The Organizational Commitment of Chief Housing Officers

By

Curtis Erwin and Brenda L. H. Marina

Abstract

The purposes of this study was to (1) examine the extent that locus of control influences the organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers and (2) review background factors such as gender, salary range, and institutional type Chief Housing Officers and any relationships related to level of locus of control and organizational commitment. The role of Chief Housing Officers requires a wide array of skills, which include a multitude of daily job stressors. How a Chief Housing Officer manages these stressors has an impact on the success, and longevity of his or her career within the role. When organizational commitment is high, longevity is more likely and some particular level of success will be obtained. The level of locus of control a person has is related to their level of organizational commitment. Specifically, if an individual has a high sense of internal locus of control then the individual will experience a higher level of organizational commitment. Existing research examines the high attrition rates among workers in the student affairs field and the relation to level of organizational commitment. However, at the time of this study, there has been limited research that determines if such a relationship exists for Chief Housing Officers. In addition, there has been no specific research study that has examined the effects of locus of control on Chief Housing Officers' organizational commitment.

Introduction

The roles of University Chief Student Affairs Officers have undergone multiple changes, which include their roles increasing in complexity in regards to the skills needed for successful administration. Housing professionals often comprise one of the largest component within a Division of Student Affairs (Winston & Anchors, 1993). The Chief Housing Officer (CHO) serves as the primary administrator within Student Affairs that guides, directs, and ensures success in the wide range of services in University Housing units on a college campus. Sandeen (1991) predicted that as the needs on college campuses continue to change, the skills, abilities, and behavioral characteristics of chief administrators would also need to change. It has also been suggested that the high attrition rate of housing professionals is affected by the inherent long hours and stressful conditions within the student affairs profession (Lorden, 1998). In addition, job dissatisfaction and high levels of stress within the workplace for student affairs administrators affect satisfaction of life in general (Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000). Boehman (2007) suggests that the high level of attrition rates for student affairs professionals may be a combination of low organizational commitment and the individual feeling devalued by their organization. A continued examination of personal (locus of control) attributes of Chief Housing Officers and the influence of those attributes on organizational commitment is needed to better understand the attrition rates of Chief Housing Officers.

By examining the Chief Housing Officer's organizational commitment in relation to locus of control, one may begin to understand the relationship between the two and allow for purposeful decision making that can increase the organizational commitment for Chief Housing

Officers. This work is timely as there has been minimal research conducted with Chief Student Affairs Officers related to the effects of locus of control on organizational commitment after the 1990's. At the time of this study, there has been no research examining locus of control and organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers.

Literature

Initially, a new Student Affairs professional's primary reason for entering the field is the opportunity to interact with students (Anderson, Guido-Dibrito, & Morrel, 2000; Hunter, 1992; Lorden, 1998). Professionals who advance in this field and take on new positions and more responsibilities have less contact and less meaningful interactions with students on a daily basis. However, as a whole, professionals have a higher sense of job satisfaction and organizational commitment as they move up the organizational hierarchy (Frohman & Johnson, 1993). When compared within the university setting, those working in Student Affairs as the Chief Student Affairs officer feel as if they have less personal communication, are dissatisfied with their status, and unhappy with salary and fringe benefits when compared with others at the same employment level within the university setting (Trimble, Allen, & Vidoni, 1991; Harway, 1977). Consequently, attrition rates within Student Affairs have been reported to be as high as 61% (Lorden, 1998), which may suggest an inconsistency between the level of satisfaction generally reported by student affairs practitioners and their actual commitment to the profession.

Regardless of the type of work, a worker's perceptions and attitudes about his or her employment have various consequences for the individual and their level of organizational commitment (Steward, Patterson, Morales, Bartell, Dinas, & Powers, 1995). One such perception is locus of control as introduced by Rotter (1954). Locus of control refers to the degree to which an individual believes the occurrence of reinforcements is reliant on his or her own behavior (Rotter, 1966).

Rotter (1966) investigated a person's expectancy and to what degree it may influence reinforcements received. At one extreme are persons who believe that reinforcements are a result of fate or luck (external locus of control) and at the other extreme are persons who believe reinforcements are a result of one's own behavior (internal locus of control). A person who has an external locus of control believes they have little control over the variables that affect their personal and work experiences and usually have a lower level of organizational commitment. Conversely, a person with a high internal locus of control believes they have significant control on the outcomes related to their experiences (Rotter, 1966).

The concept of locus of control has been examined and determined to have an impact on role ambiguity and conflict, as well as an impact on the work environment being viewed as threatening or stressful (Spector & O'Connell, 1994). In addition, it has been shown that those with a higher level of satisfaction and internal locus of control have lower levels of attrition rates when compared to their counterparts (Tarver, Canada, & Lim, 1999; Spector, 1982). Studies have shown the importance of a person's perception and attitude about his or her job has consequences on the individual's overall commitment and satisfaction (Locke, 1983; Sigelman & Shaffer, 1995; Loscocco & Roschelle, 1991; and Spector & O'Connell, 1994). These studies indicate that locus of control is a primary component within an individual's personality that affects organizational commitment.

Methodology

Our intended purpose was to (1) examine the extent that locus of control influences the organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers and (2) look at background factors (gender, salary, type of institution, etc.) of Chief Housing Officers and any relationships to level of locus of control and organizational commitment. We gathered data that examined an individual's organizational commitment and locus of control from Chief Housing Officers working at public and private institutions within the United States as identified through the Association of College of University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I). ACUHO-I is the primary overarching organization for university housing, which strives to advance exceptional residential experiences at colleges, universities, and other post-secondary institutions. To accomplish our purpose, the following research questions (RQ) and null hypotheses (H_0) were used:

- RQ1: To what extent does locus of control influence organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers? H_01 : There will be no relationship in level of locus of control and level of organizational commitment for Chief Housing Officers.
- RQ2: To what extent do background factors (gender, salary range, housing capacity, race, institutional funding type, years as a CHO, and generational grouping) influence organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers? H_02 : There will be no relationship between background factors and the level of organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers.
- RQ3: To what extent do background factors (gender, salary range, housing capacity, race, institutional funding type, years as a CHO, and generational grouping) influence locus of control of Chief Housing Officers? H_03 : There will be no relationship between background factors and locus of control of Chief Housing Officers.

Instrumentation

One survey instrument was a combination of two established instruments with proven validity and reliability. Organizational commitment was measured by utilizing the Three-Component Model (TCM) Employee Commitment Survey (Meyer & Allen, 2004). The TCM Employee Commitment Survey is an 18 item instrument that measures three forms of employee commitment to the organization: desire-based (affective commitment), obligation-based (normative commitment) and cost-based (continuance commitment). Participants responded to statements such as “I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization” (affective commitment scale), “it would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to” (continuance commitment scale), and “I think that people these days move from company to company too often” (normative commitment scale).

Locus of control was measured by utilizing the Work Locus of Control Scale (WLCS) (Spector, 1988). The WLCS is a 16 item instrument that measures control beliefs in the workplace and places the individual on a continuum from internal locus of control to external locus of control. Participants responded to questions such as “If employees are unhappy with a decision made by their boss, they should do something about it” (internal locus of control) and “in order to get a really good job, you need to have family members or friends in high places” (external locus of control).

Each question was answered on the following six point Likert scale: Strongly Agree, Agree, Slightly Agree, Slightly Disagree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

Combining the two instruments, we created an on-line titled "Organizational Control and Locus of Control of Chief Housing Officers." Our survey consists of three sections: commitment scale, work locus of control scale, and personal information. Embedded within the survey was the informed consent form that had to be acknowledged before completing the survey. Section I of the survey instrument gathered information related to organizational commitment and Section II of the survey instrument gathered information related to locus of control. Information on selected demographic variables was collected in Part III of the survey.

Population and Sample

The Chief Housing Officer is defined as the person who is the top administrator with responsibilities within the organization in charge of on-campus housing. Chief Housing Officers in the United States served as the population for this study. While at some institutions the role of Chief Housing Officer may be combined with other roles on campus within student affairs, (Dean of Students, Judicial Affairs, etc.) there are persons at each institution who assume these roles that provide leadership for housing functions. We utilized the membership directory of the Association of College and University Housing Officers – International (ACUHO-I) to identify Chief Housing Officers in the United States that served as the overall population. There are over 1,100 member institutions within ACUHO-I from thirteen regions.

Although this is an international organization, only personnel employed in American colleges and universities were included in the sample for the research study. To provide a national perspective we sought participation from the persons identified as the Chief Housing Officer at 801 member institutions in the United States. The sample population came from eight of the thirteen regions that make up the entire population. The five regions not surveyed were the international colleges and universities.

Data Collection

According to Nardi (2003), on-line gathering of data is a valid way of distributing self-administered surveys. We emailed all 801 identified Chief Housing Officers the link to the on-line survey with a cover letter stating the purpose of the research, the process of completing the on-line survey, information related to confidentiality and the consent process. There were 352 returned surveys. Accounting for 23 undeliverable email addresses, a 45.2% response rate was obtained. Utilizing a 95% probability level, a confidence interval of +/- 3.91 percentage points was achieved. Achieving this confidence level decreases the likelihood of a Type I error where the null hypothesis is rejected even though the hypothesis is true and decreases the likelihood of a Type II error when the null hypothesis is accepted even when the hypothesis is false (Bartz, 1999).

Data Analysis

We used SAS® to analyze data obtained from the Likert-scale survey instrument responses. Pearson's Correlation and a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were utilized to examine research question 1 since the data consisted of multiple dependent variables. Utilizing a MANOVA identified if there were any effects on the dependent variables when the

independent variable was examined. Comparisons and relationships of these groupings were examined. We took the Work Locus of Control scale and created groupings since the independent variable was continuous. This was done by examining the total distribution of the respondents. By taking the total mean (39.09) of the locus of control scale and adding one standard deviation (8.10) a mean of 47.19 was obtained for those with a high external locus of control. Likewise, by taking the mean (39.09) and subtracting one standard deviation (8.10) a mean of 30.99 was obtained for those with a high internal locus of control. Within SAS[®], we ran a General Linear Model (GLM) which is a procedure that firsts runs individual analysis of variance (ANOVA) and then multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVAs) for corresponding data. Pearson's Correlation was utilized to examine research questions 2 and 3 since the questions were aimed at determining the relationship between the variables.

The background information/personal variables were treated differently from the responses related to the organizational commitment scale and locus of control scale. Scores on the personal information section were assigned codes downloaded to SAS[®] (i.e. for institutional funding status, public was assigned a specific identifying code and private was assigned a different identifying code). SAS[®] assigned numeric values to each response category of each Likert-scaled question response, establishing a code for each variable. SAS[®] generated frequency distributions of categorized data, means, and standard deviations (Bartz, 1999 and Nardi, 2003).

We were able to draw conclusions on the locus of control's relationship to organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers from the data collected and the inferential statistics. However, we were unable to check to see if the respondents were representative of the membership population since no descriptive statistics existed for the population related to gender, race, type of institution, etc. Consistent results were identified through the analysis enabling us to answer each proposed research question.

Discussion of Findings

From part I and part II of the survey, means and standard deviation for the three sub-areas of the commitment scale (affective, normative, and continuance) and the locus of control scale were established (Table 1).

Table 1 Means and Standard Deviations for Locus of Control and Commitment Scales

Scale	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Work Locus of Control	350	39.09	8.10
Affective Commitment	350	26.62	5.79
Normative Commitment	350	23.30	5.76
Continuance Commitment	350	21.19	5.18

Chief Housing Officers in this sample have a locus of control very similar to the United States norm. In addition, we designated these separate categories of locus of control for those respondents completing the survey so the independent variable would be categorical and a MANOVA could be utilized.

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations for each of the three sub-commitment scales (affective commitment, normative commitment, continuous commitment) by each developed category of locus of control.

Table 2 Means and Standard Deviations of 3 Commitment Scales by Level of Locus of Control

Work Locus of Control	N	Commitment Scales	Mean	Standard Deviation
Higher Internal Locus of Control	44	Affective	28.89	5.29
		Normative	25.10	5.08
		Continuance	19.05	5.52
Mid-range Locus of Control	254	Affective	26.76	5.63
		Normative	23.36	5.78
		Continuance	21.10	4.97
Higher External Locus of Control	52	Affective	24.04	6.08
		Normative	21.51	5.75
		Continuance	23.44	5.11

It was noted that those with a higher internal locus of control had normative commitment as their second highest commitment area, while those with a higher external locus of control had continuance commitment as their second highest commitment area.

Correlations were run between all variables by means of Pearson Correlation Coefficients. There were significant correlations between locus of control and the affective, normative and continuance commitment scales. As Table 3 illustrates, there was a significant negative correlation between locus of control and affective commitment ($r = -.27$; $p < .0001$), meaning that a higher internal locus of control results in a higher level of affective commitment. Similarly, there was a significant positive correlation between locus of control and continuance commitment ($r = .25$; $p < .0001$), showing Chief Housing Officers who felt they control their own lives (internal locus of control) were also less likely to feel they *had* to stay with the organization (continuous commitment) out of lack of other opportunities or other perceived social and financial costs.

Table 3 Pearson Correlation* Between Locus of Control and Sub-Organizational Commitment Scales

	Affective Commitment Scale	Normative Commitment Scale	Continuance Commitment Scale
Locus of Control	-0.26597	-0.17146	0.24690
	<.0001	<0.01	<.0001
	N = 350	N = 350	N = 350

*Prob>(r) under H₀

In addition to testing the correlation between locus of control and the three sub-organizational commitment scales, we compared the overall effect of locus of control on organizational commitment and the effects of the three created levels of locus of control (internal, mid-range, and external) on organizational commitment as shown in Table 4. A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted using the Wilk's Lambda statistic to test the null hypothesis of no overall locus of control effect on the three sub-organizational commitment areas. The results of this test illustrate that the null hypothesis can be rejected since there is a significant difference between all categories of locus of control and organizational commitment. Regardless if a CHO had an internal, mid-range, or external locus of control, there was an effect on the organizational commitment for the Chief Housing Officer.

Table 4 MANOVA Test for H₀ on Overall Effect of Locus of Control Comparisons on Organizational Commitment

Locus of Control	Wilks' Lambda	F Value	Num DF	Den DF	PR > F
Overall	.8900	6.90	6	690	<.0001
Internal vs External	.8920	13.93	3	345	<.0001
Internal vs Mid-Range	.9603	4.75	3	345	<.01
Mid-Range vs External	.9406	7.26	3	345	<.0001

To further examine in more detail another MANOVA was conducted to test the null hypothesis of no overall locus of control effect on each sub-organizational commitment area. A multivariate analysis of variance was conducted using the Wilk's Lambda statistic. The test examined the difference in the three sub-organizational commitment areas when compared with the three levels of locus of control. As shown in Table 5, the null hypothesis can be rejected at $p < .0001$ for no overall effect when comparing internal versus external locus of control for affective commitment and continuance commitment. The null hypothesis can be rejected at $p < .01$ for no overall effect when comparing internal versus external locus of control for normative commitment. The null hypothesis can be rejected at $p < .05$ for no overall effect when comparing internal versus mid-range of locus of control for affective commitment and continuance commitment. However, the null hypothesis could not be rejected for the same comparison when evaluating normative commitment. Examining mid-range versus external locus of control, the

null hypothesis can be rejected at $p < .01$ for both affective commitment and continuance commitment, and at $p < .05$ for normative commitment. These tests indicate that regardless to whether the locus of control is internal, external, or mid-range, does influence

Table 5 Contrast Follow-Up of MANOVA Test for H_0 on Sub-Groups of Organizational Commitment

Scale (DV)	Locus of Control	Contrast Sum of Squares	F Value	Pr>F
Affective Commitment Scale	Internal vs. External	560.296	17.49	<.0001
	Internal vs. Mid-Range	171.075	5.34	<.05
	Mid-Range vs. External	317.654	9.92	<.01
Continuance Commitment Scale	Internal vs. External	458.046	17.89	<.0001
	Internal vs. Mid-Range	157.393	6.15	<.05
	Mid-Range vs. External	235.399	9.20	<.01
Normative Commitment Scale	Internal vs. External	307.232	9.48	<.01
	Internal vs. Mid-Range	114.183	3.52	.0614
	Mid-Range vs. External	147.009	4.53	<.05

organizational commitment is influenced for the Chief Housing Officers who responded to the survey, the only exception being when comparing internal versus mid-range locus of control with normative commitment.

We sought to determine to what extent background factors (gender, years in profession, type of institution, etc.) influence organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers. Question 2 was analyzed by looking at correlations between the background factors and the sub-categories of organizational commitment. Correlations were run between background/personal variables and the three sub-areas of organizational commitment (affective, normative, continuance) by means of Pearson Correlation Coefficients.

A significant positive correlations exists between affective commitment and range of salary ($r = .25$; $p < .0001$), housing capacity ($r = .23$; $p < .0001$), and to a lesser degree there were significant positive correlations between affective commitment and institutional funding source ($r = .14$; $p < .01$) and number of years as a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .20$; $p < .001$). In addition, there were significant negative correlations between affective commitment and generational grouping ($r = -.27$; $p < .0001$) and to a lesser degree there was a significant negative correlation between affective commitment and race ($r = .17$; $p < .01$) of the Chief Housing Officer. There were significant positive correlations between normative commitment and salary ($r = .12$; $p < .05$) and housing capacity ($r = .13$; $p < .05$) and negative correlations between normative commitment and generation year grouping ($r = -.19$; $p < .001$). Finally, there were negative correlations between continuance commitment and gender ($r = -.18$; $p < .01$), salary range ($r = -.14$; $p < .05$), and race ($r = -.13$; $p < .05$).

In relation to affective commitment, Table 6 demonstrates how salary changes affected the level of affective commitment. This was not the same for continuance or normative commitment, in fact the relationship was negative; continuance and normative commitment scores decreased as salaries increased.

Table 6 Pearson Correlations Statistics Between Three Areas of Organizational Commitment, Locus of Control, and Background Factors

	AC S	CC S	NC S	WLO C	Gende r	Salar y	Capacit y	Rac e	Fundin g	Exp .	Gen .
Affective Commitmen t Scale	-	.00	.66^a	-.27^a	-.09	.25^a	.23^a	-	.14^c	.20^b	-
Continuance Commitmen t Scale	.00	-	.24^a	.25^a	-.18^c	-.14^d	-.10	-	-.02	.04	.01
Normative Commitmen t Scale	.66^a	.24^a	-	-.17^c	-.11	.12^d	.13^d	-.11	.10	.07	-
Work Locus of Control	-	.25^a	-	-	.03	-.20^b	-.13^d	.03	-.06	.03	.12^d
Gender	-.09	-	-.11	.03	-	.08	.07	.08	-.01	.03	.02
Salary Range	.25^d	-	.12	-.20^b	.08	-	.72^a	-.06	.30^a	.40^a	-
Housing Capacity	.23^a	-.10	.13^d	-.13^d	.07	.71^a	-	-.09	.30^a	.22^a	-
Ethnicity/Ra ce	-	-	-.11	.03	.08	-.06	-.09	-	.00	-.04	.08
Inst. Funding Source	.17^c	.13^d	.10	-.06	-.01	.30^a	.30^a	.00	-	.17^c	-
Years Experience as CHO	.14^c	-.02	.10	-.06	-.01	.30^a	.30^a	.00	-	.17^c	-
Generational Grouping	.20^b	.04	.07	.03	.03	.40^a	.22^a	-.04	.17^c	-	-
	.27^a	.01	-	.12^d	.02	-.54^a	-.38^a	.08	-.27^a	-	-
		.19^b								.57^a	

^ap < .0001

^bp < .001

^cp < .01

^dp < .05

And finally, the groupings of White and Hispanic/Latino had a higher level of affective commitment than other ethnicities. Black Chief Housing Officers were significantly lower in levels of affective commitment than all other races of Chief Housing Officers. Again, these study results indicate that when comparing Black, White, and Hispanic or Latino Chief Housing Officers, Black Chief Housing Officers are less likely to exhibit a commitment level that is based upon desire.

In relation to continuance commitment, Chief Housing Officers making less than \$50,000 had a higher level of continuance commitment than other salary ranges while female Chief Housing Officers also experienced the same higher level of continuance commitment. In addition, female Chief Housing Officers scored a higher score on all three sub- areas of organizational commitment and for a higher internal locus of control, although this difference was only significant in the sub-category of continuance commitment. And finally, relative to commitment, the older the Chief Housing Officer the more likely they were to believe they *ought* to stay with the organization. This also held true to some degree related to salary range and responsibility related to housing capacity.

We sought to determine to what extent background factors (gender, years in profession, type of institution, etc.) influence locus of control of Chief Housing by looking at correlations between the background factors and locus of control. There was a significant negative correlation between locus of control and salary range ($r = -.20$; $p < .001$) and housing capacity ($r = -.13$; $p < .05$). In addition there was a significant positive correlation between locus of control and generation grouping ($r = .12$; $p < .05$). The more money earned by a Chief Housing Officers resulted in a higher level of internal locus of control. Higher internal locus of control levels also existed for those Chief Housing Officers with more responsibility related to housing capacity and of an older age. This indicates that salary is a determining factor related to locus of control since salary is highly correlated with age ($r = -.54$; $p < .0001$) and housing capacity ($r = .72$; $p < .0001$).

In addition, we provide some information on the relationship between background factors. Pearson Correlation statistics revealed significant positive correlations between salary and housing capacity ($r = .72$; $p < .0001$); salary and public funding status ($r = .30$; $p < .0001$); salary and years' experience of a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .40$; $p < .0001$); housing capacity and public funding status ($r = .30$; $p < .0001$); housing capacity and years' experience of a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .22$; $p < .0001$); and public funding status and years' experience of a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .17$; $p < .01$). Pearson Correlation statistics also revealed significant negative correlations between salary and generation grouping ($r = -.54$; $p < .0001$), and housing capacity and generation grouping ($r = -.38$; $p < .0001$). These correlations are consistent with expectations but further validate that salary does increase for Chief Housing Officers as the amount of students responsible for increases, the longer one works as a Chief Housing Officer and working in a public institution versus a private institution. Also, the opportunity to be responsible for additional students (larger housing capacity) is a result of having more experience as a Chief Housing Officer ($r = .22$; $p < .0001$) and working at a public institution ($r = .30$; $p < .0001$).

Discussion

Regardless of type, locus of control did influence the level and type of organizational commitment of Chief Housing Officers. Chief Housing Officers with a higher orientation of internal locus of control were more likely to experience high levels of affective commitment (a desire based upon *want* and personal alignment with organizational goals) and normative commitment (a desire based upon *obligation* and moral responsibility with the organization). Chief Housing Officers with a higher orientation of external locus of control were more likely to experience high levels of continuance commitment (a desire based upon *having* to stay with the organization and feelings related to lack of opportunity and/or costs associated with leaving the organization). While Chief Housing Officers possessing either locus of control orientation showed affective commitment as their top type of commitment, those with an external locus of control showed continuance commitment as their next highest type of commitment and internal locus of control showed normative commitment as their highest type of commitment.

High affective commitment correlated with many of the investigated personal variables. Affective commitment increased if the Chief Housing Officer earned a higher salary, was responsible for a larger housing inventory of beds, was White or Latino, worked at a public institution, and had more experience as a Chief Housing Officer. It should also be noted that those self-identifying as Black Chief Housing Officers had the lowest level of affective commitment when looking at race. High continuance commitment correlated with salary, and gender. Earning the least amount of money and being female increased the chances of having a higher level of continuance commitment. The older the Chief Housing Officer the more likely they were to have a high level of normative commitment. In addition, locus of control correlated with the personal variables of age, salary, and housing capacity. Internal locus of control increased as did the salary earned, the number of beds in the housing inventory, and the age of the Chief Housing Officer.

Meyer and Allen (1991) described affective commitment as an individual whose commitment level was based upon wanting to be with the organization and having personal alignment with organizational goals. We found that Chief Housing Officers who had an orientation toward internal locus of control were more likely to experience higher levels of affective commitment. This study aligns with past research conducted that demonstrated high levels of positive correlation between internal locus of control and affective commitment (McMahon, 2007; Spector, 1982; Coleman, Irving, & Cooper, 1999; and Luthans, Baack, & Taylor, 1987).

Some conjectures had to be made since most of the prior research focused on job satisfaction and organizational commitment or job satisfaction and locus of control, whereas this study examined organizational commitment and locus of control. Research has shown that increased job satisfaction is associated with stronger organizational commitment in Student Affairs professionals (Boehman, 2007; Bender, 1980; Blackhurst, Brandt, & Kalinowski, 1998; and Anderson, Guido-DiBrito, & Morrell, 2000) and research has shown internal locus of control correlates with increased job satisfaction (Locke, 1983; Spector, 1982; Tarver, Canada, & Lim, 1999). Chief Housing Officers who responded to this survey were more likely to have a high level of affective commitment if they had internal locus of control, higher salary, larger capacity of beds responsible, were White or Latino, work at a public institution, have had more experience as a Chief Housing Officer, and were older in age.

We found that those Chief Housing Officers with orientations of external locus of control had higher levels of continuance commitment corresponding with past studies (Spector, 1982; Coleman, Irving, and Cooper, 1999). Women had higher scores for all three types of organizational commitment and internal locus of control; however, these differences were only significant in relation to continuance commitment. Continuance commitment is the least desirable form of commitment from an employment standpoint (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This finding aligns with research that showed Chief Student Affairs Officers who were female were less satisfied than male colleagues with their position and profession (Bender, 1980).

Research conducted by Jones (2002) showed that job satisfaction of Chief Housing Officers correlated with being male, white, older, higher pay, working at larger institutions, public institutions, and more experience. In this study, affective commitment (the most desirable form of organizational commitment) of Chief Housing Officers significantly correlated with higher salary, larger inventory of beds (which indicates larger institution), White, public institution, and more experience.

Earlier research concluded that persons who remain with an organization for extended periods of time do so because of a moral compass (Marsh & Mannari, 1972) and that internalized normative pressure may cause a person to behave in such a way without thought towards personal benefits (Wiener, 1982). Here we concluded that the older the Chief Housing Officer the higher level of normative commitment (commitment based upon obligation and moral responsibility to the organization). Earlier research also suggested that persons may develop a sense of obligation to an organization over a long term of employment (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). While we did not examine the length of time a Chief Housing Officer was with the same organization, we did look at the total years a person had been a Chief Housing Officer. The years of experience for a Chief Housing Officer did not correlate with normative commitment or continuance commitment but did correlate with affective commitment.

Prior research (Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm, 1983) also indicated that the longer period an individual worked in Student Affairs at an institution of higher education, the lower their morale, feeling of value toward the institution, feeling connected to the University mission, and that these leaders were unlikely to leave the organization because of their years of service and commitment to the Student Affairs field. This study illustrated that years of experience and age of Chief Housing Officer correlated with affective commitment. Affective commitment is the strongest type of organizational commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991) and is not characterized by descriptors of low morale, value, and lack of synergy with mission. In relation to how years of experience/longevity affect ones disposition, this research contradicts information provided by Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm (1983). In addition, we saw a strong correlation between Chief Housing Officer age and normative commitment. While it cannot be assumed that age correlates with years of service, this study supports Holmes, Verrier, & Chisholm (1983) stance that persons may not leave an organization because of years of service.

Lastly, McMahan (2007) found that locus of control and age were related to affective commitment and that age was a significant predictor. This study illustrated that affective commitment also correlated with age being the personal descriptor that most correlated with affective commitment. We agree with McMahan and his finding that older individuals who believe their own actions are responsible for self-relevant outcomes, more frequently identify with and are involved with their organizations more so than younger individuals and those who had an external locus of control.

Implications and Recommendations

As a group, the Chief Housing Officers had a mean locus of control that was similar to the national mean as a whole. This was somewhat of a surprise since Chief Housing Officers are the top administrative leaders within their organization, and thus, we anticipated that being in control of one's outcome would possibly be higher than the general population. We contend that despite being the chief administrator of the housing organization, housing departments are a subgroup to a much larger division or institution, which may be where the feelings of not controlling one's outcomes originate.

This study illustrates there are certain related background factors that correlate a Chief Housing Officer having higher levels of affective commitment. We did not intend to identify causality related to demographic characteristics. We do provide information on what indicators may suggest various levels of organizational commitment and locus of control. As an example, to some degree, institutions control pay scales which can impact internal locus of control and affective commitment. Making sure to allow Chief Housing Officers the opportunity to gain experience, learn from mistakes, and professionally develop is paramount since internal locus of control is correlated with age and affective commitment is correlated with age and experience. Upper administration with Chief Housing Officers who identify race as Black or two or more races should be particularly aware since the respondents of this group showed the lowest levels of affective commitment. In addition, similar concerns exist for Chief Housing Officers who are female. Providing opportunities where Black, bi-racial, and women Chief Housing Officers control their outcomes is important in developing internal locus of control and affective commitment; especially for female Chief Housing Officers since female Chief Housing Officers showed a higher level of continuous commitment.

It was disappointing to learn that only 10.3% of respondents identified self as non-white. This is particularly alarming for a field that serves such a diverse level of students and espouses the importance of diversity education and related opportunities for diverse populations. Also, almost 30% of Chief Housing Officers who responded earned less than \$60,000 which the researcher found surprising since this low salary does not correspond to a role that is considered an upper administrative position and a position that requires such a wide variety of skills and knowledge areas. The survey results confirmed the researchers' beliefs that Chief Housing Officers as a whole (64%) were on the lower end of experience (less than 10 years).

We encourage the following recommendations to be considered and provide suggestions for future research:

- Existing Chief Housing Officers should be given the opportunity to identify their own level of locus of control and to examine how this personal construct influences their actions and perceived commitment to the organization and institution. Providing opportunities that help the Chief Housing Officer see their role in the larger picture and to see what areas they control internally and externally will help originate an accurate picture of what is and can be. In addition, encouraging processes that allow the Chief Housing Officer to evaluate and assess a situation when it is done and identifying those internal processes of a situation to accurately categorize those things they internally control and those objects that were truly out of their control (supervisor mandates, university restrictions, etc.).

- Because there is a correlation between salary and affective commitment, continued vigor should be given to the issue of salaries and the Chief Housing Officer. Not doing so may foster bitterness within employees who compare their salary with other chief administrators who may be perceived as having less responsibilities or desired skills. This a potential hazard within the division and institution, which may result in strong individuals leaving the role of Chief Housing Officer and exploring other fields where these skills are valued.
- Student Affairs and Housing as professions should make sure they are developing underrepresented persons to become active professionals and Chief Housing Officers. Increasing the diversity make-up of the Chief Housing Officer role is important in an environment that serves diverse populations and is committed to social justice principles. In addition, administrators who currently supervise Chief Housing Officers that identify as Black, bi-racial, multi-racial, and/or female should spend additional time exploring their job experience. Asking questions, allowing for goal setting and accomplishment, and acknowledging successes will increase internal locus of control and affective commitment in these populations who, as a whole, are not identifying with these conditions.
- The length of time the Chief Housing Officer had been at their particular institution, marital status, and the most advanced degree obtained are other background factors that can increase the understanding of the relationship between locus of control and organizational commitment that were not included in this specific study.
- A qualitative approach to this topic would be beneficial. Examining what Chief Housing Officers feel would increase their internal locus of control would provide personal information related to the topic of locus control and the Chief Housing Officer experience. Answers to open-ended questions related to the three areas of organizational commitment would shed additional light on the personal experience of the Chief Housing Officer and where they had a particular inclination towards a certain type of organizational commitment.
- Additional research on what actions individuals can participate in that increase the likelihood of development of internal locus of control.

We recognize that the way one looks at their environment has a significant impact on their experience and commitment to the organization. In order to increase likelihood of success and prior to taking on the role of Chief Housing Officer, it will be important to gain an understanding of the organization and institution's goals, level of autonomy for the position, and available resources. All of these items will increase the likelihood of being empowered and having a sense of control of the outcomes of the overall experience (internal locus of control) and if established, the feelings of wanting to be in the current environment will increase (affective commitment).

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