THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND

EFFECTIVENESS IN UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATIONS:

A COMPETING VALUES STUDY

by

Lawrence B. Faerman

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of

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This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the candidate's dissertation advisor, Dr. Deborah L. Floyd, Department of Educational Leadership, and has been approved by the members of his supervisory committee. It was submitted to the faculty of the College of Education and was accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

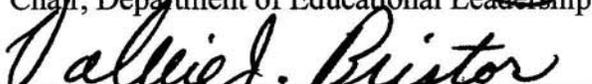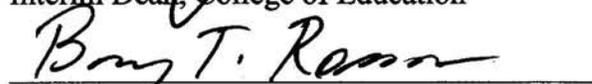SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:
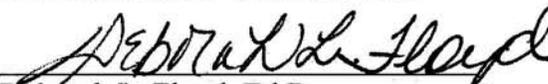
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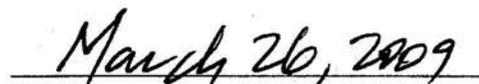Deborah L. Floyd, Ed.D.
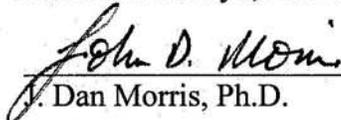
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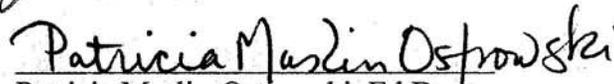
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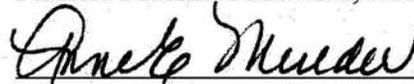
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ABSTRACT

Author: Lawrence B. Faerman

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                   Effectiveness in University Residence Hall Associations:

                   A Competing Values Study

Institution: Florida Atlantic University

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        This study examined organizational member and housing staff perceptions of

organizational culture and effectiveness of residence hall associations. Two instruments,

the Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument designed by Tucker

(2001) and the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) designed by

Cameron and Quinn (1999, 2006) were utilized to gather quantitative data, while

individual interviews and focus groups were conducted utilizing selected questions from

the Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Organizational Analysis (Quinn

1988) to collect qualitative data. A mixed methodology was utilized to collect and

analyze data from three sites yielding 217 assessments, 27 interviews, and 6 student focus

groups with members of residence hall associations during the spring 2008 semester.

The study indicated that there is a positive relationship between all ideal culture type scores identified by the OCAI and effectiveness constructs identified by the RHA Effectiveness Instrument. Additionally, there is a difference in the perceptions of Clan and Hierarchy ideal culture type scores and Housing Relationship and RHA Effects effectiveness construct scores based upon housing staff membership or RHA Legislative Body membership. Furthermore, the research indicated that level of student involvement, emphasis on leadership development and training, patterns of communication and teamwork, financial resources, implementation of rules and procedures, roles in program planning, student voice, member evaluation, collaborative partnerships with host housing departments, and relationships with university Student Government were constructs for the development of organizational culture and influenced the organizational effectiveness of RHAs. Recommendations are provided for the organizational development and evaluation of residence hall associations.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Student organizations exist as part of all institutions of higher education with the purpose of serving as a learning opportunity to impact the student experience and increase the quality of student life on campus (Akdere, 2005; Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Woodard & von Destinon, 1993). The structure of a student organization can be formal or informal, with formal groups being recognized by the institution, organized around specific purposes, and holding to a constitution; informal groups, however, may be temporary in nature (Woodard & von Destinon). Student governance structures specifically have a role in the decision making processes and are thought of as a part of the greater governance structure of the institution (Pembroke, 1993). Regardless of the composition of an organization, each is unique and addresses a certain group of students with embedded interests in the mission and philosophy of that organization (Akdere).

Residence hall associations (RHAs) can be defined as "a housing student governing body that operates within on-campus housing at a university or college" (Tucker, 2006, p. 61). These organizations can also be described as being "made up of college students who are involved in a specific type of organization, based in the residence halls with specific aims to improve the quality of life and enhance leadership skill development" (Romero-Aldaz, 2001, p.ii). The National Association of College and University Residence Halls defines the RHA as:

A leadership organization that represents the various halls and the general on-campus student population. An RHA seeks out to develop both the leaders within the halls and help make on-campus living more of a community through programming and services offered. RHAs work within the residence halls much like RAs at most schools, however, RHAs also serve a very different purpose. RHAs focus on the students wants and needs within their living community. RHAs sponsor programs for the entire campus or a particular living community; they bring together individuals and serve as a governing-body for the on-campus population. (National Association of College and University Residence Halls, 2005, p. 2)

Like many student organizations, residence hall associations hold limited ability to affect long term change due to the dynamic nature of the internal and external environment. Given the turnover of professional staff advisers, students in leadership roles, and new student members, the ability to both produce and sustain as well as review and renew becomes essential for the effectiveness of the organization. The nature of the residence hall association is unique in that not only does it encompass the student involvement and leadership roles of a general student organization, but also holds the decision making role of a student governance structure. In addition, while most student organizations are universally governed specifically by state or institutional administrative codes and funded through student fees, residence hall associations are also governed by policies and funding mechanisms of the housing department within which the organization resides.

Overview of the Problem

Student organizations serve a dual purpose of assisting in the learning process and providing a venue for the student voice. At institutions of higher education, the primary responsibility of student governance bodies is student organization activity and funding oversight (Love & Miller, 2003). These responsibilities place student organizations in an influential position regarding financial and policy decisions, thus student accountability is a significant issue. In the state of Florida alone, there have been concerns with the administration of student government at the University of Central Florida and Florida Atlantic University (Date, 1996; Freeman, 2006). Colgan and Opper (1987) state that the misconduct of individuals in student organizations is attributable to organizational weakness, thus it has become increasingly important for researchers to investigate organizational development. Concerns for student accountability have brought scandals to home institutions leading to the necessity for research to assist students in leading and sustaining organizations with integrity.

The second primary focus of student organizations is the contribution to the learning process. Levine (1994) describes four areas in which administrators can increase intentional education all of which are found in the implementation of the residence hall association. These areas include out-of-classroom learning, which is considered to have the most impact, student-to-student interaction due to the impact that students have on one another, student culture because students define the culture of the institution and transfer this definition to other students, and student activities because students are more likely to attend those activities that are student initiated.

The RHA provides a governance function in that it allows for a student voice to the key decision makers in university housing programs (Werring, 1984). It is also believed that the "success of residence hall governments is pivotal to the student experience on campus" (Tucker, 2006, p. 60). As one of the roles of RHAs is to make on-campus living more of a community through programming and services offered, understanding the relationship between culture and effectiveness can assist advisers and leaders in the recruitment and retention efforts of members in addition to program evaluation. Astin (1993) identified the environmental variable with the strongest negative effect on overall satisfaction with college as *Lack of Student Community*. Additionally, *Lack of Student Community* is the strongest variable related to students who are most likely to not re-enroll at their initial institution of enrollment.

Student organizations play a crucial role in the collegiate experience; however there are limited classroom experiences or training programs focused on advising in the context of a college or university and more specifically in college or university housing (Linkous, 2006). Although many housing professionals hold responsibilities for advising student groups and staff supervision, the time spent by advisers of residence hall associations is typically less than that spent on supervising paraprofessional and professional staff (McCluskey-Titus, 2004). As advisers are the primary link to the university administration, they assist in the RHAs capacity to deliver the learning outcomes specified by the institutional, departmental, or organizational mission.

<div align="center">Statement of the Problem</div>

RHA members and advisers have been dependent on classic theories and strategies of organizational development to guide their organizations with little data

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supporting the connection between group cohesion and effectiveness. Given the increasing emphasis on the connection between funds appropriation and measurable outcomes, strategies for program development and evaluation are necessary.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness of the entity defined as the residence hall association. Deal and Kennedy (1982) describe a strong culture as the informal policies by which organizational members are to conduct their operations most of the time and state that a strong culture will enable organizational members to work together more effectively. Furthermore, empirical research conducted by Cameron and Quinn (1999); Quinn (1988); and Quinn and Kimberly (1984), determined that both leadership and organizational effectiveness are related to organizational culture. Given the connection in the literature between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness, this study serves as a contribution to the literature in two ways. First, the study offers a strategy for the assessment of perceptions of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness of residence hall associations. Second, the findings from the study can be utilized to recommend areas of organizational development for residence hall associations.

Rationale for the Study

Student organizations face similar issues to non-profit organizations regarding resource acquisition and identification of measurable outcomes (Akdere, 2005). In an era where higher education is asked to be further accountable, student-governed organizations are also under scrutiny from stakeholders including fee paying students,

trustees, and local, state, and national governance boards. Thus, the role of program evaluation and assessment, through the achievement of goals or benchmarking has become more pertinent than before in evaluating the effectiveness of the organization (Akdere; Cutt & Murray, 2000).

The issue of measuring RHA effectiveness has been addressed in the literature through several studies; however, to date no formal investigation has been conducted to explore the connection between organizational culture and effectiveness. In a qualitative study, Komives and Tucker (1993) identified contributing factors to the success of 13 effective residence hall associations which include the role of the adviser, staff values and beliefs regarding students, the purpose of the RHA, the organizational structure, and leadership development. Tucker (2001) conducted an empirical, quantitative study through which he designed and validated an instrument measuring RHA effectiveness (Residence Hall Government [RHA] Effectiveness Instrument). This study initially identified five constructs of organizational effectiveness for RHAs as resource acquisition, structure, internal system, productivity, and external environment which were reduced to three constructs in the final inventory named RHA Effects, Housing Relationship, and Formal Processes.

In a different study, McCluskey-Titus and Paterson (2006) introduced a national model for RHA excellence based upon semi-structured interviews with RHA advisers and a review of websites from schools most often recognized with national awards by the National Association of College and University Residence Halls (NACURH). This model defines RHA excellence as involvement in NACURH, relationship with housing offices, developed traditions through large-scale programs, understanding and appreciation of the

history of organizations, support from residence hall staff, support from housing offices, and committed advisers.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study were developed with the intention of examining the perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness of residence hall associations by housing professional staff and organizational members. These questions, four of which were studied through quantitative methods and three of which were studied through qualitative methods, are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and RHA group membership (RHA Legislative body, Hall Council, Housing Staff)?

2. What is the relationship between the perceptions of RHA effectiveness and RHA group membership?

3. What is the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and perceptions of RHA effectiveness?

4. What is the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and perceptions of RHA Effectiveness as moderated by RHA group membership?

5. How do the operations of the RHA influence the member perception of ideal culture type?

6. In what ways does group membership influence the perception of ideal culture type?

7. How does the perception of organizational culture influence the perceptions of organizational effectiveness of RHAs?

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in that it informs university administrators, parents, students, and other stakeholders on the strategies to improve residence hall associations. The research to date has addressed the institutional effectiveness of governing boards in education, for-profit organizations, and non-profit organizations; however there has been little research on student organizations. The examination of student organizations is significant because it addresses accountability at the student governance level.

Due to the organizational roles of governance, leadership development, and activity planning, the findings from this study can be utilized with most any student organization or student governance body. However, the study of the RHA is unique in that RHAs hold the decision making role of student governance structures with the composition of a formal student organization. Because these RHA structures can be seen as a duplication of university-wide services, especially at a small- or medium-sized institution, their existence can be dependent on effectiveness more so than student governance boards at institutional level; which in many cases are mandated by charters or statutes. Furthermore, residence hall associations are limited in their ability to affect long term change due to the constant change in internal and external environment.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical frameworks can assist in providing a lens through which both organizational effectiveness and organizational culture can be understood. Argyris, Putnam, and McLain-Smith (1985) posit that organizational effectiveness is greater in organizations where there is congruence between values and practices as compared to those in which there is incongruence between values and practices. Cameron (1981)

holds that organizations with different organizational characteristics have success in

different effectiveness domains. Furthermore, Cameron and Whetton (1983) argue that an

individual Effectiveness Construct cannot be used as the primary dependent variable in

the study of organizational effectiveness because of the subjective nature and mental

construct of effectiveness. Because of this, it can be more viable to develop frameworks

for assessing effectiveness as opposed to developing theories of effectiveness.

Furthermore, Cameron (1978) states that organizations pursue multiple and contradictory

goals, thus different aspects of effectiveness have importance at different times in the

organizational life-cycle. Finally, the criteria of effectiveness at one organizational level

may not be the same as those at another level. Chapter 2 includes a variety of proposed

frameworks from a wide array of authors through which one can study organizational

culture and organizational effectiveness.

This study utilized the Competing Values Framework originally developed by

Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981) to study organizational effectiveness and later adapted by

Cameron and Quinn (1999) for the study of organizational culture. This framework offers

a multidimensional approach to challenges, and recognizes that organizational values

may be contradictory. In addition, it offers a model that can be used as part of a process

of the analysis of the effectiveness of an organization. In terms of this study, it is utilized

to answer the question of "What are the ways in which RHA culture influences the

organization's effectiveness?" The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

(OCAI) (Cameron & Quinn 1999, 2006) operationalizes the framework developed by

Quinn and Rorhbaugh, but does not imply that one culture type is more effective than

another.

Denison and Spreitzer (1991) identify two assumptions that underlie the competing values model. The first assumption is that the four organizational types are ideal types; thus organizations will reflect a combination of dominant culture and subcultures with subcultures within an organization competing with the majority culture of the organization. The second assumption is that when one organizational type is overemphasized, the organization may become dysfunctional.

Quinn and Cameron (1983) propose two axes of culture making up the framework which in turn designate four quadrants within which organizational culture can be classified. One axis depicts the values of flexibility and discretion at one end of the continuum while at the other end of the continuum is the values of stability, order, and control. In defining the model, flexibility and spontaneity are essential to the change process in organizations through the development of individual initiatives, participation, and organizational adaptability. Comparatively, clear authority structures, controls, and coordination of tasks and functions through hierarchy are necessary for stability through the change process. The perpendicular axis depicts values of internal orientation and unity from external orientation and rivalry on opposing ends of the continuum. The achievement of goals or attainment of outcomes are necessary as measures of organizational success, however, human commitment must also be emphasized to keep the internal environment consistent. A third dimension of the competing values model is a means-ends continuum addressing desired outcomes and short range performance attainment.

The quadrants developed through the intersection of the two axes are defined through a series of core values of specified organizational types, as pictured in Figure 1.

The hierarchy culture combines internal focus and stability leading organizations in which this is the dominant culture to be formal and structured places to work. The clan culture combines internal focus with flexibility leading organizations in which this is the dominant culture to be focused on people and teamwork. The market culture combines external focus with stability leading organizations in which this is the dominant culture to be focused on competitiveness in the marketplace and productivity. The adhocracy Culture combines external focus with flexibility leading organizations in which this is the dominant culture to be focused on innovation, risk taking, and individuality (Cameron & Quinn, 1999).

Flexibility & Discretion

<u>Clan</u>
An extended family; the organization is held together by loyalty or tradition. Commitment is high with importance placed on teamwork, participation, and consensus.

<u>Adhocracy</u>
A dynamic and creative environment where taking risks and individual initiative is encouraged. There is a commitment to experimentation and innovation.

Internal Focus & Integration

External Focus & Differentiation

<u>Hierarchy</u>
A formalized and structured environment. Emphasis is placed on formal rules and policies with concern for stability and performance.

<u>Market</u>
An environment of competition and goal achievement. Reputation and success is a concern of members with a long-term focus on achievements of goals.

Stability & Control

Figure 1. The competing values framework: Culture.

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Given a relationship between ideal culture type and RHA effectiveness construct, strategies for promoting cultural change can be suggested based upon the area of effectiveness under examination. Cameron (1978) states:

In the private sector, goal accomplishment is more easily recognized, agreed upon, and quantifiable than in the public sector. It is suggested that by inductively deriving criteria, by focusing on organizational attributes rather than operational goals, and by carefully selecting sources and types of criteria to indicate effectiveness, important dimensions of effectiveness can be identified which can lead to more fine-grained analysis of public sector organizations. (p. 631)

Cameron and Quinn (1999) state, "The Competing Values Framework has been found to have a high degree of congruence with well-known and well-accepted categorical schemes that organize the way people think, their values and assumptions, and the ways they process information" (pp. 29-30). For this study, the Competing Values Framework provides a balanced theoretical scheme and lens for examining the relationship of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness. This framework is most compelling for the study of RHAs because it examines organizational development through the balance of competing demands rather than through the attainment of fixed goals. Due to the nature of change in organizations, effectiveness is better measured as the ability to handle change as opposed to an end process.

<center>Conceptual Framework</center>

The conceptual framework for the study is related to the effect of perceived organizational culture on perceived organizational effectiveness. It is theorized that organizational effectiveness can be influenced through the development of organizational

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culture at the group or organizational level. The data collected from the Organizational

Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) and RHA Effectiveness Instrument are used to

explain the perceptions of culture and effectiveness based upon subgroup membership as

well as the relationship between culture and effectiveness. Furthermore, the data

collected through the interviews, observations, and documents provides a greater

understanding of the culture of RHAs, allowing for the discussion of strategies for

organizational culture change.

<div align="center">Methodology</div>

This study utilized a partially mixed concurrent equal status design (Leech &

Onwuegbuzie 2007). The quantitative phase included the collection of data through the

Cameron and Quinn's (1999, 2006) Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

(OCAI) and Tucker's (2001) Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness

Instrument. The qualitative phase included three case study analyses as well as a cross-

case analysis of three separate residence hall associations used to explore the influence of

RHA operations on perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness. This phase

was conducted through an interview protocol developed by Quinn (1988) for conducting

a competing values organizational analysis and implemented through individual

interviews with selected members and focus group interviews from membership groups

designated as RHA Legislative Body and hall council. Finally, document analysis of

organizational documents and field observations of select meetings took place.

The OCAI is based on self-reported perceptions to measure organizational

characteristics which point to four distinct organizational cultures. The Residence Hall

Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument suggests that effective practices for an

RHA are based upon multiple identifiable dimensions including three constructs of effectiveness including RHA Effects, Housing Relationship, and Formal Processes. The reliability and validity of the OCAI and RHA Effectiveness are described in detail in Chapter 3.

Population for the Study

The residence hall associations at three state funded institutions meeting the 2005 Carnegie Designation of Research Universities (very high research activity) located in a southeastern state in the United States of America were identified for inclusion in this study. The individuals participating in the study were selected from three categories including residence hall association legislative body members, hall council members, and housing staff members. The distinction between these groups was determined by the governing documents of the student organization.

Limitations

The primary limitation presented in this study is the possible inflation of effectiveness values by the participants in the study. An additional limitation is that the Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument is relatively new and has not been used in additional studies to support the stability of the model. Furthermore, the length of the questionnaire is a limiting factor as participants can lose focus while responding to items.

The timing of the study taking place during the latter part of the spring is another limiting factor in this study in that those students who have discontinued membership in the organization due to a lack of satisfaction are not included. Additionally, participants for individual interviews were selected by the organizational president and adviser, while

those who participated in the group interviews self-selected. Finally, due to the nature of the organizational membership, it is difficult to ascertain the level of member involvement and knowledge of the organization.

Delimitations

The primary delimitation of the study was centered on the sample; high research public institutions in a single southeastern state of the United States. Thus, the findings identified may only be applicable to organizations found at similar institutions. The rationale for this delimitation is primarily resource based as it would be difficult for the researcher to complete a study of all institutions with functioning residence hall associations. Furthermore, the study lacks institutions designated as Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).

Role of the Researcher

The researcher selected this topic for study due to an interest in the subject matter in addition to professional experience with residence hall associations. The researcher was formerly a staff member and student at one of the institutions under study and currently serves as the adviser to a statewide organization coordinating the activities of the residence hall associations under study. In addition, the researcher serves as the adviser for the institutional residence hall association at his institution of employment. While the aforementioned roles provided greater access to research participants and institutions in addition to increased professional knowledge of the subject, this may also have led to an increased risk of researcher bias in synthesizing and interpreting data collected.

Definition of Terms

This study is focused on residence hall associations which are a specific type of student organization found at institutions of higher education. Terms associated with the subject matter are utilized considerably throughout the work.

Adhocracy Culture: An ideal culture type within an organization where it is assumed that the environment is an entrepreneurial and creative workplace. There is a commitment to experimentation, innovation, and the acquisition of new resources.

Adviser: A professional or paraprofessional staff member of a housing department who is assigned to act a liaison with and educator for residence hall associations or hall councils.

Clan Culture: An ideal culture type within an organization where it is assumed that the environment is a friendly place to work, where leaders are seen as mentors, and loyalty and tradition are valued. Furthermore, there is a priority placed on teamwork and consensus building.

Competing Values Framework (CVF): A socially constructed spatial model of organizational culture or organizational effectiveness which provides a method by which analysis of organizations based upon structure and focus can take place. The two axes provide a four quadrant model within ideal culture types exist (hierarchy, market, adhocracy, and clan) in organizations (Cameron & Quinn, 1999, Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Quinn & Cameron, 1983).

Formal Processes: Those items (21) from the RHA Effectiveness Instrument that relate to established practices of the RHA including planning, ethics, or involvement in processes in the Housing Department.

Hall Council: Student governance and programming entity established to represent an individual building or series of buildings at a university campus.

Hierarchy Culture: An ideal culture type within an organization where it is assumed that the environment is structured governed by policies and procedures.

Housing Relationship: Those items (17) from the RHA Effectiveness Instrument that describe the aspects of the RHA's relationship with the Housing Department.

Market Culture: An ideal culture type within an organization where it is assumed that the environment is driven by results and an emphasis is placed on winning in the marketplace.

National Association of College and University Residence Halls (NACURH): Considered to be the largest student-governed organization in the world serving affiliated organizations with leadership and programmatic opportunities including partnerships with professional associations and business partners.

Organizational Culture: For the purposes of this study organizational culture is defined as those practices and organizational characteristics that members perceive as standard as measured by the OCAI and identified by research participants during interviews.

Residence Hall Association (RHA): A student governance, programming, and leadership organization that represents the entire housing population at the university and coordinates the hall councils.

RHA Effects: Those items (56) from the RHA Effectiveness Instrument that describe the effects or outcomes the RHA produces in conducting its operations, including the effects on members and resident students.

Organization of the Study

The second chapter includes a literature review of the primary themes of the study including background on student organizations, organizational culture and effectiveness, and the Competing Values Framework. The third chapter describes extensively the methods of research which were conducted to address the research questions identified previously. Chapters 4 through 6 discuss the qualitative data collected and findings from the individual institutional residence hall associations included in the study. Chapter 7 includes a description of the quantitative data collected and a cross-case analysis of the qualitative data collected from the three institutional residence hall associations. Finally, the study concludes in Chapter 8 with discussion, conclusions, and recommendations for future study and practice.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes a review of the literature which supports the rationale and framework for the study. The primary topic areas include historical information on student organizations, background information on residence hall association structure and purposes, and literature on theories of organizational development, effectiveness, and culture. Finally, an overview of the Competing Values Framework and the operationalization of the framework are discussed.

Student Organizations

Prior to the Civil War, both curricular and extra-curricular student organizations existed at institutions of higher education. However, following this period, formal recognition of student organizations through athletics, Greek life, and student governance became more prevalent (Rudolph, 1990). In present times, the student organization is formed or recognized by the institution as extra-curricular involvement and many become formal offerings listed in materials for the recruitment of new students or utilized as part of program evaluation. Most formal organizations are characterized by a written constitution and by-laws, officers, a faculty or staff adviser, and activities based upon a stated purpose or objectives.

The structure of a student organization can be formal or informal, with formal groups being recognized by the institution, organized around specific purposes, and holding to a written constitution and by-laws; informal groups, however, may be

temporary in nature (Bloland, 1967; Woodard & von Destinon, 1993). Regardless of the formality of an organization, each is unique and addresses a certain group of students with embedded interests in the mission and philosophy of that organization (Akdere, 2005). Student governance structures differ from general student organizations in that members are typically elected or appointed to represent the student body through a role in the decision making processes and are thought of as a part of the governance structure of the institution (Bloland; Pembroke, 1993).

Residential student governance organizations began in the early to mid-20th century and are thought to be an important aspect of a successful college housing program (Frederiksen, 1993). Although names vary among and between institutions, these organizations are most commonly known as Residence Hall Association (RHA).

RHA as an Educational Entity

Lewin (1936) states that behavior is a function of the interaction between the person and the environment, with the environment composed of physical (weather, terrain, architecture), social (people, behavior, relationships), and institutional components (policies, doctrine, traditions). This theory is supported by a straightforward statement by Astin (1993) who concludes that "students learn by becoming involved" (p.133).

Student organizations serve as a key element of social and institutional components in that they are included in the institutional mission, exist as a learning opportunity utilized to impact the student experience, and increase the quality of student life on campus (Akdere, 2005; Komives, 1994; Woodard & von Destinon, 1993). Furthermore, Boyer (1987) considers student organizations as an environment wherein

students can learn through practice and observation. Burns (1995) concurs, stating that a leadership development program should allow participants to put theoretical knowledge into practice. One of the primary purposes of the campus based RHA is to serve as a learning community (Dunkel & Spencer, 1998).

Chickering (1974) concludes that residential students in leadership roles are provided developmental opportunities which differ from those available to non-residential students. The RHA is thought to incorporate what Werring (1984) refers to as "two interactive forces" (p. 41) connecting involvement and development. Komives and Tucker (1993) state that "RHAs improve the residence hall environment, provide activities for resident students and are a leadership training ground for other organizations" (p. 35) Finally, Levine (1994) identifies four areas in which institutions of higher education could increase intentional education, all of which could be found in university housing, thus also present in RHAs, as: (a) out of class learning, (b) student-to-student interaction, (c) student culture, and (d) student activities.

Organizational Structure of the RHA

In a 2004 study of 45 residence hall associations conducted by McCluskey-Titus and Paterson (McCluskey-Titus & Paterson, 2006), it was shown that RHAs typically are traditional bureaucracies. These organizations are made up of an executive board, representatives from the residential areas, and advised by a member of the housing staff. Komives and Tucker (1993) found that although the organizational structure of effective RHAs differ, a formalization of roles and procedures through development of manuals and a formal constitution encourages uniformity and continuity from year-to-year, even given the large amount of turnover prevalent in these organizations.

Komives and Tucker (1993) found that although there are many structures existing in strong RHAs, there were similarities between the structure of the RHA and the housing department at the institution. In addition, in most cases, there is a strong relationship between the Housing Department and the RHA (Tucker 2001). Most RHAs are formed around a bureaucratic structure due to the need for continuity of officers elected annually. Although the constitution is the structure of the organization, flexibility of the constitution is necessary to reflect the changing needs of the students and maintenance of the organization (Wyatt & Stoner 1984).

In most cases, the RHA exists as part of a Housing Department, thus holding a working relationship with the staff in all areas of the department. Many housing directors propose budgets and policy changes to members of this organization as an advisory board in addition to the utilization of this board as a feedback mechanism for student concerns. Informal relationships also exist between the staff of the Housing Department and student members of the organization. Some housing offices support the organizations financially through stipends to leaders, funding transportation and registration fees to conferences, and providing funds for initiatives (McCluskey-Titus & Paterson, 2006). At smaller campuses, the RHA make take the form of the institution's student government association which includes the complete student body as constituents (Bowling 1980).

Student Organizations and Organizational Development

Tuckman (1965) developed a model of four developmental stages composed of orientation, emotionality, openness, and constructive action, which have also been described as forming, storming, norming and performing. Lippitt (1973) developed a model including five stages of the emotional life of the group including trust, self-

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assertion, intimacy, identity, and equilibrium. Also in 1973, a fifth stage was added to Tuckman's model by Napier and Gershenfeld of reforming, which moves the group through a continuous cycle of development. In 1979, Fisher developed a similar four-stage model to Tuckman's which comprises orientation, conflict, emergence, and reinforcement. Fisher states that although groups move through a series of developmental phases, most groups never reach a state where they are not developing. Fisher's (1981) further research describes a mature or healthy organization as one which has well defined goals, optimum use of resources, assimilation of new information, and flexibility. Allen (1983) wrote of four levels of group maturity as opposed to development, which includes programming expertise, commitment to the organization, ability to take responsibility for their own actions and interpersonal skills.

Conyne (1983) created a stage model of group development comprising concentric circles moving through cohesion, organization, resourcefulness, and energy (CORE) based upon the Weisbord (1976) six-factor model. Conyne believed that if these central conditions were met, the student organization was more likely to achieve organizational success and member satisfaction. This model was based upon a 100-item CORE Conditions Checklist assessing member perception of the organization; however, no validity or reliability studies have been conducted on the instrument. Schein (1985) describes four stages of group evolution including formation, building, work, and maturity; however, rather than a linear stage model, a paradoxical model is promoted. Schein holds that that since any issue can resurface and dominate the group's attention at any time, the group may move forward and backward through the different stages.

Organizational development requires the organization to adapt to the way it approaches problem solving and decision making (Burke, 1982). Burke (1994) argues that in order to successfully develop organizations, an easily understood diagnostic model is required that can categorize information about the organization. If most of the organizational issues surround a minimal number of areas, the organizational leaders and members can assess the areas for improvement.

Organizational Effectiveness

Owens, Witten, and Bailey (1982) state that hierarchical organizations have five descriptive characteristics including the organization is a system, it is composed of interrelated components or subsystems, it is in constant interaction with its environment, whatever affects one component of a system also affects all other components, and there is no single best way to approach the organization and administration of the system. Hall (1972) defines effectiveness as "the degree to which an organization realizes its goals" (p. 96). Given that goals can be subjective, other indicators of organizational effectiveness can include the sum of financial resources, balance, and volunteer commitment (Knoke & Wood, 1981). In terms of organizational development, it can be argued that by developing people, leaders can create healthier and more effective organizations; however, others advocate developing organizations to create healthier and more effective people (Mirvis, 1988).

Assessments of effectiveness are primarily judgments that may be based on criteria that are unrelated to constructs of organizational effectiveness (Cameron & Whetton, 1983, Van de Ven, 1980). The importance of the criteria for assessing effectiveness is dependent on the organizational model being used (Goodman &

Pennings, 1980). Because of this, models, criteria, and values can often reflect those ideals held by those who are interested in self-promotion, change, or conflict resolution rather than in increasing organizational performance (Cameron & Whetton; Goodman & Pennings; Zammuto, 1982). Furthermore, different constituent groups may have different perspectives and constructs of organizational effectiveness which lead to different criteria of effectiveness and the improbability of the organization meeting the defined criterion of all constituent groups (Friedlander & Pickle, 1968). Finally, Zammuto posits that measurements of organizational effectiveness are impacted by time and environment.

Manzini (1988) describes four categories of organizational diagnosis to address improvements for organizational effectiveness which are made up of corporate history and culture, organizational processes, organizational resources, and organizational structure. First, corporate history and culture includes stories and folklore, corporate indoctrination, corporate values and beliefs. Next, organizational processes includes authority and power, leadership and power characteristics, problem solving practices, decision making practices, reward systems, and task functions. Then, organizational resources include financial resources, human resources, technological resources, and physical assets and corporate planning and strategy. Finally, organizational structure includes core mission and response to environmental stimuli. Frohman, Sashkin, and Kavanagh (1976) demonstrate that while organizational development may or may not involve data-based diagnosis of organizational issues, action research emphasizes data-based diagnosis of system problems. The action research approach further involves specific actions to be developed based on the issues identified through the course of study.

Effectiveness of Non-Profit Organizations

A definition of a non-profit organization has been established by Salamon and Anheier (1992), which is composed of five qualifiers. First, the organization must be formal and institutionalized. Second, the organization must be institutionally separate from the government. Third, the organizations do not distribute profit amongst owners. Fourth, they are self-governing; and fifth, the organization must involve some level of voluntary participation. Knoke and Wood (1981) define voluntary associations as "formally organized, named collectivities in which the majority of participants do not derive their livelihood from the activities in the group" (p. 8). Moles (1983) defines voluntary associations as "spontaneous groupings of people aiming to act, or react, to certain types of action undertaking by institutions with the purpose of improving the overall or global quality of the function of these institutions" (p. 3). Student organizations can be researched using the same criteria as those of non-profit organizations because the student groups meet the parameters of a voluntary organization.

Mason (1984) posits that leaders in non-profit organizations are responsible for major organizations and although they are knowledgeable in their professional area, they have minimal training in the management of organizations. Measurement difficulties make it complicated to assess the organizational effectiveness of voluntary organizations when compared to for-profit organizations (Knoke & Prensky, 1984; Mason). As such, Knoke and Prensky posit that the ability of the organization to attain goals is a primary determinate of organizational effectiveness within the three constructs of satisfying member demand for services, achieving recognition and legitimacy from constituents, and influencing public policy in membership interest areas.

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Jackson (1999) developed a model of organizational effectiveness based upon gathering perceptions of pre-selected effectiveness indicators in non-profit organizations. This study identifies six indicators for perceptions including management experience, organizational structure, political impact, board of directors' involvement, volunteer involvement, and internal communications.

Effectiveness of Student Organizations

Student organizations are primarily task-oriented groups with moderately defined purposes and some shared goals to achieve group outcomes (Komives 1987; McKaig & Policello, 1984; Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1988). Student organizational effectiveness can be determined through the identification of variables such as service to students, resource acquisition, structure/governance model, effectiveness of the internal processes (executive board), goal attainment/outputs, and relationship to external constituents (Ekeland, 2005; Tucker, 2001).

College student organizational effectiveness has been measured through the Student Organizational Diagnosis Questionnaire (SODQ), developed by Cherrey (1982) as referenced in Schmitz (1997). The questionnaire incorporates Weisbord's Six-Box model (1976) and an instrument by Preziosa wherein the six organizational components are purpose, structure, relationships, rewards, communications systems and leadership. The strength of the Weisbord model is that is it able to encompass interpersonal and group issues as well as complex organizational systems, processes and structures (Manzini 1988). Cherrey added a seventh component to this instrument which measures attitude toward change.

The Student Organization Environmental Scale (SOES) was developed by a team of researchers (Winston et al., 1990 as referenced in Schmitz, 1997) based on eight areas of organizational life including rewards, helpful mechanisms, structure, leadership, purpose, relationship, institutional support, and external support in addition to the CORE conditions checklist (Conyne 1983) and energy. This instrument is utilized to diagnose weaknesses and develop strategies to improve student organizations. The SOES has been determined to have adequate reliability and validity for its use in the practice of organizational development. The authors of this model believe that the SOES could be used as a teaching tool for student leaders and advisers wanting to improve organizational effectiveness, to intervene in poorly functioning organizations by using an action research model, or to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions in student organizations (Schmitz, 1997). Bledsoe (1994) utilized the SOES to evaluate the effectiveness of action research intervention on student organizations which was conducted on the entire membership of the organization rather than solely focusing on student leaders.

Five aspects of institutional support are explored through a study by Janosik, Huesman, and Cibbarelli (1989) including the degree of financial support provided by the institution, the degree of freedom found in the organization's internal decision making processes, the degree of advising given the organization, the degree to which other institutional resources were made available to the organization, and the degree to which the organization participated in the institution's governance process. The study showed that financial support and institutional resources were not found to be significant factors of institutional support, instead showing that support was a process as opposed to something tangible.

Finally, Kouzes and Posner (1993; Posner & Kouzes, 1988) developed the Leadership Practices Inventory to measure the description and differences of behavior between self and observer which has since been to individual college student leaders (Posner & Brodsky, 1992; 1993, 1994). This method is thought to be one of the prevailing methods to analyze individual leader behavior.

Effectiveness of Residence Hall Associations

In many ways, RHAs can be placed in the category of nonprofit organizations because they meet the criterion established by Salamon and Acheier (1992). For example, the organizations collect funding from resident students, university entities, and through fundraising initiatives, of which all funds remain with the organization and are utilized to provide services to students and staff for activities and advocacy. Like all organizations, the effectiveness of the RHA can be measured through a multi-tiered construct including the individual member level, the subgroup level, and the organizational level. Given the structure of the RHA, effectiveness can also be examined through involvement with the campus community or state, regional, and national organizations.

Because the RHA exists within an open system, the external environment of the RHA, including the Housing Department and the greater institution influence organizational effectiveness. Wyatt and Stoner (1984) state that there is a hierarchy of five sequential criteria for the initial development of an RHA or for the reevaluation and improvement of an existing RHA including "an identifiable need for the organization, a substantial level of institutional support, a source of income, a means to ensure and maintain effective leadership, and successful strategies for system maintenance" (p. 3). Furthermore Wyatt and Stoner state that the long and short term goals of the organization

can be evaluated by purpose, compatibility, practicality, feasibility, obtainability, and measurability" (p. 3). Finally, attendance at conferences allows for the awareness of issues at other institutions as well as information for student leaders to utilize with which to create the most effective organization (Wyatt & Stoner).

<div align="center">Organizational Culture</div>

Blake and Mouton (1985) identify organizational universals as having purpose, being made up of organizational membership, power and hierarchy, and including a culture of norms and values which serves as the broader framework in which membership is experienced. Schein (1992) addresses organizational culture as evolving out of individuals seeking to find their space in the area of inclusion, control and acceptance.

Organizational culture can be defined as the set of values, beliefs, and ways of thinking conducted by members in an organization (Schein, 1992). A positive culture exists in organizations when there is an environment of commitment to improvement, goal attainment, and a sense of pride in the tasks being done. Berry and Parasuraman (1991) describe a total quality culture as having an environment where a prevailing theme of trust, teamwork, objective problem solving, and accountability exists. At the other end of the cultural continuum, negative cultures are associated with self-protection and lack of energy. In a negative culture, members are in conflict with each other in an environment of revenge. Denison (1990) postulates the positive relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness in a model which associates four effectiveness criteria found in the four culture types: mission, involvement, consistency, and adaptability. The goal for leaders is to develop knowledge of the process by which culture develops.

Organizational Culture and Effectiveness

The scholarly and popular study of connections between culture and effectiveness became pervasive in 1982 with Peters and Waterman's *In Search of Excellence.* Organizational culture has been defined by several theorists including Deal and Kennedy (1982) who describe culture as the shared values and beliefs interacting with the structures, people, and purpose of the organization that result in behavioral norms. Schein (1985) defines culture as the solutions to issues that are ingrained in the organization so they can be taught to new members as the prevailing method of making assumptions about or addressing future issues. Frost (1985) describes culture as the "glue" of the organization, and Owens (1991) describes culture as the way we do things here.

Understanding the importance of traditions and values of an organization can influence the strength of the organization. "Unlike goals, values are intangible and define a fundamental character that distinguishes an enterprise from others. Values create a sense of identity, from boardroom to factory floor, and make people feel special" (Bolman & Deal, 2003, p. 252). McCluskey-Titus and Paterson (2006) adapt this to RHAs by stating "When current students involved in an RHA (as leaders or as members) know and have known about former student-leaders and the importance of the traditions and values of the organization, it tends to be a stronger organization" (p. 116).

Research has shown that staff participation in decision-making and a team approach to goal attainment are predictors of organizational performance (Denison & Mishra, 1995; Owens, 1991; Petty, Beadles, Lowery, Chapman, & Connell, 1995). Organizational culture including strength and adaptability and the ability to react to the

environment external to the organization is also related to organizational performance (Gordon & DiTomaso, 1992; Kotter & Heskett, 1992).

There is a relationship between a strong, cohesive organizational culture and effective organizations. Boggs's (2004) review of 22 empirical studies related to organizational culture and effectiveness found that each of the studies showed an influence or relationship between the two. Strong, cohesive cultures are those where the majority of the membership shares a set of common values, and heroes, ritual, and ceremonies play an important role in sustaining the culture (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Peters & Waterman, 1982). Block (2002) further explains that culture is not a distinct phenomenon; rather any organizational culture has multiple subcultures that influence the cultural dynamic of an organization.

Robbins (2000) developed six characteristics of organizational culture that included innovation and risk taking, attention to detail, outcomes orientation (ends versus means), people orientation, team orientation (individual versus organization), and aggressiveness (flexibility versus control). Hofstede (2001) explains six different characteristics of organizational culture including holistic, historically determined, anthropology (rituals and symbols), socially constructed, soft, and difficult to change.

Organizational Culture and Effectiveness in Student Organizations

In a 1997 study that sought to translate organizational behavior theory to student organizations, Schmitz found that total cultural strength and organizational effectiveness of student organizations had a significant correlation. Schmitz further found that within the college student organization, culture was established through an exploration of the following components:

1. Symbols, ceremonies, and rituals that become the expected process or behaviors and are passed along as the expected format

2. Traditions and anticipated programs

3. People identified as role models or examples of successful leaders

4. Storytelling, as a means to pass information along

5. Unquestioned decisions and assumptions about aspects of the environment within the organization to describe its climate. (Schmitz, pp. 129-130)

To date, there has been no literature written that specifically discusses the culture of RHAs. Komives and Tucker (1993) have come closest by describing a theme whereby they describe a culture of valuing students and student involvement. Additionally, this research showed that staff held "a deep respect for students and their abilities" (p. 31) and felt that the RHA held a significant role in the overall housing program. Staff felt that it was important to create a culture of the RHA where students felt empowered to conduct the business of the organization.

<center>The Competing Values Framework</center>

Culture types are discussed in some competing values research using terms developed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981,1983) (i.e., human relations model, open system model, rational goal model, and internal process model.) For consistency and clarity, the language used to describe the culture types relating to the competing values model will be the language as conceptualized by Cameron and Quinn (1999, 2006).

The Competing Values Framework (CVF) is a diagnostic tool that can be utilized to inquire into an organization's effectiveness (see Figure 2). The CVF received its name

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because the criteria of effectiveness within each of the four models appear to be in
conflict.
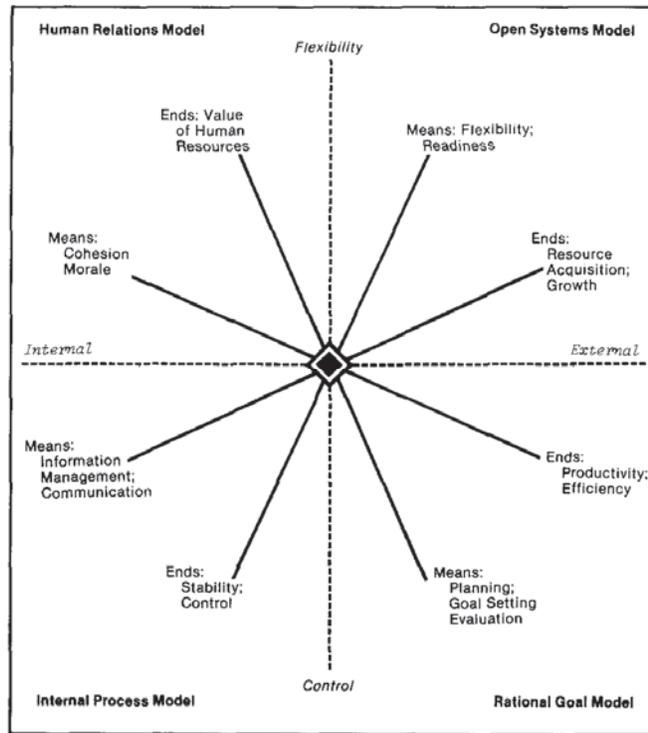
Figure 2. Competing values framework (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1981, 1983).

Organizational stakeholders wish for stability, but also want the organization to be
adaptable to change. Growth and resource acquisition are important for the continued
success of the organization, but much of the communication and processes need formality
(O'Neill & Quinn 1993).

Furthermore, the CVF allows for organizations at different stages in their life
cycle and development by measuring varying degrees of effectiveness within each of the
individual models and criterion (Quinn & Cameron, 1983). To this end, Quinn and
Cameron postulate that as organizations become more formalized, the focus shifts from
open systems and human relations to internal process and rational goals. Thus, goal

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attainment and output become the primary measurement of effectiveness for established organizations leading to maintenance and stability.

The Competing Values Framework provides a validated and focused method that measures effectiveness through an analysis of the central values of the organization (Schein, 1985). Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981, 1983) developed the CVF framework from 30 indexes measuring organizational effectiveness which they identified through a review of the effectiveness literature. Two independent panels were canvassed in order to reduce and organize the list of criteria. In the first stage of the process, criteria were eliminated if the panelists did not believe them to be at the organizational level of analysis, if they were a composite index of several criteria, if they were not a construct but an operationalization, or if they were not a criterion of organizational performance. After the list was narrowed to 30 indexes, two major dimensions and four main clusters emerged and were submitted to a statistical multivariate ordering process. Through the use of multidimensional scaling, the most prominent criteria were plotted on a three-dimensional spatial model, resulting in dimensions of organizational effectiveness. The three-dimensional model of organizational effectiveness is made up of the dimensions of organizational focus, organizational structure, and ends-means. Within these three dimensions, four models coexist: the open systems model, human relations model, internal process model, and rational goal model (Quinn & Rohrbaugh, 1981). In 1983, Quinn and Rohrbaugh developed a spatial model of effectiveness criteria based upon their earlier research to organize the effectiveness criteria which build upon a natural system model and rational model.

The competing values diagnostic framework was constructed and tested at the

Institute for Government and Policy Studies, State University of New York at Albany.

The primary components of this framework are the measures which were developed by

Rohrbaugh to operationalize the concepts in addition to a set of interview questions

focusing on the eight criteria of organizational performance (Faerman & Quinn 1985).

The integrative results of these two measures result in a pictorial representation of a snap-

shot of organizational performance at that moment in time (see Figure 3). Through this

method, the researcher can construct a visual representation of organizational

functioning. The information is plotted on a metric version of the competing values

model which results in a diagram representing the perception by a person or sub-group of

the state of organizational performance. The use of this structure allows for the diagnosis

and answer to the effectiveness question from multiple perspectives (Quinn, Faerman,

Thompson, & McGrath, 1990).
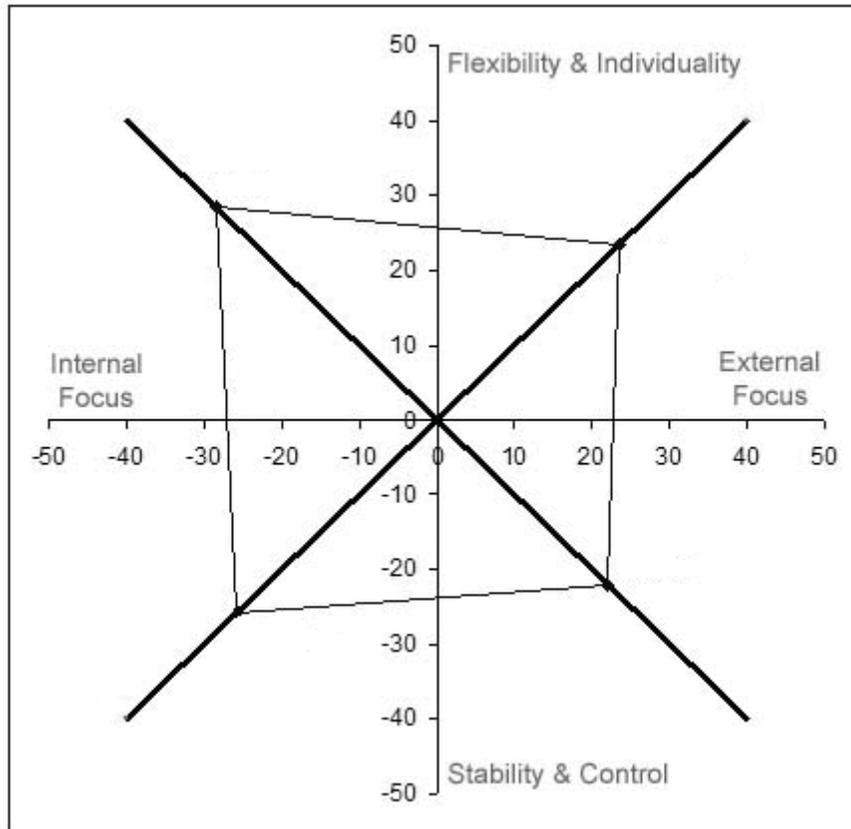
Figure 3. Competing values framework: Pictorial representation of scores.

This framework allows for the organization to determine the effectiveness goals for itself when conducting a diagnostic study of effectiveness as well as setting goals for the criteria of effectiveness. This design provides researchers and organizational leaders with an understandable, yet comprehensive model for organizational diagnosis and analysis. The organizational pictures provide a common language for discussion of organizational effectiveness and performance (Quinn et al., 1990).

Organizational Culture and Effectiveness Using the Competing Values Framework

The Competing Values Framework is one strategy for examining the characteristics of an organizational culture that may impact its organizational

effectiveness and success (Cameron & Quinn 1999). Cameron and Quinn point to two assumptions that they contend are fallacies about effective organizational culture. First, that congruent cultures are a key to successful performance; and second, that organizations which have cultures that are uniformly supportive of the organizational purpose and goals are more successful.

The Organizational Culture Assessment (OCAI) was developed based on two of the three dimensions explained by the Competing Values Framework and provides a method by which organizations can easily analyze their current and preferred culture types. The two dimensions utilized in this framework are flexibility and discretion versus stability and control and internal focus and integration versus external focus and differentiation. The intersection of the two axes divides the model into four quadrants or cultural subsystems—hierarchy, clan, market, and adhocracy (Cameron & Quinn, 1999). Cameron and Ettington (1988) studied a sample of 334 colleges and universities in the United States which showed that culture type is a predictor of dimensions of organizational effectiveness. The Competing Values Framework contends that organizational effectiveness is determined by the organization's ability to consistently achieve valued outcomes within each of the cultural types.

To implement an organizational development intervention, a diagnostic model can be utilized to serve as a representation of the organization. The CVF can be used to assess the ways in which the organization's culture influences its effectiveness. Through this model, a description of the organization's cultural values are related to the effectiveness criteria as described using the framework, then strategies for adapting the culture are suggested by the culture type indicated within the framework. The Competing Values

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Framework can assist in describing the differing perceptions of the organizational

effectiveness by organizational members and stakeholders. The differing values of the

constituent groups will determine the importance of different sectors of organizational

performance (Edwards, Faerman, & McGrath, 1986).

The quadrants of the Competing Values Framework can be defined as follows:

Clan – The organizational culture type reflected in this quadrant holds a concern with

human relations or team model. Groups or subgroups with an emphasis in this

quadrant show an internal focus with an emphasis on flexibility over control.

Group maintenance is a key purpose for groups in this quadrant with belonging

and trust existing as the core values. The development of human resources serves

as an effectiveness outcome.

Adhocracy – The organizational culture type reflected in this quadrant holds a concern

with an open systems or adhocracy model. Similar to the clan culture, the groups

in this quadrant show an emphasis of flexibility over control, however, with a

focus on the external environment. Expansion and transformation are key

purposes for groups in this quadrant with innovation and vision existing as the

core values. Resource acquisition and external supports serve as effectiveness

outcomes.

Market – The organizational culture type reflected in this quadrant holds a concern with a

rational goal model. The groups in this quadrant show an emphasis of order and

predictability, with a focus on the external environment. Goal orientation and

directed leadership are key purposes for groups in this quadrant with efficiency

existing as the core value. Overall effectiveness and productivity serve as the effectiveness outcomes.

Hierarchy – The organizational culture type reflected in this quadrant holds a concern with a hierarchical model. The groups in this quadrant show an emphasis on order and control, however with an emphasis on the internal environment. Information management and communication are key purposes for groups in this quadrant with security existing as the core value. Stability and control serve as the effectiveness outcomes.

Chapter Summary

The issue of measuring RHA effectiveness has been addressed in the literature through several studies; however, to date, no formal investigation has been conducted evaluating differing perspectives of effectiveness by stakeholder groups. It is only through the evaluation of multiple indicators, both internal and external, that a true assessment of effectiveness can be found. For example, effectiveness could be measured based upon total financial resources, number of state, regional, and national awards, or number of events planned and implemented; however, factors such as student satisfaction and leadership development would be neglected. Measuring effectiveness through individual factors can lend to replication of what other institutions have been successful with as opposed to assessing the needs and finding solutions for the individual campus.

Due to the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness shown through both empirical research and theory, the Competing Values Framework is a compelling approach to understanding Residence Hall Associations through both quantitative and qualitative methods. Organizational culture possesses

various values, beliefs, and assumptions of both the whole group and subgroups. Because

of this, leaders of both public and private sector organizations have attempted to improve

organizational effectiveness through the understanding and modification of

organizational culture. Prospective members make judgments about organizational

effectiveness as they make their choices regarding which organization to join or volunteer

for (Cameron, 1986). Thus, the leaders of the RHA must be concerned with effectiveness

in order to ensure sustainability of the organization.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the research methods that were used to

gather and analyze the data addressing the research questions for this study. Included in

this chapter is a description of the diagnostic use of the competing values framework in

addition to a discussion of mixed methods research, the design methodology, the

description of the research participants, data collection, and data analysis procedures. The

purpose of this partially mixed concurrent equal status study was to explore the

relationship between perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness of the entity

defined as the residence hall association. The study took place during the spring semester

of 2008.

Competing Values Framework

The model for the study of organizational culture is based on Quinn and

Rohrbaugh's (1981) Competing Values Model for Organizational Effectiveness. Quinn

and Rohrbaugh base their initial model on the 1959 work of Parsons who developed a

theory of social action signifying four underlying characteristics of systems:

organizational goal attainment, organizational existence within a super system, the

integrative nature of the systems, and the pattern of behaviors descriptive of the system.

Thompson, McGrath, and Whorton (1981) state, "the concept of effectiveness, like the

concept of leadership or motivation, is bewildering in its complexity and in the diversity

of contexts in which it is applied" (p. 190). To this end, Quinn and Rohrbaugh developed

the competing values framework to encompass a continuum for the study of organizational theory. The assumption of the model is that "in all organizations, there are tensions among competing needs, tasks, values and perceptions" (Thompson et al., 1981). However, Quinn (1988) contends that although the criteria identified within each of the quadrants appear contradictory, they are not mutually exclusive.

Organizational culture can be analyzed from several perspectives; one of which is adapted from the Competing Values Framework for the study of organizational effectiveness (Cameron & Quinn, 1999; Quinn, 1988; Quinn & Kimberly, 1984). The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) was developed and has been used for studying corporate culture in the for-profit sector. Cameron and Ettington (1988) found that the cultural assessment used by Cameron (1985) was consistent with the categories established by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981) to diagnose organizational effectiveness in that each culture described in the model exhibits opposing characteristics from the opposite quadrant and some similar characteristics as the adjacent quadrant. Cameron and Ettington explain that "organizations have attributes of more than one of the cultures, and paradoxical cultures often characterize organizations" (p. 373).

Several studies have utilized the Competing Values Framework (CVF) in application to settings within the environment of higher education. For example, Cameron (1986) adapted the organizational effectiveness framework to institutions of higher education, while Smart and St. John (1996) conducted research pointing to the effect of culture type on the performance of institutions of higher education. Cameron found that organizations that focused on innovation and change in addition to stability and control were most effective. Smart and St. John conclude that the cultural types

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explained by the Competing Values Framework are consistent with the literature on organizational culture and are well-suited for the study of colleges and universities. Thus, the model exists as a diagnostic framework measuring the comprehensive functions of the organization.

Mixed Methods Design

Due to the complicated nature of measuring organizational culture and organizational effectiveness, this study utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods. It is useful to utilize mixed methods when the research questions cannot be fully addressed by quantitative or qualitative methods individually (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006). It is believed that by including surveys, observations, individual and focus group interviews, and document collection, a comprehensive evaluation can be generated. To this end, this study included research participants from the residence hall associations of three state funded institutions located in one state in the southeastern United States of America meeting the 2005 Carnegie designation (RU/VH) Research Universities having very high research activity.

A mixed methods research approach represents research for which the collection, analysis, interpretation, and integration of quantitative and qualitative data are utilized for the investigation into a phenomenon (Creswell, 1998; Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Yin, 2003b). Partially mixed methods allow for quantitative and qualitative inquiry to be conducted concurrently and then mixed at the interpretation stage of data analysis (Leech & Onwuegbuzie). Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) reference expansion as one of the purposes for mixed research which they define as seeking to extend the breadth and range of inquiry by using different methods for different inquiry components.

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A partially mixed concurrent equal status design allows for a two-phase study where data collection and analysis occurs concurrently and each holds approximately equal weight in the inferences (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2007). This method is similar to those referred to as concurrent mixed model design (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) and concurrent transformative strategy (Creswell, 1998). Yin (2003a) contends that quantitative process can be used to define the frequency of a phenomenon, while the case study can be used to reveal the process by which the phenomenon takes place. In this case, the two methods of inquiry are conducted independently with the merging of findings in the interpretation stage and final analysis of the data.

As the Competing Values Framework has been developed to include both quantitative and qualitative instruments for the diagnosis of organizational culture, the study incorporated a modified qualitative interview protocol for use with individuals and with focus groups. The data collected through these methods were used in coordination with the results of the quantitative questionnaire to explain the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness of residence hall associations.

<div align="center">Research Design</div>

This study was guided by the overarching inquiry into the relationship between the organizational culture and effectiveness of residence hall associations. Within this context, four quantitative and three qualitative research questions are described in the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis sections of this chapter.

Quantitative data were collected to identify relationships between the ideal organizational culture type scores and three constructs of RHA effectiveness scores in

addition to identifying the impact of organizational membership on culture scores and effectiveness scores. Qualitative data were collected to explore the research participants' perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness in greater detail.

Research Setting

The residence hall associations at three public institutions in the state were included in this study. The institutions selected are public institutions in a southeastern state that meet the Carnegie 2005 classification of Research Universities (very high research activity), and are identified in this study as Institutions Alpha, Beta, and Gamma. The criterion for selecting participant institutions was determined based on similarities in funding and governance structures in addition to policies and procedures. Furthermore, the study was limited to this Carnegie Classification due to the conclusion that institutions with similar classifications would be governed by similar missions. As a homogenous sample of institutions, the university governance structures, student organizational procedures, and funding mechanisms are consistent allowing for the ability to focus on organization-specific characteristics to address the research questions as opposed to those related to the external environment.

Institution Alpha

During the semester of study, Institution Alpha had a student body of approximately 40,474, 75% of which were undergraduate students. Within the undergraduate population, females made up 56.4% of the enrollment and minorities comprised 24.6% (Black, 11.1%; Hispanic, 9.8%; Asian, 3.2%; Native American, 0.6%) of the enrollment. Full-time students made up 83.5% of the students (full-time freshman, 17.9%; full-time sophomores, 14.2%; full-time juniors, 19%; full-time seniors, 18.2%;

full-time graduate students, 14%). Of all first time in college freshman, 58% lived on campus; however, only 16% of the entire undergraduate student population lived on campus. The Housing Department had a maximum capacity of 4,700 for undergraduate student housing with the average annual room cost at $4,500. The mission of the RHA at Institution Alpha is described on their website as follows:

It is the mission of the Residence Hall Association, as an agency of SGA, to create a sense of community among residential students at Institution Alpha. In conjunction with hall councils, RHA will create quality and efficient programming for residential students and develop a seamless campus experience. RHA will also represent residential students to the campus and city community, as well as to the state, regional, and national conferences. In this way, RHA will provide leadership to residential students.

Institution Beta

During the semester of study, Institution Beta had a student body of approximately 51,520, 70.2% of which were undergraduate students. Within the undergraduate population, females made up 53.4% of the enrollment and minorities comprised 34.2% (Black, 9.6%; Hispanic, 13%; Asian, 7.3%; Native American, 0.3%) of the enrollment. Full-time students made up 62% of the students (full-time freshman, 18.4%; full-time sophomores, 13.2%; full-time juniors, 21%; full-time seniors, 20.9%; full-time graduate students, 18.5%). Of all first time in college freshman, 79% lived on campus; however, only 22% of the entire undergraduate student population lived on campus. The Housing Department had a maximum capacity of 7,000 for undergraduate

student housing with the average annual room cost at $3,786. From the Residence Hall Association (RHA) website, the mission of the Residence Hall Association is as follows:

The Residence Hall Association at Institution Beta, herein referred to as RHA, has been established for the purpose of coordinating hall council activities and representing and serving the collective interests of all the residents as decided by the representatives to RHA. RHA will promote the University's academic and social missions and encourage leadership development among its members. RHA will further serve as a channel of communication between the residence hall community, the Department of Housing, the University community, and outside interests.

Institution Gamma

During the semester of study, Institution Gamma had a student body of approximately 38,521, 76.2% of which were undergraduate students. Within the undergraduate population, females made up 58.9% of the enrollment and minorities comprised 24.6% (Black, 11.1%; Hispanic, 9.8%; Asian, 3.2%; Native American, 0.6%) of the enrollment. Full-time students made up 71.2% of the students (full-time freshman, 23.3%; full-time sophomores, 16.2%; full-time juniors, 22%; full-time seniors, 21.5%; full-time graduate students, 12%). Of all first time in college freshman, 55% lived on campus; however, only 12% of the entire undergraduate student population lived on campus. The Housing Department had a maximum capacity of 4,430 for undergraduate student housing with the average annual room cost at $4,270. From the Residence Hall Association (RHA) website, the mission of the Residence Hall Association is as follows:

The Residence Hall Association at Institution Gamma, herein referred to as the

RHA, has been established for the purpose of representing and helping student

residents address issues and concerns about their welfare at Institution Gamma. In

addition, it will also serve to generate and support activities and programs with

the goal of uniting all halls as a community and governmental body on campus.

Quantitative Design

The quantitative design was based on two separate instruments, the

Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) designed by Cameron and Quinn

(1999, 2006) and Tucker's (2001) Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness

Instrument. Copies of the OCAI and RHA Effectiveness Instrument are located in

Appendixes A and B respectively. Both surveys were used with permission of the authors

(see Appendixes I, J, K). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to address the

research questions. The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the

Social Sciences (SPSS 15.0) software.

Instrumentation

The OCAI assesses six dimensions of organizational culture including dominant

characteristics, organizational leadership, management of employees, organization glue,

strategic emphases, and criteria of success, which serve to identify the respondent's

perception of the assumptions under which the organization operates. There are four

questions related to each of the six dimensions for which the participant responds to on a

six-point Likert scale between *strongly disagree* and *strongly agree.* One of the four

questions within each dimension is connected to one of the four ideal culture types (Clan,

Adhocracy, Hierarchy, or Market). The mean of the six scores connected to the ideal

culture type results in the organizational culture score for the individual participant. The mean score for participants in each of the identified groups in the sample serves as the perception of organizational culture score identified by the research questions.

Reliability of the instrument used for this study refers to the consistency by which the instrument measures culture types. The reliability of the OCAI has been tested by several studies including Quinn and Spreitzer (1991) in which evidence of significant Cronbach alpha coefficients were computed for each of the culture types assessed by the instrument. The results of this study showed coefficients of 0.74 for Clan culture, 0.79 for Adhocracy culture, 0.73 for Hierarchy culture, and 0.71 for Market culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). Furthermore, in a 1991 study referenced by Cameron and Quinn (2006), Yueng, Brockbank, and Ulrich showed the reliability coefficients for Clan culture at 0.79, Adhocracy culture at 0.80, Hierarchy culture at 0.76, and the Market culture at 0.77. Finally, Zammuto and Krakower (1991) conducted a study of institutions of higher education that showed the reliability coefficients for Clan culture at 0.82, for Adhocracy at 0.83, for Market culture at 0.78, and for Hierarchy culture at 0.67 (Cameron & Quinn).

Validity refers to the extent to which the values that are to be measured are actually being measured. Research by Cameron and Freeman (1991) showed validity for the instrument through the study of organizational culture in 334 institutions of higher education. Quinn and Spreitzer (1991) utilized a multitrait-multimethod analysis and a multidimensional scaling analysis to show convergent validity and discriminant validity (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

The Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument is a 94-question assessment that provides descriptors of organizational behavior on which participants are

asked to identify the level where the organization exhibits the behaviors through a six-point Likert-scale ranging from *to no extent* to *to a great extent*. The 94 questions are divided into three constructs of effectiveness for RHAs: RHA Effects (56 items), Housing Relationship (17 items), and Formal Processes (21 items) (Tucker, 2001). Mean scores of the questions within each of the constructs provide three effectiveness scores for each research participant. The mean score for participants in each of the identified groups in the sample serves as the three effectiveness scores identified by the research questions.

The Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument was developed as part of a doctoral dissertation and to date has not been utilized in any study. Thus, reliability and validity are solely available from the initial development. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were completed for RHA Effects at .99, Housing Relationship at .97, and Formal Processes at .97 (Tucker, 2001). Validity was shown through an exploratory factor analysis showing strong support for construct validity (Tucker).

Quantitative Research Questions and Related Hypotheses

The four research questions guiding the quantitative phase of this study were written with the intention of examining the relationship between perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness of residence hall associations. The null hypotheses are synthesized as part of a family of null hypotheses, which include hypotheses about each ideal culture type and each construct of effectiveness. The quantitative research questions are as follows:

1. What is the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and RHA group membership (RHA Legislative Body, Hall Council, Housing Staff)?

Null Hypothesis: There is no statistically significant relationship between ideal culture score and member affiliation of RHAs.

2. What is the relationship between the perceptions of RHA effectiveness and RHA group membership?

Null Hypothesis: There is no statistically significant relationship between construct of effectiveness scores and member affiliation of RHA.

3. What is the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and perceptions of RHA effectiveness?

Null Hypothesis: There is no statistically significant relationship between ideal culture score and indictor of RHA Effectiveness scores for RHAs.

4. What is the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and perceptions of RHA Effectiveness as moderated by RHA group membership?

Null Hypothesis: There is no interaction between group membership and ideal culture type score on the perceptions of effectiveness.

Quantitative Sample

The sample for the quantitative phase of the study included all members of the RHA Legislative Body as determined by the organizational constitution, members of hall councils as determined by the organizational constitution, and housing staff as determined by the organizational chart of the residential life area of the organization's host institution.

The sample for the study was stratified into three categories designated as residence hall association legislative body members, hall council members, and housing staff members. Due to organizational structure, there was overlap between some

members of the RHA Legislative Body and hall council members. Participants who fell

in to both categories were placed into the RHA Legislative Body. Descriptive data were

also collected on each of the research participants for use in describing the population

studied. The sample for each of the categories was RHA Legislative Body (n=83), Hall

Council (n=94), and Housing Staff (n=40).

Quantitative Data Collection

Approval from the institutional review board at each of the institutions

participating in the study was granted before the commencement of research. Following

this approval, permission to collect data, including attendance at meetings, was obtained

from the director of housing at the respective institutions. Once this consent had been

granted, the researcher contacted the institution's RHA President to request authorization

to observe the executive board and legislative body meetings in addition to distribution of

the survey. The survey, including instructions and goals for the study, was distributed to

participants at either hall council, RHA, or housing staff meetings (see Appendix K). The

researcher was present at the meetings of the RHA, professional staff, and most hall

council meetings for the distribution of surveys; however, in some instances, members of

the housing staff were asked to assist in the distribution and collection of surveys at hall

council meetings. It was believed that through presence of the researcher and the

designated meeting time, the response rate would be high. Although some absences to the

meeting occurred, the researcher was able to collect an adequate representation of

organizational members and staff members for the study.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed utilizing the SPSS software. Data were entered from the hand-written surveys by the researcher into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. The data were then checked to ensure that the scores of the seven variables would be accurate given that some respondents did not respond to all of the survey questions. If a respondent did not respond to an inquiry for the OCAI, the score for that question's response to the ideal culture type was removed from the data set. Furthermore, if a respondent did not respond to more than 10% of the questions corresponding to an effectiveness construct, the effectiveness construct was removed from the data set. Once all variables were checked for accuracy, this data set was imported into SPSS.

To address the first research question, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was utilized to investigate the relationship between each of the dependent variables identified as Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy, and Market ideal culture scores and each of the independent variables identified by group membership identified as Housing Staff, RHA Legislative Body, and Hall Council.

Next, the second research question was explored through analysis of variance (ANOVA) to investigate the relationship between each of the dependent variables identified as RHA Effects, Housing Relationship, and Formal Processes and each of the independent variables identified by group membership.

The third question examined the correlation between each of the dependent variables identified as RHA Effects, Housing Relationship, and Formal Processes and each of the independent variables identified as Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy, and Market ideal culture scores was investigated.

Finally, to consider the fourth research question, a regression analysis was conducted to examine the effect of group membership on the relationship between each ideal culture type and construct of effectiveness. This design allowed for the effect of two independent variables defined as group membership and ideal culture score on a dependent variable defined as the three constructs of effectiveness.

Graphical representations of the data were used to assist in the organization and interpretation of findings. For all tests, the significance of the correlation between the independent and dependent variables was be tested at $\alpha = .05$ levels of significance. Due to the design, a Bonferroni adjustment was necessary; adjustments to α are discussed as appropriate.

Qualitative Design

Qualitative Research Questions and Related Hypotheses

The three qualitative research questions for the study were written with the intention of examining the relationship between perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness in residence hall associations.

1. How do the operations of the RHA influence the member perception of ideal culture type?

2. In what ways does group membership influence the perception of ideal culture type?

3. How does the perception of organizational culture influence the perceptions of organizational effectiveness of RHAs?

The qualitative section of the study used a multiple case explanatory approach to describe in further detail the perception of the ideal cultural types defined by the

competing values framework and their relation to organizational effectiveness of RHAs. This approach is defined as focusing on two or more cases utilized to present data which discuss a cause-effect relationship (Yin, 2003a). Miles and Huberman (1994) explain that much of the reason for conducting multiple case studies is to "look at processes and outcomes across many cases, to understand how they are qualified by local conditions, and thus to develop more sophisticated description and more powerful explanations" (p. 172).

Consistent with the case study design, multiple data collection methods including individual and focus group interview, observation, and document analysis were implemented. Creswell (1998) points to the use of multiple methods as increasing the support for the findings. Stake (2006) believes that focus groups can be helpful when the researcher is short on time; however, he believes that they do not always provide good evidence for the researcher.

The individual interviews were conducted utilizing a modified version of the *Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Organizational Analysis* (Quinn, 1988). Furthermore, organizational constitutions and policies were examined, and both a RHA executive board meeting and residence hall association meeting were attended.

Qualitative Sample

Each RHA incorporated in the study served as a bounded case. A mixed sampling method was utilized to identify participants from the member group's legislative body, hall council, and housing staff to allow for flexibility as well as to meet the needs of the research (Kuzel, 1992, as cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994; Patton, 1990, as cited in Miles & Huberman, 1994). To this end, nine 45- to 60-minute individual interviews were

arranged with three from hall councils; three from the legislative body (one of which was

the organization president); and three from the housing staff (one of which was the RHA

Adviser). The individual interview participants were identified through a reputational

case selection where research participants are chosen on the recommendation of the

expert or key information (Goetz & Lecompte, 1984, cited in Miles & Huberman). The

researcher also requested for at least two of the individuals identified to be those who,

although involved in the organization, did not espouse values which were congruent with

the other members in terms of philosophy of the organization. A focus group session was

held for legislative body members and for hall council members to add to triangulation of

data.

Qualitative Data Collection

     Instrumentation. Individual and focus group interviews were conducted utilizing

the *Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Organizational Analysis* which

was adapted for use with residence hall associations. This instrument, developed by

Quinn (1988), was utilized to add depth to the data collected through the quantitative

instrument. The original interview protocol consisted of four general introductory

questions; eight questions from the quadrant representing the human relations model of

the Competing Values Framework, which is connected to the clan ideal culture type;

eight from internal processes/adhocracy; seven questions from the rational goal

model/hierarchy; eight questions from the open systems/market; and one concluding

question. These data were used to assess the perceptions of organizational culture within

each of the dimensions in the framework per subgroup. To ensure the applicability of the

instrumentation, a pilot study of the instrument was conducted with members of a

residence hall association not involved as part of the study. Interview questions were adapted as appropriate.

Individual interviews. The individuals invited to participate in the individual interviews were selected from a pool of participants recommended by the organization adviser and president. Interviews were arranged in advance of the site visit with a reminder e-mail sent three days before and a phone call one day prior to the interview.

Individual interviews were conducted in conference rooms and offices on the campus of the respective institution. The researcher collected data using an interview protocol of open-ended questions that the researcher asked of each participant. Each interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. These interviews took place over a three- to four-day period.

At the beginning of each interview, the researcher reminded the research participant that the interview would be recorded, that their responses would be kept anonymous and confidential, and informed the participant that they were free to choose not to respond to any of the questions. Once that information had been covered, the researcher distributed a demographic and informational questionnaire (see Appendix M) as well as a consent form to sign. Due to the nature of the study, information about the study was discussed following the interview to keep this information from impacting the answers to the question.

Each of the interviews was digitally recorded with the consent of the research participant and was transcribed verbatim. The typed transcripts were then sent to each interview research participant as a form of member-checking the document. Pseudonyms were utilized in the typed transcript to allow for the anonymity of the participant. As the

transcripts were typed, references made to the names of buildings, cities, people, or organizations were changed to protect the anonymity of the interviewee and RHA. Finally, notes were taken during the interview and immediately following, a field note was written to assist the researcher in analyzing the transcription.

Focus group interviews. Focus group interviews took place with members of the legislative body and hall councils as individual sessions. All organizational members were invited through an e-mail invitation sent through the organization adviser and president prior to the researcher arriving at the campus. Individuals selected to participate in individual interviews were not permitted to participate in the focus group interviews.

Focus group interviews were conducted in conference rooms on the campus of the respective institutions. The researcher collected data using open-ended interview questions that the researcher asked of the participants. Each interview lasted approximately 90 minutes and was conducted over a two- to three-day period.

At the beginning of the interview, the researcher distributed a consent form and reminded the research participants that the interview would be recorded, that their responses would be kept anonymous and confidential, and informed the participants that they were free to choose not to respond to any of the questions. Due to the nature of the study, information about the study was discussed at the close of the interview to keep this information from impacting the answers to the question.

Interviews were taped with the consents of the research participants and transcribed verbatim. The emergent themes from the individual focus groups were sent to each focus group participant as a form of member-checking the document. Finally, notes

were taken during the interview and immediately following, a field note was written to assist the researcher in analyzing the transcription.

Observations. The data collection methods included two field observation sites identified as a residence hall association meeting and a residence hall association executive board meeting. The observations were conducted to gain an impression of the operations of the institutional RHA in order to triangulate this data with themes that emerged from the individual interviews and focus groups. The observation of the RHA meetings was the entirety of both the general body and executive meeting. Notes were taken throughout the meeting and a field note was written immediately following the conclusion of the meeting,

At several times, the opportunity presented itself to be a participant observer, during which the researcher took place in this interaction. Furthermore, when clarification was necessary, the researcher approached participants following the meeting, taking care not to disturb the integrity of the observation. As the researcher examined the RHA meeting (see Appendix F) and executive board meeting (see Appendix E), detailed notes were kept of what was occurring, from the environment to the individual students to the interaction among students.

Document review. Related documents that had the potential to assist in answering the research questions were identified and analyzed. These documents included organizational constitutions and policy manuals, training materials, award nominations, meeting agendas and minutes, institutional and organizational websites, and institutional and organizational marketing materials (see Appendix G). The documents were reviewed

to see if the information located in them was consistent or supportive with the activity in meetings and with the themes that emerged from the interview data.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative measures served the purpose of gaining a deeper understanding of the culture of the organizations being studied as well as the interaction of culture, processes, and effectiveness. Due to the nature of the research questions, this study included both single-case and cross-case analysis. The recordings from the individual and focus group interviews were transcribed, coded, and categorized to find emergent themes and trends in the data. The constant comparative method was utilized as transcripts were read and re-read until redundancy occurred.

Interviews were typed into a Microsoft Word document and read and re-read to find emergent themes. These themes were assigned a specific color and the researcher color-coded the data based on the themes.

The field notes generated through observations and information found in the documents were analyzed to see if the materials supported or conflicted with the emergent themes. Keeping in mind the research question, the researcher attempted to draw a connection between the activity of the meeting and content of the organizational documents to find support and dissent of the themes which emerged from the interviews.

Each case was examined independently initially through a within case analysis followed by a cross-case analysis for the entire population and stratified by member group. The data were analyzed and reported first by case and then through cross case. In Miles and Huberman (1994), Ragin (1987) states that in a multiple case-study approach,

the researcher considers the cases individually, looking at the data within case, and then conducts a comparative analysis of all cases; looking for similarities as well as differences. Furthermore, Yin (2003a) states that although the cases will vary in specific details, the researcher should seek to find an explanation of the phenomenon that describes each of the individual cases.

Following the individual case analysis, the researcher utilized Stake's (2006) method, which offers a series of matrixes used for cross-case analysis. Stake offers several courses of analysis which instruct the researcher through phases of collecting individual themes, merging these themes into multi-case assertions, and then finalizing cross-case assertions.

Reliability, Validity, Generalizability

"Reliability in a research design is based on the assumption that there is a single reality and that studying it repeatedly will yield the same results (Merriam, 1998, p. 205)." With this in mind, it is believed that due to the diagnostic nature of this research that the outcomes are reliable for the three institutions identified and the member groups making up the institutional RHA. However, as Merriam (1998) discusses, reliability does not fit into qualitative research neatly due to the fact that one is studying human behavior, which is not a "static" element.

The discussion on reliability leads to the issue of generalizability. Merriam (1998) explains generalizability as external validity and according to her resources "in multicase or cross-case analysis, the use of predetermined questions and specific procedures for coding and analysis enhances the generalizability of findings (p. 208)." The researcher engaged in these activities leading to the belief that the research has a generalizable

quality. Furthermore, Miles and Huberman (1994) contend that one of the reasons to study multiple cases is to increase generalizabilty.

When dealing with the issue of validity threats, Maxwell (2005) states that researchers must be careful of inserting their own bias and influence on the research. Reactivity as Maxwell describes it is "the influence of the researcher on the setting or individuals studied (p. 108)." Asking non-leading, open-ended question and allowing the interviewees to talk about themselves and their experiences was to provide the researcher thick, rich data relating to the research.

Merriam (1998) discusses six tactics to check validity: triangulation, member checks, long-term observation, peer examination, participatory or collaborative modes of research, and researcher's biases. The methods utilized employed triangulation, member checks, and researcher's biases as part of the validity checks. Not only did triangulation occur among the data but also with the utilization of member-checking the transcript of individual interviews and themes from focus group interviews. Finally, a research journal was kept for the entirety of the study.

<center>Potential Ethical Issues</center>

To ensure the protection of the participants, approval to conduct this study was requested from the Institutional Review Board, Human Subjects Review Committee at Florida Atlantic University as well as at the three institutions where research was conducted. When the individual and focus group interviews were organized, participants were informed that the interview was to be digitally recorded and all responses kept confidential. Additionally, in the e-mails confirming individual interview participation as

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well as at the beginning of the focus group interview, the research participants were reminded as well.

Maxwell (2005) warns the researcher that the utilization of existing theory requires cognizance in using theory to frame the phenomena, but not allowing it to skew the analysis of data. Maxwell recommends looking for the data that is not supportive of the theory framing the phenomena in an attempt to refute it.

Finally, as the methodology for this research was examined, there were several personal assumptions, beliefs, and biases that needed to be considered in order to minimize the potential for these assumptions, beliefs, and biases to impact the research. First, at the time of study the researcher was employed as a mid-level housing professional working in an advising capacity of two residence hall organizations in addition to acting as the adviser for the state coordinating body of college and university residence hall associations. Additionally, the researcher has significant historical information about one of the organizations having been involved in this organization as an undergraduate and graduate student. Finally, at the time of research, the researcher held 10 years of professional and 4 years of paraprofessional experience at three separate housing departments at institutions of higher education. Given the aforementioned details, several of the research participants knew the researcher, which could have impacted the data collection due to a level of informality in the interviews and a familiarity with the data collected.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provides the overview of the research methods utilized to collect and analyze the data addressing the research questions. It is believed that through the

implementation of the protocols described, the study provides significant insight into the

relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness of residence hall

associations.

CHAPTER 4

INSTITUTION ALPHA

Student Involvement

The student involvement in the RHA at Institution Alpha is limited considering

the campus population. The opportunity for involvement is considered a learning

experience, which includes leadership skills, program planning, and teamwork. Given the

organizational structure, there is a stronger emphasis placed on involvement in the hall

councils as opposed to the RHA in that each hall council is responsible for sending only

one representative to the RHA meetings. As such, the recruitment of members to the hall

councils is a primary focus with the involvement in the RHA growing out of the in hall

involvement. The RHA relies heavily on the advisers and the resident assistants for the

initial recruitment of members at the beginning of the year. As the RHA Adviser stated:

> Staff that are really dedicated to it, that at move-in are just pushing it and that
>
> have RAs who have been on hall council who will tell you it's just the most
>
> amazing thing they've ever done, they have them sitting at tables at check-in,
>
> great hall governments. Those staffs that don't push it that way, that aren't as
>
> dedicated, don't have as strong a hall council, have a harder time recruiting.

The primary motivating factors for students to become involved are either to have

fun, become connected to the institution, or developing their resume; whether for resident

assistant or other leadership positions. Because of this, it is difficult to recruit in those

residence halls which have a large number of upper-class students in residence who either

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know and are not interested in hall council or already have their peer networks established. While the hall councils have executive boards, floor representation is difficult to obtain, possibly because these students do not appear to have a significant role in the organization.

There is mixed evidence pointing to whether or not students are aware of the hall councils in their buildings, however, it is felt by members of the hall councils that only those students that actually come to the meetings are aware that this organization is a subgroup of the RHA. As one adviser stated, "I wouldn't necessarily include our General Body members in each hall as a part of RHA or a working body of RHA, because they don't really attend the meetings or anything like that." One hall council member described the RHA in relation to the hall council as being there to "watch over them, helps them out if they need help, and then puts on like a big social twice a year." Another hall council adviser agreed, stating:

> Some might say that it's RHA's job to, to not like plan to get people out, cause that's the hall council's job, they're just there to watch over the hall council, and so RHA is, is like government and like the states, say would be the halls, and so they, they plan for themselves and RHA just watches over them, and just doesn't really, it just make sure that they don't like break the rules, so they plan themselves, but I think that they're supposed to get involved with every hall as well, like help them out when you know when they need help, even when they don't need help.

Retention of members in the organization is a prevailing issue because as one adviser explained, "Hall council is the first thing they get involved in and then they find

something else, and then they kind of let hall council go." One adviser did remark that there is a "student condition" that results in apathy from the resident students:

> From my personal experience in a hall council and in a student government, that I mean, you're wearing so many hats as a student leader, and you're trying to convince all these volunteers that it's worthwhile for them to volunteer, and that's where, cause to my knowledge, none of them are getting paid for that. And so, it's pretty difficult to convince all these guys to volunteer for stuff. And that anything is just the student condition, I mean if were some sort of corporation you know and you're getting paid to do it or your some sort of corporation or even a non-profit, getting like personal satisfaction from doing it, you're, it's on a different level from what we're doing.

Some advisers felt that retention during the year was negatively impacted by the students' inability to see the immediate benefit from their involvement. It was believed that the students want to see the value of the contribution of their time and effort in addition to wanting to enjoy themselves at meetings and events. The issue of member retention was apparent not only to the leadership of the organization, but members as well, one of whom commented, "Last year at the banquet, there was only one hall council that actually stayed for two semesters, and he won like Hall Council President of the Year by default, and everybody was really, really shocked cause he was like horrible."

Most students do not stay remain involved into a second year, although the benefit to the organization of retaining members was understood by advisers. The retention issue is compounded by the fact that to remain involved, the student must reside in University Housing past their first year in college. The culture of the institution as explained by both

advisers and students was that most students move off campus after their first year. One adviser explained this as follows, "I think that's the biggest issue especially here, there aren't a lot of upper class students that stay on campus any longer, so keeping them involved in an organization tied to the residence halls is very difficult." Because of this, the hall councils, and thus the general assembly of the RHA re-establishes itself annually, leaving those students that do remain on campus and remain involved to start with what in some cases is a new organization; unless they join the RHA executive board. In addition, some students are forced to live off campus due to financial limitations, as was described by one RHA member:

> Next year, financially, because of financial reasons, I'm trying to find a cheaper place than on campus, which might mean that I'm moving to a less than nice facility, but otherwise, there's a very good chance I would have stayed on campus and tried to get more involved with RHA, which you're not allowed to do if you're not on campus, cause it is a housing campus organization.

Involvement in RHA and hall council was viewed as fun, but also a tremendous commitment. On the organization's website, there are photographs of students involved in different activities, all of whom appear to be having an enjoyable time. The RHA meeting was held at the Student Union, and while a central location, a less sterile location might lend to more energy in the meeting. Furthermore, the set-up of the meeting did not allow for group interaction nor did the participants appear to be engaged.

Some hall government members understood their role to be simultaneously fun and serious, one of whom commented:

It really is something serious that you need to be involved in, and, because we're responsible for making our residents happy and making sure they have a good time while they live here, so it's not something that you see taken lightly.

The level of perceived commitment necessary coupled with the lack of compensation, can lead to students not wanting to be involved beyond membership on hall council unless they are elected to the RHA executive board. Most members of the Executive Board have been recruited by friends that currently serve on the board and the only time that commitment from these members to the organization wanes is when the officers feel that they are receiving an overwhelming amount of negative feedback. The executive board members, who are considered to be the most dedicated to the organization, were working toward receiving a discount on their housing fees in return for their service to the organization. The President and Vice-President of the organization received a stipend from the institutional Student Government for their roles.

The advising of the hall council is a role that was carried out by either a full-time or graduate staff member depending on their interest. The advising role typically takes up to three hours per week conducting meetings with executive board members, attending meetings, and assisting with financial and other records. The adviser was viewed as essential to the success of the hall council, as described by the RHA Adviser, "You get two people in a building and somebody has to advise, and if both people don't feel like advising is their strength or it's not something they really like to do, like they don't get evaluated very well on that." She continued by stating that, "Probably our three least successful hall councils have a lot to do with the fact that their adviser's not very dedicated to them." This sentiment was echoed by some of the RHA members one of

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whom stated, "I think that some of the professional staff, some don't like advising." One of the difficulties for the adviser was that there were some staff members who had come from other institutions and wanted their hall council or the RHA to conform to what their image of the organization should be.

<div align="center">Leadership Development and Training</div>

One of the main activities that the RHA engaged in is the training and development of student leaders who make up both the legislative body and the hall councils. Initial planning for this component of the organizational activity takes place at a summer retreat, which includes the executive board and adviser who plan out the goals and activities for the fall semester. Participation in this retreat is constitutionally mandated for the organizational officers. The next component occurs shortly after hall elections and includes the training of all hall officers on both the content of the organizational by-laws and programming procedures. Both the timing of the training and attendance at the training is constitutionally mandated to take place no later than one week following the fall elections of hall council officers. The planning for this training is viewed by some of the RHA Executive Board as one of the most critical annual decisions; as was described by one executive board member:

> At our fall retreat when we plan out our training for the hall council members throughout the year, because it shows how the whole, on campus population interacts with the RHA, whether they know it or not, so if we train everyone really well and all the hall council members take home an excellent idea about what their job entails and what their mission is, the students get the benefit of that.

The training was perceived by members of the hall council as being partly position related and partly on how the councils interact with the RHA. It was also a time for the RHA Executive Board to discuss their goals for the year and assist the hall councils in planning their initiatives. In addition to the initial training, there are monthly meetings and weekend events for members to build leadership skills and develop community within and among the hall councils, however, these sessions were not mandatory. Finally, another session is planned at the beginning of the spring semester for new and returning members. One of the hall council members stated, "I think that the, the training, of the hall council members is the most important, like outside expectation, because they're the ones that are the closest to the students."

Although the RHA Executive Board plans training for the members of the general body and hall councils, from the perspective of advisers, training of the hall councils was primarily their responsibility. As one adviser discussed:

> For lack of a better phrase, I am their training, I sit down with them, I kind of tell them what their job is, what are the duties that they need to fulfill, share with them kind of the things that the person in their position before them have done in the past; and I also make sure they have a copy of the by-laws.

Many of the hall council members agreed that that the adviser played a significant role in the development of the organization, one of whom stated, "They're a very large source of information and help and I know that you can always go to any of them, and get help from them if you're having trouble programming or getting people to come out to socials."

Even with the planned training by the RHA Executive Board and the hall council adviser, some members did not feel the training was as comprehensive as they would have liked. Although they did not feel unprepared to conduct the responsibilities of their position, they did believe that a shadowing period might have been beneficial. One hall council member described the training as:

> All the positions of all the halls came and they split us up and they went over what was going to be required of us, so that was our training, but as for being teamed up with someone and working maybe behind them in their shoes for a couple of weeks, there was nothing like that.

Those officers who had been elected after the initial training session tended to learn their positions from their colleagues in like positions in other halls. The hall council members were mixed in terms of their feeling on the substance of the training, by either the RHA or the advisers. As one member stated, "There aren't that many training opportunities, it's, it's really just at the beginning you know, you just get taught mainly what to do and then throughout the year if you have questions, you know they help you out." However, another member stated:

> They always do, they always suggestions at those about, ways to program or get involved, get your residents to be involved and the, and residence life in your hall, so I really they are, they're a very large source of information and help and I know that you can always go to any of them, and get help from them if you're having trouble programming or getting people to come out to socials, or just, you know, a better way to make your residents happy, you know throughout, doing things in your hall.

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Following the training, most of the learning took place during meetings where processes were better explained. This was seen as beneficial by several of the RHA members, one of whom stated, "Because there's only a certain point where you could show the people the way, after a while, they have to start walking it; which I've seen a lot of the people start doing, which you know has been awesome." The knowledge that the general assembly members received at the RHA meetings was communicated by them to the hall council members through assistance in planning events.

The experiential preparation of executive board members was more intentional with the term beginning and ending in February of the calendar year as opposed to the academic year. The constitution describes the training of executive board members in specific detail regarding both the election and training cycle in addition to the responsibility of the current executive board members to "properly train and mentor their incoming replacement for the months of January and February." Elections for the new executive board are held in November and the students begin a transitional period where they shadow the person currently holding the position until they are sworn in. In addition, a two-day training takes place early in the spring semester during which the new officers receive a binder of transition materials including instructions on how to accomplish the tasks of their position.

The leadership development component is one that causes the advisers to balance the need for the organization to be both productive and meet the requirements of the university. As one adviser described his role, "Things like making sure they're on the right path for success; attending their meetings to make sure they're congruent with University policy and housing policy in everything we do." Advisers believed that the

training component led to the students having more significant commitment to the organization. This level of commitment resulted in increased organizational productivity, as members were not constantly concerned with training new officers as had been the case in previous years. This value was shared by the RHA Executive Board who believed that better trained members would be more likely to persist in the organization over the course of their academic career.

Advisers believed that the focus on overall leadership as opposed to solely training on position is what has led to the retention of members which was supported by one adviser as follows:

> They need to train the student leaders, they've been really conscious this year about the fact that leadership is not about the position you hold, but how you hold that position and really trying to focus on that with the students.

This retention was thought by the advisers to contribute not only to the continued success of the RHA, but to the overall productivity of the Housing Department, specifically:

> If we can retain those student leaders, Housing benefits because they have a stronger pool of RA Candidates and a stronger pool of receptionists, and hall council, and if we can get people to return to hall council for a second year, that's great for us, because that's that much easier if you have somebody who understands the traditions.

Leadership development was seen by the advisers as being one of the primary benefits that student leaders gain through their involvement with the organization. Students also saw this as being beneficial to their ability to become resident assistants, feeling that the experience was a "great training ground to prepare for going through the RA process."

Another adviser stated that involvement in hall council was, "An excellent leadership opportunity especially for students that are just walking in the door, it's simply a way for them to be meeting other students in their hall, and helping them kind of take a hold in forming the community."

Training of advisers was a critical piece missing from the overall training program for the residential life staff. Some of the advisers began their role with no formal experience with hall councils or RHA, which has required them to learn the responsibilities for their role as they were performing it. One adviser stated, "I'd had no hall council experience from my undergrad, so coming in here, and being thrown in the circle of things I wasn't exactly sure what to do." Without experience or formal training, the new advisers were reliant on the organization adviser or executive board members to prepare them.

Although the organization won national merit for the training program developed for students during the year of the study, much of the discussion about the future of the organization centered on the way that hall councils would be trained and the role they would play in the development of the RHA. Advisers, organizational members, and organizational leaders felt that more training could be conducted with the hall council members.

In addition to the leadership development that occurred, a large focus of the training for the RHA and hall council members surrounded programming. This is due to the thought that the success of the organization somewhat hinges on the outcome of programming. The RHA Executive Board is responsible for the programming of the organization and although there is a committee structure discussed in the Constitution,

this was not carried out in practice. One RHA member stated, "I notice that in the social turnouts, and how well activities are attended and the enthusiasm of our residents, so that's the biggest accomplishment, and the biggest feedback is right there." The monthly meetings include a session where suggestions are made by the RHA Executive Board of how to involve more students in programs and initiatives. Additionally, a substantial part of hall council meetings was dedicated to the planning of programs.

The hall council members generally felt that even if attendance to one of the planned programs was poor, it still gave the planners an opportunity to have fun. As one hall council member stated, "I mean for me, if nobody shows, I'm throwing a party for myself, so that's kind of my reward, but like it's good for me to like get involved and try to get people out and enjoy the campus."

Students perceived learning how to program as an outcome of their involvement with the organization. One RHA member described programming as:

A goal to reach, and a program to plan, and you have to do all these steps along the way to make that successful, and I think that that's a big thing that transfers into the, the business world, that will help people out with projects in their jobs later in life, and I think people learn kind of goal management through that as well.

Another RHA member stated that there "are also public relations skills and people skills that people pick up by talking to people and trying to get them to come to programs and appealing to people through the programs."

Only one of the research participants discussed attendance at state, regional, or national conferences as being a part of the training or development, although the

organizational members placed emphasis on involvement with organizations and spent funds on travel. In addition to this, one award nomination shared an emphasis on conference learning stating that that any member who attended a conference was required to incorporate something they learned into their leadership role on campus or present that training topic upon their return from the conference.

<center>Communication and Cooperation</center>

There was an overall feeling that cooperation and teamwork is valued in the organization, however, the extent that this was able to occur is limited by communication issues that are prevalent among three subsets of the organization. Participants from each of the sub-organizations mentioned the differences between the executive board of the Residence Hall Association, the legislative body that is made up of the building representatives to the Residence Hall Association, and the individual hall councils. As one adviser described the phenomenon, "If I could draw it in my head, it would be a bunch of little silos with the bridges being the representatives." This was echoed by another adviser who stated that, "They really want the representatives to feel that they're a part of it, and to feel committed to it."

Communication is one area in which most research participants felt the organization could be more efficient. Making contact with students, especially as it related to the use of electronic mail tended to be frustrating for the hall council advisers. This gap in communication has led to hall council advisers utilizing the RHA Adviser as opposed to the student leaders for information. When referring to receiving information about the organization, one hall council adviser stated that he would approach the organizational adviser and ask, "This is what I need from this person or from the

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organization, how do I make that happen, can you facilitate the process?" The advisers received additional information from the RHA Adviser at their weekly staff meeting so the advisers could ensure that all of the accurate information was reaching the hall council. This communication also caused the advisers rather than RHA representatives to share information with the hall council members. Although there is a calendar on the website, only the meeting dates for the semester were listed there. Furthermore, the website was not updated regularly.

Even among the students, the informal nature of electronic mail was seen as a barrier to communication. As one executive board member stated:

The most common communication problems from the executive board standpoint are probably people forget to copy each other on e-mails, so if I send out an e-mail ordering something for a program, I forget to copy the advisers on it, and then they don't know that that's happened, so later on it's not necessarily known that it has happened.

Hall Government members agreed that it was difficult to receive information from the executive board members, one of whom stated:

I mean sometimes it's hard to get a hold of them, but you know they're busy, so you e-mail them and maybe you'll get an e-mail within the week, like within a week, but you might not get it until the end of the week. But, besides that they're easy to work with, you can ask for money from SGA account, and it's easy to get money, it's easy for their support, it's easy for them to just help you out with anything.

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The organizational structure of one representative in attendance at the RHA meeting was viewed by the advisers as ineffective for the sharing information from the legislative body meetings to the hall council meetings. If the representative did not attend the meeting, the information likely would not make it back to the hall council. In addition, the manner in which information was shared at RHA lent to people being unable to recall information from the meeting. The RHA meeting agenda lacked detail, possibly because there was only a short period of time between the executive board meeting and the legislative body meeting. In addition, several members and advisers noting the difficulty in recalling dates and other very specific information; one hall council member stated:

> From a Hall Council perspective, they're, we send one representative every week
> to get the information for us, it's, it's a system that needs some work I think
> because sometimes I feel like I don't really know what's going on, and I'm not
> sure if that's, well it's obviously communication gap.

Those hall council members who had multiple representatives attending RHA found that not only was the information distribution more effective, but the representatives had greater support from their colleagues in introducing initiatives on behalf of their halls. In terms of communication of hall council progress to the RHA, the building representatives compile monthly reports, which communicated the programmatic productivity to the executive board. The form for the monthly report was available to members through the RHA website.

A limited factor in overall involvement from all residents with the RHA could be attributed to the size of the population of students at the institution. This number of

students on campus led to the Housing Department splitting the campus geographically. These two sections within the subsets of organization were viewed by students as difficult to cross in planning initiatives. Typically a student's first interaction with the RHA can be at an end of month meeting or semester training, where having all students in one room can be intimidating. Members of the hall councils did not always see the connection with RHA, as one new RHA member stated, "Now that I work closer with RHA, I realize that like it's all interconnected and I'm, I really like working more with RHA than just my hall council." To address this, the RHA attempted to conduct team builders and ongoing training to have the members of the hall councils feel more connected with the organization. Both hall council and RHA members who had traveled with the organizations to conference felt more welcomed into the organization. They felt that traveling had allowed them to get to know the organizational members more closely than they otherwise would have had the option to.

By the accounts of advisers and members, motivation did not seem to be an issue and all students involved appreciated and incorporated feedback. However, a majority of the critical feedback students tended to receive was from advisers, and rarely did the members wish to give feedback on each other's performance.

The organizations created a support network for the members, whether in terms of their positional responsibilities, academic commitments, or acting as a family away from home. This support network while positive in many regards in some instances led to some inefficiency on the RHA Executive Board as the adviser explained, "They are all friends, they all live together, so they don't want to rock the boat, so they tend to do a lot like of 'You're Great' and then tell somebody else that they're not great." The executive

board was extremely close, which was viewed as both strength and limitation of the organization as members did not always like to bring issues to others' attention due to these relationships. Another issue with the relationship among members was that it was perceived by non-members as exclusive. One RHA member commented:

> I think maybe it's the closeness that a lot of people think you have to be like, really, really involved to know what RHA is and you have to be like, you have to do hall council, you have to do all this other stuff to be it, and it's not just, you can be a resident and still participate in RHA stuff. I think that that's what it is, it seems like very select and close-knit group which can be good, but at the same time it can be really intimidating to people who aren't in it, so I think that's one of the main problems.

Overall, however, members saw these relationships as being positive not only to the accomplishment of initiatives, but in their relationships outside of the organization, as noted by one RHA member:

> Personal relationships that you form are definitely one of the key things, cause I know that if I see of these, if I see the people that I work with on campus, it's not one of those things where, you know, you just look at them, you just give a smile and keep walking, you know, you actually sit, you actually stop and have a conversation with them, and ask them how their days going, and that's not something that's just gonna stop even if one of us moves off campus or something, that's a relation that's gonna keep on going.

Relationships within the hall councils were positive, as one student summarized, "Everyone knows everybody and we're all friends, so it's like a tight knit."

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One of the benefits of involvement in the organization was that it taught students the concept of working in teams. Feelings of teamwork and a family atmosphere were viewed by most members as the key to the organization's ability to accomplish goals and initiatives. Members and advisers felt that students and staff were helpful, cooperative, and committed to the organization. The organization president and executive board assisted the RHA members and hall council members learn processes including the drafting of legislation, which is used to request money or make changes to governing documents. There were very few people who had been elected to either hall council and serving in that capacity or on the voting board that were seen as hindrance to progress. Those few, however, were seen as having a significant impact on the organization. One RHA member stated,

> Either the select few that don't care or don't full do their job, so it's kind of hard to communicate with somebody if they're not listening or they're not willing to talk, and so that's where things sometimes get fuzzy or a hall doesn't really achieve, or the residents in that hall don't really get what they should be getting, or the whole campus doesn't get what they should be getting because someone just is lackadaisical with what they do. And so it's kind of hard to communicate or establish a strong communication with that person if they don't care.

The members tended to put forth a strong effort to RHA initiatives. As one RHA member stated, "If there's any activity going on, or any activity support, I'm there to help try to plan it, organize it, and you know make sure it flows, goes smoothly." The organization's president did not view the teamwork as intentional, but rather a series of tasks that had been delegated to individuals which finalized into a finished product.

Finally, the nature of the organization as voluntary ensured that for the most part, those students who were involved wished to be; although there was the sense from some members that a few students had become involved solely as an addition to their resume.

Although advisers thought it was difficult to sponsor events with other hall councils, both hall council and RHA members felt that teamwork was evident among the different halls. Part of the purpose of the organization according to statutes from Student Government is to "enhance communication between residence halls." However, the major issue that arose with the ability for halls to program with each other was communication as was explained by one RHA member:

> I think a lot of times it's maybe a lot of people have different communication style, like a lot of people communicate better over e-mail or on the phone than they do in person, and so sometimes you have to work with somebody who does it in person, but you're an e-mail person, and sometimes that gets confusing.

Processes that were kept within hall did not seem to be as confusing or difficult to manage. Students across hall councils felt that the collaboration among the councils was productive; especially those representatives who began their terms because of a vacancy found the support of their peers helpful in terms of navigating RHA processes. The hall councils had a positive view on the way the RHA conducted business, and supported the RHA through program attendance and volunteering at events. The primary detriment to hall collaboration tended to be the Hall of the Year and Hall of the Semester Awards in which the hall councils compete for best hall of the year, best scrapbook, best hall council, and best executive board members.

RHA members felt that when decisions had to be made or situations resolved, processes were effective. Each representative had the opportunity to speak, and decisions were made with input across the voting body. However, this level of collaboration was also viewed as detrimental to the progress of the organization. As one adviser noted:

> I think sometimes that teamwork slash participation kind of works against them in a little ways, because I feel sometimes they're inhibited from doing something that they may really want because they aren't getting the buy-in that they necessarily want, or the teamwork that they need.

Although this collaboration on decision making was pervasive among the voting membership, the executive board members were not always as consistent in communicating with one another. Some of the executive board members who resided or held office hours together sometimes mistakenly made decisions among subgroups of the executive board and forget to share that with the other members. In one instance, this not only caused an issue with the executive board, but with the Director of Housing as well. The situation was described:

> There was a time where somebody came in and they asked if they could speak at a meeting and they got approval, but none of the rest of the board knew that person was coming and it turned out to be the person didn't have the right information and they shared some misinformation.

Rules and Procedures

Each of the hall councils has an individual set of by-laws and funding source, which exceeded the funding that the RHA receives. The primary way that the RHA governed the hall councils was through the points system for annual awards. According

to the RHA Constitution, however, the individual hall council by-laws must be "in compliance with the RHA Constitution and/or By-laws." The RHA was viewed as receptive to the needs of hall councils, however, the relationship between the two bodies was generally dependent on the level of participation the hall council executives wish to have with RHA. One adviser stated:

> We try to keep it in RHA's mind that at any point that the hall councils decided they didn't want to be affiliated with RHA, there's no punishment, like we can't freeze their funds, we can't do any of that, so really they could say tomorrow, well we don't want to come to RHA, we don't want anything to do with you, we just want to spend our own money, there would be no punishment for that, so the fact that they stay involved and haven't decided like to walk away, I guess is pretty good.

Even with the lack of true regulatory control established, many of the RHA members believed that the hall councils served as the greatest level of support for the RHA.

One of the roles of the adviser is to interpret and revise the by-laws as necessary. As such, a primary area of support that was provided by both the RHA President and the adviser was with the assistance to hall council advisers in understanding the procedures as dictated by the by-laws. The confusion that can arise from the differing sets of by-laws led to a campaign by the RHA President to establish a common set of by-laws for all hall councils to follow. The main regulations that are followed by both the RHA and hall councils dealt with financial processes, however, due to the different by-laws, not all hall councils passed money in the same manner.

Meeting procedures for the RHA and hall councils were described as being

facilitated by *Robert's Rules of Order* both in the RHA constitution and by-laws as well

as each of the hall council by-laws. Although parliamentary procedure is supposed to

dictate the meeting process, for the most part according to both hall council advisers and

members, this "doesn't happen." One adviser stated:

> People pretty much say what they want to say, do what they want to do, and keep
>
> going; I would say that the RHA meetings I've been to, that's pretty much how it
>
> goes, there is an agenda, they do work through it, but it's not formal, there's, I
>
> haven't seen, there are motions, but nearly as intense or heavy in the emphasizing
>
> of the process.

It was thought by some advisers that the level of enforcement of parliamentary

procedure by the RHA President was determined by his relationship with those at the

meeting. The RHA Adviser stated for instance that:

> He's very hard on his own board members, but I think with hall council members,
>
> he wants to be a little more lenient with them, so if they don't turn in their
>
> paperwork in on time, he's more willing to give them their more benefit of the
>
> doubt and make it happen for them where if it's a board member, he'll say, you
>
> know the rules, I'm not gonna accept it.

The knowledge of procedure allowed the executive board to know how to circumvent the

rules as well, for instance, one adviser described an incident at an RHA meeting where

someone did not turn in a request on time:

> They'll open it with, we can't hear this unless you say that you're gonna vote to
>
> suspend the rules, and then the board will vote to suspend the rules, so I think that

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even when they bend the rules, for the most part, they're pretty good about

utilizing the rules to bend the rules.

Some members of the executive board compared the RHA to that of some other

institutions in the state and region who run their RHA meetings strictly according to

parliamentary procedure as they are at the regional or national level. This is not how the

president wished to chair their meetings as the adviser stated, "He wants it to be collegial,

he wants it to be that we're friends, we can joke around."

Based on the observations of the RHA meeting and the executive board meeting,

there appeared to be a lack of formality and a reliance on a policy book which did not

appear to be complete. When an issue is not discussed in policy, it seems to be difficult to

reach consensus. Additionally, when an issue is discussed in policy, while the policy was

referenced, the document was not officially referred to. It did not appear that any of the

individuals had the policy book with them, nor past meeting minutes. Policies for RHA,

housing, and the university were quoted from memory.

Even though the executive board did not view the organization as being

procedurally driven, some of the first-time advisers felt that the language and procedure

was very cumbersome. Additionally, the members felt that procedure was heavily

focused, one of whom stated "If you don't follow the rules, people aren't going to vote

you, vote it to pass." Additionally, hall councils did not follow parliamentary procedure,

primarily due to the limited number of attendants, which nullified the need for the

procedure.

Program Planning

Though the advocacy role is one that the RHA is growing into, programming was the primary role of both the RHA and the hall councils. Programming is covered in the mission of RHA as "creating a sense of community among residential students" at the institution. Furthermore, the RHA is to act "in conjunction with the hall councils to create quality and efficient programming for residential students and develop a seamless campus experience."

The organizational constitution holds the RHA responsible for "providing opportunities for University Housing residents to interact on a campus-wide level throughout the year, such as Residence Hall Week or other educational or social programming." Certainly, the emphasis of discussions at the executive board and general body meetings were focused on programming and funds allocation. Programming, however, is not covered in the by-laws of the hall councils, although traditional programs through the oral history and scrapbooks of the organizations, both RHA and hall councils, have become expectations.

The organizational president described the RHA; "Essentially we're a programming organization that also governs, so really I think our main goal is to give the students somewhere to go and something to do." Students agreed that part of the major goal of RHA was to "appeal to the students and give them something to do." Much of the organizational planning surrounded the ability to conduct outreach and meet the needs of the students through programming initiatives. This is the area where the RHA was thought to be the most efficient as described by one adviser, "They are very efficient when it comes to planning their events, figuring out how they're going to spend their

money, deciding how they are going to build their reputations, which organizations do they plan to partner with."

Both RHA and the hall councils measured their success greatly by attendance at events and achievable goals for the organization tended to be focused on programmatic initiatives. For example, one adviser spoke to "Specific goals, they had a big goal to get 15% of students who live in the halls out to programs this year, and they've surpassed that number as far as I know." In addition, there has been an increase in RHA programming over the past year to which they now conduct two full weeks of programming as opposed to one full week which was previously planned. The budget process of the Student Government allocates money a year in advance, so essentially, the RHA is planning their events a year in advance; the individual hall councils however are not tied to this funding stream.

The RHA Executive Board plans a vision for the semester and shares this with their members at the first meeting to gain input before finalizing the plan. Several advisers felt that the most critical decisions the organization made related to programming, however, one of the hall government advisers did not feel that the RHA was connected to the hall councils in terms of their programming initiatives. For the most part, the organization as a whole planned in terms of semesters at a time, however, the president had started to think more strategically, possibly because he had been in the position for more than one year.

Programming by the hall councils was more prevalent as the advisers attempted to have their hall plan one event per month. Planning for programming was the primary function of the hall councils as they would plan, "one a month in which they'll spend a

good two-three weeks really like brainstorming, planning it out, dividing up the tasks, and just accomplishing the goal, and then starting over." Hall productivity as it relates to programming was communicated to the RHA through the monthly reports submitted at the end of month meetings.

Constitutionally, the current executive board is responsible for the training and mentorship of their replacements. Because the organization had gone through a period of growth and transformation, there was a priority placed on transition of new officers to prepare the organization for the departure of the current officers. The RHA Adviser was also concerned with this transition as she is worried that, "when the current group of leaders graduate and move on, that the organization won't be prepared to continue and stay at the high level it's been functioning at recently." This is coupled with the fact that the adviser was searching for new employment.

There was no transition of hall councils, as one adviser explained, "These guys are gonna move out, and someone else is gonna move in, and those other people will be elected anew and basically their transition will be an account of money." The hall council by-laws and annual scrapbook are the only transitional documents that are left for the next hall council. The historical piece is where the RHA President had received the most criticism as it relates to consolidating all hall councils under one set of by-laws. The scrapbook serves as a compilation of the events that an individual hall council has held over the course of the year. Once completed, they are shared with other hall councils and the RHA votes on the best scrapbook.

Student Voice

The goals of RHA included planning and implementing quality programming, representing student concerns, and being recognized on a campus, state, regional, and national level. The mission of the organization includes "represent residential students to the campus and city community, as well as to the state, regional, and national conferences." Additionally, by Student Government statute, the purpose of the organization is to "coordinate programs and activities for the enhancement of student life in the residence halls, to represent the views of residents, and to enhance communication between residence halls." The halls were primarily concerned with planning socials as no housing issues or concerns are addressed. Hall council leaders tended to promote the RHA as a place where students could go to voice their concerns; however, there was a sense of apathy on the campus. One hall council member stated, "We have a really apathetic campus, we're noticing more and more, with every time we vote on something, every time we try to get student help for something, so not many people here know what RHA is." While the executive board is attempting to gain respect, the RHA general assembly was more socially oriented. The RHA members agreed in that they were attempting to receive greater recognition by the residence hall students as well as the Student Government on campus.

The RHA Executive Board was very concerned with the organizational reputation on campus as well as on the state, regional, and national. The organization had received much recognition outside of the university over the past year, which had led to many of the executive board members feeling as if they had "proven themselves." In addition, one of the advisers noted, "I think their reputation on our campus has gotten a lot better over

the past year and a half two years that I've been here." However, to some, the emphasis on recognition was viewed as counterproductive to the organization. The organizational adviser noted, "I think to some extent this group is really motivated by recognition in a way that sometimes makes me very uncomfortable." Organizational leaders had increased their visibility on campus through an increased effort in programs and services in addition to expanding efforts to collaborate. This reputation, while pervasive with Student Government and Student Affairs administrators, was lacking among their constituents. One adviser discussed that "I would like to see our RHA become more important to the campus, to the students, to our residents." The RHA members however, recognized the amount of time the executive board members placed on initiatives, one of whom shared, "Just trying to get our name out among other campuses as not only our own, for a growing campus organization, I see some of these members putting in all nighters and not just one, but many of them."

Part of the goal for increased recognition was that the organizational leaders wanted to move toward being an advocacy as well as a programmatic body. The RHA President had initiated meetings with the Director of Housing to discuss student concerns; however, students still identified the housing staff as their avenue towards having their concerns addressed. One adviser downplayed the role of RHA in the overall decision making processes of the institution, stating, "The most critical decisions that can be made at the university would be large financial decisions, decisions regarding University policies and building construction, Board of Trustees kind of stuff, and I don't see the RHA being involved in that."

Resources

The financial structure of the organization is designed in a manner through which the hall councils receive a more substantial budget than the RHA does. Hall councils are funded through social activity fees paid by the residents of the specific building, while RHA is funded through the university Student Government. Resource rooms that are generally stocked for the housing staff were open to the RHA members, which meant that the RHA did not have to allocate money on construction paper or office supplies. Because of finance, the hall councils were viewed by some as being more impactful than the RHA. One hall council leader stated:

> I definitely think it's one of the best groups on campus to be involved with, since we do affect so many people, because I know the hall council executive board is only 5 or 6 people and that's a lot of control over what happens in the residence hall for 700 other people.

The level of productivity the organization was able to achieve was perceived to be based on financial resources. As one adviser noted, "I think they could do more, but, part of that, is financial constraints because they don't receive a whole lot of money." Other advisers felt that the constraints were based on human resources as opposed to financial resources. Over the past two years, the RHA had increased its effectiveness through increased participation and visibility, which has led to increased budget. The increased budget allowed the organization to continue in a cycle of increasing the number of events and productivity. However, at least part of the increase in productivity of the RHA can be attributed to the designation of a staff member to advise the organization. As the primary adviser noted:

When I started, we had to rebuild the organization, it had been committee

assignments, so there just wasn't a lot of time dedicated to them, so last year it

was a lot of hard work, and a lot of rebuilding, and deciding what they were going

to be about; this year it's a lot easier.

Evaluation

There is no evaluation process by which RHA Executive Board members gain

feedback. While the RHA Adviser did not feel that the RHA President would be

supportive of formal evaluation, during his interview, the president acknowledged that

there was a need for a formal feedback system. The primary form of formal feedback that

any member of hall council or RHA received would be through Of-The-Month Awards

which are sponsored by NACURH, Incorporated. Hall council and RHA members

recognized the merit to being nominated for regional student or program of-the-month

awards, one of whom stated, "If you receive one of those, obviously you've done

something, you've stood out, and even just to be recommended and to be nominated to

receive one, even if you don't win at any level, that would indicate there has been some

superior activity." These formal feedback mechanisms were typically submitted by other

students; however, the RHA Advisers would also submit nominations for awards on the

campus. RHA members felt that there was a lot of encouragement and appreciation

expressed by their colleagues.

Most hall council member feedback came from the adviser of the individual hall.

Hall council members determined their group success based upon the attendance at

events and the enthusiasm that residents had toward the events that they had planned.

Hall council members saw most of their formal recognition coming through the semester

and annual awards. The organizational documents state the responsibility of the RHA Vice-President to coordinate recognition and awards, however, during the RHA executive board meeting and general assembly, the Treasurer was organizing the points system for hall of the year. In addition, there is a section in the policy manual of the organization which discusses the different qualifications for the major awards in addition to allowing the executive board to create additional awards. During the year of the study, recognition was submitted on a regional level for Adviser of the Year, National Communications Coordinator of the Year, School of the Year, and the Student Award for Leadership Training.

<center>Collaborative Partners</center>

There was a significant emphasis placed by the executive board on organizational development and recognition of the organization. One adviser summarized the organization's effort as, "I don't know that they would call it reputation planning, but planning to set up the organization to be well-known on campus." There was a sense that this was the primary area where there was incongruence among RHA members in that some felt that increasing their reputation in the university community would allow them to achieve other goals, while some people felt that the RHA should be more supportive of housing programs and staff. The organizational members enjoyed being held to a perceived higher standard than other organizations because it assisted in goal attainment including the increasingly positive reputation of the organization. RHA was highly regarded and supported among university officials for having a commitment to following procedures and holding a strong effort. Due to this, members were asked to serve on university-wide committees including Homecoming and Freshman Convocation.

Housing

The Housing Department was viewed as a strong supporter of RHA and the hall councils both in terms of financial and human resources. The RHA President met monthly with the Director of Housing and it was generally felt that the professional staff, regardless of whether or not they served as an adviser to hall council attended RHA meetings a few times throughout the year. The graduate staff, some of whom served as hall council advisers was not as likely to attend due to constraints in their academic and work schedules. However, at least one of the advisers to the hall council did not hold a connection to RHA, stating:

> I haven't felt personally connected to it or willing to volunteer necessarily and I didn't I mean I don't like, again when I see the RHA people, I attend, I am a very active, I consider myself a very active adviser and yet, I haven't really been involved in RHA.

The adviser to the RHA viewed the relationship between the housing staff and the RHA as tenuous stating:

> I think Housing Staff; it can be a little bit of a difficult relationship at times. We've tried to mend that by when I have Housing Staff meetings, I always bring in an update and try to keep them as in the loop as possible. I think that in the past they felt like we really didn't tell them what was going on at all, and then they would hear that their students didn't do something, but they didn't know that their students were supposed to do something. I think it gets difficult when the students don't communicate back to their advisers and it's something that happens every month or and then the advisers want to know where it's coming from.

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However, the officers made an effort to meet and communicate more effectively with the professional staff of the department in addition to adviser roundtables that were initiated by the RHA Adviser. The primary expectation that the RHA Executive Board felt that housing had of them was in the training component for hall council leaders.

The resident assistants rarely interacted with the RHA; however, their involvement with the hall council was significant primarily because the hall council funded the resident assistant programs. The RHA Executive Board recognized the need to be integrated with the resident assistants, primarily to assist with recruitment of members and thus, has attempted to increase the resident assistant's knowledge of who they are. The RHA Executive Board attended RA training this past year and in addition, utilized funds to provide t-shirts to all RAs. The relationship between hall council and the resident assistants, however, was very positive. As one hall council member stated, "I love the RAs. We have two RA Liaisons that come to all of the, that try to come to every single one of our meetings, so we never, we always try to you know, place our socials around what they're doing."

Student Government

It was believed that Student Government was very critical of RHA, possibly because they did not understand the organization or due to past lack of effectiveness of the organization. By all accounts of advisers, RHA members, and hall council members, there was a primary concern by the RHA Executive Board for how they are viewed by the Student Government, based upon how the organization can place themselves in a better position for funds allocated. As one adviser stated, "SGA is kind of controls their budget, so whatever they demand, they have to kind of give in to." Due to this, the RHA

Executive Board takes any opportunity to work with Student Government or to request resources. The RHA President noted:

> We get a lot of work from SGA and there's certain unwritten expectations for us, from SGA so that we get a better budget, a bigger budget, and that we're more recognized by them, so from those expectations, we put on programs and try to get as many people out, so essentially it's a numbers game, that we're trying to play to say, hey, we brought out 2000 people to our events over the course of the semester, that's a lot and we should get more money for that.

To keep the relationship with Student Government strong, representatives from RHA attended weekly meetings to promote events or be seen. This responsibility is noted in the position of the Vice President in the organization's constitution.

The statutes for Student Government are limited on what they say about RHA, which when compared to other organizations on the campus, has made it difficult to establish a set of evaluative measures by which to determine the need for funding. Additionally, given the level of support provided by the Housing Department, some members of Student Government believed that housing should provide more financial resources. The Student Government also viewed the residential population to be a small number of their constituents, thus there had been a recent emphasis placed on resident students running for Student Government office.

CHAPTER 5

INSTITUTION BETA

Student Involvement

The level of student involvement in hall council and RHA at Institution Beta was

dependent on the housing areas represented. The buildings include varying suite types,

occupancy sizes, and class standing, which tended to influence the productivity of the

hall councils specifically. As one RHA member stated, "Just because of a different size,

the funding, and the turnout, so some are, some aren't, some are really good about getting

people out and some aren't. It just depends on the year." One hall council member

summarized resident involvement in hall council activities as follows:

> We can normally bring out about 80 to 100 people per event, but as for general
>
> body meetings, nobody shows up, we'll knock on doors, and we'll say there's a
>
> meeting downstairs, and they won't even answer, even though you know they're
>
> inside, because you can hear people talking.

Availability of housing for returning students at this institution is sparse, thus the

Housing Department entices student to remain involved by offering students who are

appointed or elected to a position on the hall council executive board the opportunity to

bypass the annual housing lottery.

Of the hall council executive board members, a portion are considered voting

members of RHA and serve on a RHA committee which made these individuals feel as if

they are members of both organizations. This is opposed to those who are not RHA

voting members who identified only with their hall council. One adviser stated that his

hall council members "dreaded" attending RHA meetings because:

> They're gonna be long, they're not usually gonna have anything that they need to
>
> say, it's just stuff that's being told to them that they need to know, such as, are we
>
> having audit, what type, what's the goal of RHA this week, is there a type of
>
> program they want us to put on, and they're bogged down with someone asking
>
> for money and then one person asking a question that's a little inappropriate
>
> because they're not experienced.

> One hall council president stated, "Only voting members really get involved in

other areas, like events or organizations." Complimenting this statement, one of the RHA

members stated, "I think the connection that RHA has with the hall councils it's like one

and the same." Regardless of their level of involvement, hall council members

understood the scope of the work that is completed and respected those students who are

involved, especially the officers.

> From attending the RHA meeting, it appeared that students did enjoy the meeting,

and although some left early, those that were remaining went to dinner together

following. The RHA Executive Board also attempted to make the meetings more

engaging through the use of Microsoft PowerPoint, an informative agenda, and

recognition of members throughout the meeting.

> Hall council advisers are required to attend two RHA meetings per semester. One

adviser stated that there is a method to choosing which meetings to attend based on how

short or long they are anticipated to be. However, another adviser stated that he attended

all of the meetings because it allowed him to hear what is being said as opposed to just

seeing what is discussed in the minutes in addition to assisting him in being a better intermediary between the resident assistants and the hall council members.

There was a significant amount if commitment exhibited by the students involved in the RHA. There was also a significant amount of planning that is involved with the programs that the RHA and hall councils promote. In addition, the organization had a rigorous schedule of activities which leads to the expectation of a high level of commitment from the time one becomes involved in the organization. As one RHA member stated, "It can be long hours at times, and during certain weeks; getting no sleep and going to programs and that's I guess the story of anything that you do in college."

The expectation of commitment was thought to limit the number of students that were involved, although this did not seem to be of concern to most members of the RHA, one of whom stated, "There's always a mix, there's the people who can commit a lot of time to it and there are the ones that don't, and they usually, they're the ones that usually don't come back." The level of commitment was not an issue for those who were involved in the organization and this was reflected by members who stated that it was important to enjoy what they were doing because it was a tremendous amount of work, with no pay attached to it. Advisers also reflected this commitment, stating that not only did members plan a lot of programs, but attend their colleagues programs to support them as well. One specifically stated:

> I mean to be perfectly honest, I get paid for my job, so you know, I go to the meetings, that's part of my job, that's part of my expectation, but these people don't get paid and they're at every meeting, you know, paying attention, they get excited for the meetings, I'd say there's a lot of commitment.

The time expended in this activity is tremendous to the point that members believed the only limitations to the organization being able to accomplish more was the number of students involved. Students who were members of RHA through their position in hall council had more rigorous time commitments than those who were solely involved in RHA or the hall councils due to the dual membership role that they held. These individuals attended the executive board and general body meeting of their hall council as well as the general body meeting of RHA. It appeared that for a campus with a large residential population, only a small percentage of students were involved in the actual organization. As one adviser noted, "I see a lot of the same leaders doing everything which kind of leads to their burnout."

When asked if the organization could complete more initiatives if more financial resources were available, one RHA member stated, "I think it's, it's time. You know just with what we do right now, it fills up my entire, it fills up my week, it fills up members of my executive board's entire week." This individual continued by stating that when the organizational members receive ideas for new initiatives:

We kind of try to do what we can within the time that we have, but there's just always so much going on, it always seems like there's a retreat or a conference or a new officer or a new issue coming up with stuff that we're already working on.

RHA members thought that the commitment to being available to the hall council members was extremely important regardless of the time commitment necessary because as one RHA Executive Board member stated:

You know, allowing them to make sure that they can call you any time, my phone is always on, when you have 120 students that could be doing anything at any

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given time you want to make sure that they're, that they know that they've got

somebody there and those are gonna be the new leaders of RHA and those are

gonna be the people that go on to lead this campus, and become Student Body

President, and become doctors and lawyers and whatever, so making sure that

those students know that they, they have somebody there that is there to listen to

them and you know there to be kind of their mentor, but that can get very, very

time consuming so I would say, that personal piece, that is, the most time

consuming in my experience.

The level of time needed to become immersed in the organization limited the

ability to recruit members as many students felt it to be too time consuming, especially

those that remained solely involved in their hall council. When asked about involvement

with RHA, one hall council member stated:

It's just another meeting to go to, and after a day of classes, you just don't want

to, you just want to get some sleep, or hang out with your friends as opposed to

going to a meeting and hearing us talk about what happened at another meeting,

cause they didn't go to it, then there's the whole lingo that you have to learn and I

think that a lot of kids don't go to RHA meetings because of that.

This was also shared by a few other hall council members who stated that the vocabulary

used at RHA meetings was similar to learning a completely different language. The hall

council members' point was reinforced by RHA members who did state that they had a

lot of inside jokes and tended to "speak in acronyms."

Although the members stated that they are welcoming of all who wanted to be involved, there appeared to be some expectations of the level of commitment that individuals would have. When asked about new members, one RHA member stated:

Definitely open, I mean, like when we had people walking by, when we're holding our general body meetings, hey come sit down, listen to us discuss things that are gonna be going on and vote and let us put on awesome events for you, it's one of those things where we want people to get involved, it's not exclusive at all.

However, another member stated:

It's just like you get out what you put in, like if you sit in the back and you don't say anything and then you walk out as soon as it's over, like people probably won't remember you, but if you go, you sit next to people, you're like hey, what is this, you get to know them, like you voice your opinions, then people recognize you, then they know you, then you get more out of it.

Another member confirmed this by stating:

They make sure they get to know you, if you want to get to know them of course, if you don't she's right, if you don't spend the time, then they're not going to care, and we've had people, we'll talk about people that'll show up for meetings because they have to, and then take off halfway through it, and we're not gonna get to know you if you don't want to kind of like sit around with us, I mean you don't have to sit, we expect you to sit through the entire meeting.

One of the advisers was critical of the organization as it related to welcoming new members stating, "It may not be the most approachable situation, you know, they, they

are part of the people that know people that are in you know positions of power and that may not be as welcoming as other organizations are."

RHA members did not see an issue with students who are turned away from RHA, going so far as to ask prospective members what their other time commitments were. One hall council president boldly stated that "The first question I asked people when they applying for, to be on my board, was, 'what are your other obligations?'" Other hall council and RHA members agreed that they were very concerned with where the organization fell in terms of students' other priorities and scheduling. According to several members, during the elections for the RHA Executive Board, concerns about students' resumes were raised, specifically about the level of involvement that candidates had with other organizations. One RHA member recalled the following story:

> When we were doing elections for the executive board of just all of RHA, we were sitting there, well what other obligations do you have, I'm looking at your resume, it's pretty stocked, what else do you have to do, because if you're, if you've got five other things that you've got going, if you're on SG as well as a fraternity, as well as this and that, then I start to wonder if you're as dedicated to RHA as we need you to be.

While the level of commitment was applauded by staff and students, the Housing Department recently raised the minimum grade point average for eligibility for student involvement. Additionally, advisers expressed concern for students who they felt were putting more into the organization than they were academics. This was reflected in comments by one adviser who stated that in his role he would be, "making sure that someone's not doing too much to where it's affecting their school or their going and

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doing something else other than staying in the residence hall and doing programs." Other

advisers thought the commitment by some students was too high because it limited their

ability to be involved in other organizations on campus.

As with almost any organization, the certainty of the future is tied to the ability to

recruit and retain members. The primary recruitment methods for the RHA were through

talking with students at planned events. Students who are either having fun or asked to

lend assistance at an event were more likely to seek out opportunities for further

involvement.

While recruitment of first year students was relatively easy, the retention of these

students as well as the recruitment of returning students or those from apartment style

housing were challenges for the organization. As one member described:

> The first two or three weeks, they haven't really, the students haven't really
>
> gotten involved in a lot of other things, so they're like oh, I'm going to a meeting,
>
> I'm doing something, representative, and pretty much by November, they've
>
> either found something else, or they've moved up onto the E-Board.

Retention from fall to spring is also an issue as one hall council member stated, "I've

seen sometimes like at the beginning of the spring semester a lot of people will drop off,

will leave to pursue other things, other organizations." Even with the overall challenge of

retention, there are a limited number of opportunities for off-campus students to be

involved in the RHA and some students who move off campus do continue their

involvement.

The resident assistants were considered a crucial piece in the recruitment and

retention of hall leaders, as described by one adviser, "The RAs that are more involved or

are more supportive of the hall council tend to have better floor representation, tend to have floor reps that stick it out all year long." In addition to the RA, the level of involvement of the executive board member who is assigned as liaison to the area and if the graduate student adviser is studying Student Personnel Administration were thought to be important.

Elections take place in the spring semester for both the RHA Executive Board and the hall council executive boards. Because the institution has a large summer freshman enrollment coupled with the fact that the RHA and hall councils are active in the summer, the staff and RHA Executive Board recruited strongly during this semester. One member explained this as follows, "At the end of the Summer B, we always say, all of them area all invited to come to our Fall Leadership and they can, come and meet people that they would be working with." Other than this formal recruitment, one member explained:

> We do a lot of like banner paper, hi, do you want to learn how to get involved.
>
> They do some information sessions about getting involved depending on the area,
>
> cause some areas are significantly larger than others, some hall councils require
>
> that, hall presidents and such can't be elected in the Spring, they have to be
>
> elected in the fall, to give incoming freshman that opportunity, so, which is a lot
>
> of flyering and do this and do that, and then we also use RHA bags, we give out
>
> welcome bags at the beginning of each year, just to kind of promote RHA, and
>
> make sure we have a lot of RHA publicity everywhere else, when we're
>
> discussing how to get involved so they can put that connection together.

The opening weeks of programming were thought to be essential to the recruitment success of the hall councils and thus in turn the RHA. Once the initial

recruitment drive has occurred, new members who join are typically friends of current

members

<p style="text-align: center;">Leadership Development and Training</p>

The leadership development component was viewed as a primary function to

many of the organizational members. This aspect of the organization is stated explicitly

in the mission statement of the organization as "encouraging leadership development

among its members." One RHA member stated that the organization has "Been just a

great resource for, you know, learning, hopefully it's been beneficial to residents and

whatnot, but also learning to be a student leader and responsibility and taking something

on beyond just studying." This sentiment was echoed by the RHA President who stated:

> When we look back, when we look at the different leaders that across this
>
> campus, and we can count how many of them are previously RHA, it's kind of,
>
> it's a nice sense of satisfaction, because you just can't, and my, I'm biased, but,
>
> you can't get the type of leadership development that we provide. Not only do we
>
> do it during fall leadership, yes we're teaching you about RHA, but we're also
>
> teaching you time management skills, and we do personality tests, and kind of
>
> guiding them through what it is to be a student leader and then the actual like,
>
> putting all of the that into practice, and the day in and day out jobs that you need
>
> to be doing as a student leader.

This was stated by a hall council leader as well:

> There's so many different organizations on this campus, like, it's really sort of a
>
> window into campus involvement and it was the first thing that I got involved in
>
> and from that, I was able to branch off into so many different things, like it sort of

gets your feet wet and gives you opportunities to apply for other things, and I

really feel like it opens up the campus.

Students involved in the RHA and hall councils received significant procedural

training as well as leadership development. The executive board was trained primarily by

the organization president in conjunction with the adviser. Although some of the

education to the hall council members was provided by organizational advisers, much of

it was peer based. Each of the executive board counterparts to hall council officers served

as a resource for them, for example one hall council member, when speaking about the

RHA Executive Board, stated that they were:

> A great resource cause they're the ones that are crazy about the organization, and
>
> have been doing it for a while, and that's probably the, I don't want to say the
>
> easiest source, but it's definitely the most, obvious choice because it's, they're
>
> there, and they have easy e-mails to remember.

The relationship that executive board members are to have with their hall council

counterparts were also stated in the RHA constitution. Since hall councils often begin the

year with many vacant positions, the peer mentorship role was one that is expected of the

hall council leaders as well. One hall council president summarized:

> I really feel like it's been my job over the past year to develop my other board
>
> members as leaders. I started the year off by myself. I was elected last year for the
>
> position and nobody else filled any of the other vacancies, and so when I got here,
>
> it was pretty much just me and my adviser. So what we did pretty much, we had
>
> the interviews, we interviewed 16 candidates and filled 15 spots including floor
>
> representatives, and from that point, the first couple of weeks, I really felt like I

had to be the authoritative person, the person who had to tell everybody what to do, but as the year went on, like I really saw my board grow as leaders. Continuing development was provided to those students who continued with the organization past their first year and remained in hall councils in that some hall council executives would run for office in other halls during subsequent years to gain different experiences while remaining in a more secure environment than that which may be provided by becoming a RHA Executive Board member.

The first formal training and leadership development program for the academic year was a fall leadership training, which all hall council members were "highly recommended to go to." Because of the timing of the session, only returning students and those first year students who became involved during the summer were aware and thus invited to attend. At this session, students participated in teambuilding activities to meet other members of the RHA and hall councils. In addition, they received formal training on RHA committee structures, financial procedures, and position training as well as a binder with information on the organization and position. The organization also believes heavily in transition reports from past officers to instruct successive students on how to complete the expectations of the positions. One of the primary difficulties with the fall leadership training was that since the hall council advisers also supervised the resident assistants, they are conducting resident assistant training and are neither involved nor present for the hall council training. The spring training is limited to a one-day session where hall council officers are either trained or given a refresher on procedures.

The administrative and financial components of the organization are considered the most integral and cumbersome which led to the necessity for on-going training

throughout the year. The RHA Vice-President conducted sessions on parliamentary

procedure to work towards ensuring that all members are able to participate and follow

the weekly meetings. In addition, financial pre-audits were conducted before the semester

audits so the hall council treasurers and presidents could review their documents with the

RHA financial officers. Furthermore, to hold the members accountable for keeping

accurate financial records, the Housing Department held the authority to place

administrative holds on students' academic records. The students did not see this as a

deterrent to involvement, as one financial officer commented, "It's just helping you

become more responsible, learn what it is to become a leader, like you're in charge of

money, three positions on the executive board are in charge of money, and it's a lot of

money." There were binders in the RHA office containing past financial records,

conferences attended, programs sponsored, and trainings conducted.

There were many positions in the RHA and hall council that students could be

appointed to and many experienced several positions during their time with the

organization. Additionally, when there were vacancies in positions, students would

temporarily occupy positions to allow the organization to progress. These opportunities

allowed members to become better acquainted with the internal and external procedures

of the organization. A large number of resident assistants began their leadership

development with the Housing Department through their involvement with RHA and hall

councils, which assisted in the preparation of student employees. The organizational

adviser spoke to the training and transition of the organization as having a:

> Status quo to uphold about this organization, this is not an RHA that ebbs and
>
> flows or has that roller coaster mentality where you know they're really, really

great, really great, really great, and then they fall off for two or three years and

they have to rebuild. This organization stays pretty steady and we have blips you

know where we get better, but we never droop.

Communication and Cooperation

The RHA website describes the organization as serving in the capacity that

"coordinates the activity of the hall councils, assist with providing equipment, and

programming." Students were able to differentiate whether an event or initiative is

sponsored by the hall council, RHA, or resident assistant staff, however, the

connectedness between the hall council and RHA was also acknowledged by the

residents. Furthermore, the differentiation between and among hall councils and RHA

was apparent, primarily through constitutions which had contrasting features including

how officers are appointed, how meetings are officiated, and how financial allocations for

initiatives are passed. The hall councils are financially tied to the RHA, which was the

main accountability structure in place to control the activity and governance of the

subordinate organizations. Funding for the hall councils was acquired through the sales of

activity cards which were advertised through the RHA website and distributed by the

RHA. Hall councils were responsible for the sales of these cards and the revenue is

utilized for hall programs and initiatives. In addition to this allocation, hall councils can

seek additional funds from the RHA by presenting proposals before the general body.

Only one hall council received additional funding from an outside source which has led

to this council being the most difficult to hold to the RHA expectations.

The primary relationship between the hall council and RHA is to be an

information conduit between the central coordinating body and the residents of the halls.

The hall councils were viewed as intermediaries, wherein the hall council executive members will receive information from RHA and then report that to the students in their halls. The hall councils appeared to do an effective job of this as the communication issues in the organization are perceived as those between hall councils as opposed to with the RHA, and specifically as they relate to co-sponsorship of programs. The RHA encouraged the co-sponsorship of programs through grants that were provided specifically for multiple hall councils to utilize together, however, the communication issue between halls has led to discussion of an agreement being drafted to formally designate which council is responsible for which tasks. The struggle with co-sponsoring of programs was discussed by the hall council advisers as well, one of whom stated that:

> If you don't hold up your end of the bargain, we may not co-program with you next time you know, or something like that, and so, that would be where the cooperation kind of works and doesn't work, you know, we've had cases where it's worked great, and we've had cases where it's bombed, so you know, for the most part though, I think everything works out.

Several hall council members who were also a part of the RHA stated that the interaction between the bodies is somewhat seamless; however one does not notice how prevalent the interaction is until one becomes entrenched in both organizations. From the perspective of a hall council member that does not attend the RHA, the interaction was difficult to understand; as one voting RHA member stated:

> The people that do come to the meetings from my executive board I think really understand the interaction, but then there are a few that are, four members on my board that I can think of don't come to meetings and I really don't think, I think

they're in the same position I was last year, where they really don't see the

immediate impact of being involved.

A positive impact of the interaction between RHA and the hall councils has been a

succession plan for officers on the greater RHA Executive Board, as was described as

follows:

Sometimes like at the beginning of the spring semester a lot of people will drop

off, will leave to pursue other things, other organizations, but I feel like, when

those changes occur, like we react in a favorable way, we go out and we, either

promote from within, like the way it worked for the NCC, but either way, we fill

those positions, like we don't leave those positions vacant and I feel like that's

really something that RHA has worked well to do is anytime someone leaves,

there's another person, there's another leader that's been being developed within

the Hall Councils to take that place, and so I feel like for lack of a better

comparison, we have a pretty good minor league system that we've been working

on.

The RHA President serves as a liaison to all of the hall council presidents holding

bi-weekly meetings with these individuals to allow for on-going communication both

from the RHA to the hall councils, but among the hall councils as well. This was an

informal meeting where the presidents could collaborate on hall initiatives or speak about

concerns in the area. One president described this interaction as a time where the RHA

President:

Would cook us dinner and we would just talk about programs, talk about our

week, talk about you know ways we can improve our board, so I guess it just

depends on what needs to be talked about, but generally speaking, it's more of an informal setting than the other committee meetings.

In addition, not only did each member of the RHA Executive Board avail themselves to those holding complimentary positions on the hall councils, but to all members of the hall council through e-mail and cellular phone.

The communication in the organization appeared to be incredibly sufficient. There were multiple listservs which assisted in having the executive board members as well as housing staff send information at varying times in the semester with regards to programs or policy. There was a reliance on e-mail; however, very few people stated that there were miscommunications that occurred because of this method. Students and advisers stated that both were very effective at returning communication, the only issue arising being if an e-mail inadvertently ended up in the "junk mail." Each of the RHA officers had an e-mail address assigned to them, which is attached to the position rather than the individual allowing for continuity in communication even when the position is vacant. Furthermore, the agendas used at both hall council and RHA meetings were comprehensive and included the minutes from previous meetings. Each of the hall council secretaries kept minutes on a sheet provided by the RHA which was then sent to the RHA secretary and the area housing staff to keep all informed about the happenings with the hall council.

The executive board made a strong effort at getting to know all of the meeting attendants by name to avoid the necessity of using voting placards. Many of the members shared classes, which then assisted in members' academic pursuits as well. The notion of friendships and support that exist within the RHA was pervasive among all of the voting

members, many of whom described the RHA as a family away from home. As one

member described, "The RHA kind of like sucks you in and makes you feel at home and

then you don't want to leave." One of the executive officers described the organization as

a "social project" which develops a camaraderie that lasts for life even resulting in some

marriages. This feeling of family however did not filter down to those who are only

involved in hall council. As one hall council executive stated, "Whenever we have the

Floor Representatives come to vote on meetings, they really don't come to much more

than that, just pretty much to vote on letting us use money for events."

The teamwork within hall councils was inherent in the way the organizational

structure was set up with certain positions being responsible for specific tasks. For

example, a program required permitting, which was the role of the Vice-President and

funds requests, which was the role of the Treasurer. From there, the Publicity Director

had to work to provide the advertisement for the event. One RHA member explained:

> You know that one person could do it, but it makes it so much more efficient and
>
> so much easier if everybody works as a team, just because you know we're all
>
> students as well and we're all busy and if you're doing it all by yourself, that's so
>
> hard to do, so you have to have the teamwork, if you want to keep, your sanity,
>
> and all that.

One RHA member who was no longer involved with a hall council explained it as

follows:

> I personally have no stock in whether this area's you know, if they have
>
> somebody to run the cash box, they have somebody to run this or that, but it's
>
> always important to help people out, because you know you've been in those

situations as well, where you needed a hand, and there wasn't anybody there, so there's a lot of people like that, the executive board's really good about that, when they're at programs, they'll jump in and help out.

Rules and Procedures

The RHA was extremely steeped in the use of *Robert's Rules of Order* for parliamentary procedure and a strict interpretation of the organizational constitution. At the beginning of each semester as well as on an as needed basis, the Vice-President held training sessions on parliamentary procedure. In addition, there were voting placards distributed which included the basics of parliamentary procedure in addition to the Vice-President sitting next to the President at the meeting to act as parliamentarian to ensure that all members are following procedure. The entirety of the organizational rules and procedures in addition to the constitution and policy book were found on the organization's website. The procedures of the organization led to many members referencing the use of acronyms, one of whom stated that the RHA was "another language."

When a member was having a difficult time following procedure, either the Vice-President or a member of the general body would offer assistance to the individual to enable them to orate what they wish to say appropriately. One member stated:

If you want to make a motion and you're not sure how to do it, you can raise your hand and say ok, I want to do this, how do I do this, or you can even turn to the person next to you if you need help on something as small as, how do I make this motion.

While the members believed the meetings were officiated with an emphasis in parliamentary procedure, the executives believed they facilitated a relaxed version.

The RHA Executive Board members participated in three meetings, two of which, the executive board and pre-meeting, were meant to prepare for the third, general assembly. The executive board, per constitution, was not permitted to speak during discussion at a general assembly meeting unless they stepped down from their position for the duration of the meeting. This was evident during the observation where the President nearly censured one of the other executive officers for speaking out of turn. The organizational adviser, as an ex-officio member of the executive board is permitted to make a point of information to offer historical or departmental perspectives, but must be recognized by the chair of the meeting. All financial decisions for the organization were passed by the voting body including the annual budget which included programming, permanent improvements, or area allocations, and thereafter, any specific funding requests.

The emphasis on administrative procedures extended beyond meetings and into the permitting process for conducting programs. The executive board has been known to cancel programs if proper protocols were not followed in the planning of programs. As one RHA Executive officer mentioned:

> We're having issues with areas, with an area that did not permit correctly, and it
> really stinks to have to punish somebody, or have repercussions for actions, but it
> is so important that rules are followed because it's, you know whether it's a
> program and there's liability and safety issues or if it's a general body meeting
> and it's there to maintain order and structure, I can't tell you how many, you

know housing meetings or hall council meetings that I've been to, or RHA

meetings, where they don't have set up rules, they don't have you know this is the

process and the procedure that we're gonna follow and they don't even have

agendas and it's, it's there to maintain order with such a large body of students,

we couldn't just have everybody openly discuss things, so we really try to make

sure that people are following the rules and procedures and following the policy,

because I am a firm believer that rules are there for a reason.

Parliamentary procedure in most of the hall council meetings was not as strictly

followed as in the RHA meetings. This is typically a function of fewer attendants present

at meetings and wanting to keep those students who did attend interested in the business

to be discussed rather than the procedure. Levels of student involvement and individual

area needs influenced the need for different constitutions and policy for each hall council,

which reflected varying procedures for business including but not limited to allocating

funds and conducting elections.

The RHA procedural manuals for programming and finance as well as the

organizational constitution and policy book were revised through committee. Transition

reports we expected from every officer or committee chairs which were then shared with

subsequent students holding those positions. While there was no formal ramification for

not submitting one of these reports, one RHA member stated about the RHA President,

She's basically like threatening us in her own little way, but really, what are you

gonna, you know, but it's more like shame on you if you don't do it, so we're

really required to, but I've been drilling in my board very much, every week,

every other week, in our executive board meeting, don't forget your transition report, don't forget your transition report.

Many of the members and advisers believed that the emphasis on procedure and organizational expectations was what has led to the strength and notoriety of the organization on campus. However, one of the advisers believed the extensiveness of procedure was detrimental to the organization, "They make an extreme attempt to make it like a business, they make an over attempt to make it like a business." He continued to discuss a situation where a meeting was drawn out because some members were seeking to revise the agenda.

> They were making motions to move you know issue 4 up to the front, and these two people basically, one person wanted issue 4 up to the front and the other person wanted question and answer to the front, so they just kept motioning to like move it up, so someone said motion to move issue 4 up above questions and then someone would say I motion to move questions above issue 4 and so it's like, it's one of those things where, you know, all the rules and policies end up wasting five minutes on that issue.

Program Planning

A primary goal of the organization was to assist with the community development initiatives of the Housing Department in order to assist students with their transition to the institution. Many of the members found their college friends in the organization and ended up living with them in subsequent years, either on or off campus. Students who were not involved in high school or did not have extensive social networks prior to coming to the institution were able to establish networks quickly through the

organization. One RHA member stated, "If you don't know a lot of people, it's really convenient to get to know people who live in your hall, so having those kind of programs and being able to meet people who are in your area, it's just, invaluable I guess." Each of the research participants noted the importance of the organization's impact on the student living experience, whether when the student first arrives on campus, or throughout their college career. When asked about any negative perceptions of the organization, one member responded, "What are you gonna say bad about bringing students together and letting them meet new people and kind of acclimating them to the campus life?" The organization's president described her "overall mission" as working with University administrators "making sure that we have everything that we need to make sure that the students are as safe and as comfortable as possible."

In addition to direct involvement of members in terms of community development and transition, the planning and implementation of social and educational programs was utilized to impact the university environment. The welcome statement on the organization's website included "communities are to be provided with social programming." There was also a calendar on the organizational website which listed the events sponsored by the RHA and the hall councils. The advisers saw the programming role as having the greatest impact; however, felt that the program implementation was self-serving as most of those in attendance were those that were involved in the organization. One of the advisers noted that he felt that most of those attending programs were members of RHA and hall councils plus their friends as opposed to the general residential population. An additional adviser agreed stating that the goals of the organization were, "to make the residence halls a good time, not necessarily for the

residents, but for themselves because they are residents, so they're trying to make their experience in college good and then as a secondary goal, make everybody else's good."

Program planning and implementation took place during fall, spring, and summer semesters. The RHA and hall council members work to try and balance the need for new initiatives with the want to maintain organizational traditions. Program implementation was the most visible activity the organization completed and gave it the most recognition, as one member discussed, "Even if it's just, oh that's how we get all these parties and this free food." The largest programming event of the academic year was Residence Hall Week, which took place in the spring; however, planning began early in the fall semester. The event is viewed by the organizational members as their opportunity to "shine on and off campus," because the community is invited and the event is advertised locally through media outlets.

In addition to RHA sponsored programs, each hall council informally assessed the needs of their students to determine what types of events to offer. One hall council member spoke to the purpose of programming as:

> I mean, it's great to have the socials and to have all those programs where people can come and get free food, but we also try to maintain, like a quota of having programs like educational programs and diversity programs and then community service, I know that was one thing that I definitely strive for during my presidency is to have a community service program, to have some diversity, to have some educational and I really feel like, we brought that to the residents.

The RHA was primarily limited by human resources in terms of the number and scope of the programs as noted by one RHA member:

It's more student work hours, I think that we pretty much have the money to do

anything that we want to do minus huge rock concerts and that kind of stuff cause

that would take our whole budget, but I think that RHA could be doing more for

programming.

Although the perception of members was that the RHA is not limited by financial

resources, hall council sponsored programs were limited to an extent. As hall finance was

connected to activity cards, student interest and involvement impacts the ability to obtain

resources. As one adviser summarized, "If we don't sell many of those, then we're not

gonna be able to program much."

Finally, student involvement in the organization was viewed as a primary

influence on community development within the residence halls and on campus. Several

hall council and RHA members mentioned that they had taken the first year experience

course offered, and while this was helpful, they believed that involvement with the RHA

was more beneficial to learning about the institution. One student stated:

> I would almost say I'd rather be involved in an organization like this then take a
>
> class like that because you're learning both how to be a leader and about your
>
> campus, and like I feel like that's something that everybody that's involved with
>
> the organization takes away."

<div align="center">Student Voice</div>

The members of the organization took pride in their role as student advocates.

Many of them have learned many of the Housing Department policies, procedures, and

processes to serve as a resource to students and assist them when they have questions. As

one RHA member stated, "If you tell us that there's an issue, we're gonna solve it." The

welcome on the RHA website described representing the "collective interests of all housing residents" and to "insure that the administration is justly enforcing policies." Furthermore, the mission statement of the organization found in the Constitution stated that the organization will "serve as a channel of communication between residence halls, the Housing Department, and the university community." Finally, University constituents contact the RHA President to gain student opinion before large decisions are made.

The RHA held voice with housing in terms of permanent improvements in facilities. However, this advocacy role could serve as detrimental to the reputation of the organization in that students believed the organization should be doing more for them. For example, some of the student criticism as it related to housing facilities was voiced to the organization as described by one hall council president:

> The resident's saying, listen, we still have a broken ice machine, when is that getting fixed, and I mean, I can really only tell them, hey it's not getting fixed this year, RHA doesn't have $5000 of disposable income to just throw at us.

The organizational structure of the RHA is thought by many to make student voice more efficient. One of the RHA members stated:

> I feel like that works with the hierarchical design of the organization, where a resident could bring up a problem at a General Body in an area, and so he's just one resident, but that information trickles up the line to the executive board and goes to, in front of RHA, and something can really be done because of it, and I really feel like that is the goal, is to make sure every resident's voice is heard.

In each of the RHA meetings, time was allocated for issues and concerns to be addressed to the executive board from the hall councils. The advisers reflected on this efficiency in

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addressing student concerns by stating, "They do a pretty good job advising Housing on certain issues, they have an issues forum every week where they can bring up the streetlights out, or why are rates continuing to go up or things like that." However, this adviser also noted that students could address these concerns to their RA or other housing staff. In response to this, however, one adviser argued that since hall staff members were paid, they could be limited by perceptions of conflicts of interest when compared to those who were members of the RHA, who are volunteers.

Resources

Resource allocation, both financial and physical was discussed by all interview participants and almost all interview participants, students or advisers, believed that the decisions related to resource allocation were some of the most important made by the organization. When asked what the most important decisions the organization make are, one RHA member stated:

Probably budgetary ones because you know, how much money you get, or what kind of things you allocate money towards, that kind of depends, you know, what kind of programs you can put on depends on that, so if you have put this amount in educational and this amount in just general, then if you want to put on an educational or general, it kind of dictates what you can do, and how you can work, so I think that's pretty big.

Records of past expenditures were kept to guide current and future members on the budgeting process and assist with the planning of initiatives.

The number of physical resources the organization has ownership of was thought to be due to responsible leadership over the history of the organization. The equipment

that was available to the residents in the halls was owned by the hall councils, which in part were a mechanism for organizational purpose. Furthermore, the organization had equipment that could be borrowed for large scale events, as one member stated:

> I feel like probably a lot of schools don't have a lot of stuff like that to where they can just rent out machines like that to every hall council whenever they want them, but I think that we do a good job of being able to do that, and having a lot of nice things for the students to use.

RHA programming initiatives were funded primarily by Student Government, while funds for physical hall improvements, conference travel, office space, and executive board remuneration were provided by the Housing Department. The organization also received an allocation from their campus dining company, which could be used for food purchases. While some of the monies allocated were consistent from year to year, the allocation received from Student Government was one that the organizational leaders competed for annually. RHA is considered one of the "big eight" organizations who received the greatest allocation from student government. The other seven organizations were all culturally based, which sometimes led to criticism from members of the other organizations. Furthermore, due to the support from the Housing Department, other registered student organizations would be critical of the allocation provided to the organization by Student Government. In response to this criticism, one of the RHA members commented that the other organizations:

> Don't see all the stuff that's going on all the time, they don't see that there's 400 programs a year, they just see, you know the money piece, so I think that the

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criticism that we get would be from other organizations, not necessarily thinking that we're worthy of the amount of money that we get.

The Activity Card was the main revenue-generating source of the hall councils. These cards were provided by the RHA at the beginning of the year, and the proceeds from sales provided the hall council budget. Students must hold a valid activity card in order to gain entry into programs sponsored by RHA or the hall councils. While there were plenty of resources available to the organization, the different revenue streams forced the RHA to be creative in order to maximize their funds, as one student described:

> We definitely have enough money, it's trying to make, knowing where to go with it, and knowing which line you can take it out of, and how to use the money efficiently to get the most food or get the best equipment, so we're just trying to learn which place to go to.

In addition to the money raised with the activity cards, hall councils could request money from the RHA general assembly to increase the scope of or provide for additional programs and initiatives. Furthermore, both university departments and other student organizations could request funds from RHA, which allowed the organization to become more involved in the campus community. The RHA and hall council budgets were effectively utilized and at the end of the year all which was left was a small amount to allow the hall councils to sponsor programs during welcome week before Activity Cards were sold.

Due to the amount of money being passed, the RHA Adviser or designee must be present at any meeting where money was being allocated. In addition, the RHA Treasurer met with each hall council treasurer once a semester to audit their accounts. From a

leadership development perspective, three different members of the executive board received the opportunity through their position descriptions to administer different accounts.

The level of money allocated gave the RHA significant influence within housing and on campus. This level of influence led one adviser to comment:

They enjoy the power that they're in, and they try to make it very professional, perhaps to the point that it's not even realistic, but they're a very powerful organization on campus, the department supports them a lot and they do put on some great programs and everything like that, but just the kind of power they command on campus, it's pretty impressive.

Another adviser believed this level of influence led to some inefficiency in the operation commenting:

I think they enjoy the power a little bit as well, you'll often find that someone's trying to get, I know we've had things where people were trying to petition for certain amounts of money and they'll say it's $70.82 or whatever and here's what I want and then someone will be looking over and say, do you really need three bags of rice, couldn't you do it with two, you know, stuff like that, so I think they enjoy the authority that they can have and the presence that they can make.

This phenomenon led to some hall councils being reluctant to request money from the RHA as one of the advisers noted:

A lot of people don't do it because it's a very tedious process, you have to get in front of RHA and request it twice, they have to kind of approve it twice, and then you have to, you have to make a list of what items you want, the exact items, and

exactly what aisle their on, all this other stuff, you know, I mean it's a very long

process, it's not easy and again for people who are not paid for their job, to have

to go to Publix just to look at items and write them down and then come back and

do it again, isn't all that fun, so I think it does, in a sense, it's a good and bad, it

deters people because they don't want to fill out the paperwork, and on the flip-

side, if they made it easier, they'd have more requests, 100 bucks here, 100 bucks

there.

<div align="center">Collaborative Partners</div>

Housing

The organizational members had a positive relationship with the Housing

Department, with the department being seen by research participants as one of the

strongest support mechanisms. Most students were pleased with the physical structure of

the halls, which allowed the RHA to do focus on program development. One RHA

member commented:

Housing is like the skeletal structure, no I'm just kidding, I'm not a science

student so, and then RHA keeps you know keeps residents happy and a lot of

students go from RHA, like me, I'm gonna be an RA next year, so I'm gonna

work for housing and I probably wouldn't have done that if I wasn't in RHA

because it just gets you involved in housing and gets you interested in keeping

students happy and gets you, gives you kind of like an inside look about what the

kind of things that students like to do and the kind of things that like housing does

for students as well, so they kind of feed off of each other.

The RHA President was the main avenue by which the students had access to university officials and vice-versa. She served as liaison to the university administration, attended weekly Housing Departmental meetings and held appointments with the police department and student affairs administrators. She summarized by stating:

> I'm kind of the figurehead for the entire organization, whether that's to the
> university administration or to the RHA general body by running meetings, to the
> Department of Housing, it's just kind of the overall figurehead, representative, if
> they want an opinion, they'll send me an e-mail first, or call me or however it is.

RHA members held meetings with the managers of the various dining venues on campus to give feedback and in return received funding for use at campus catering for programs. It was generally thought by the members of the organization that although the university did not always seek student input in decision making processes, the housing administration was always seeking student input. One RHA member stated:

> Housing comes and gives this nice long presentation, lays out for the next five
> years what they're planning on doing, this, that and the other thing, so we get to
> discuss with them, I mean, we don't vote on it per se, but it's, they ask us, this is
> what we're doing is this what we need and they ask us for input which we
> thankfully give which is nice.

Housing valued the students who are involved with the RHA and proudly displayed awards and other plaques on the walls of the housing office commemorating the accomplishments the organization had made over its history. As one of the hall council members stated:

They really value us and you can see that through the plaques that they have on

their wall, they have, every year, every semester they put who got honor roll,

every single person who got honor roll on the wall, and they put the executive

board positions on there, and they have pictures, and like, I think going to housing

and seeing how much emphasis that they put on RHA, makes it more valued.

Because of the relationship with the Housing Department, the organization had to choose

the battles with the university administration cautiously. As the RHA President noted:

There's a fine line because RHA has such a strong relationship with housing, that

we don't ever want to do something that's going to make housing look bad or

make us look bad in the eyes of housing, but it's walking that fine line between, at

some point, we're the student's voice, not housing's voice and so, walking, that's

kind of a critical line for us, but anything that deals from parking to budgeting.

The adviser served primary responsibility as a chaperone during campus travel

and as an historical information source if questions arose during meetings, but otherwise,

did not intervene in the organization's decision making process. Hall council advisers

were trained in part by the RHA Adviser and also by the RHA executive officers. One of

the strongest statements about the relationship between the Housing Department and the

RHA was as it relates to the advisers; the RHA member stated:

We have a sizable budget that we're more than equipped to do programming with,

but I'd say that probably the thing that makes us the richest is the staff that we

have, you know, between, we have an hall council adviser, most of them, a lot of

them which are part of the SPHE program here, advise our hall councils, you see

hall councils that kind of just do their own thing, but these advisers are with them

day in and day out helping them with programming, helping them with how to run meetings, taking them through personal growth which is huge to have that resource there.

Some of the advisers did not enjoy the relationship that the RHA members have with the housing office, one of whom noted:

These people are fortunate, say exec board or whatever, just are fortunate enough to know my boss, but more importantly my boss's boss's boss, stuff like that. If they have a problem, they aren't gonna come to me, they're going to come to the Director, you know they'll go to the highest person they can and so, it gives them a certain amount of authority and the fact that they know all the RAs, and you know that they have the authority over this money too, you know they have the authority over thousands and thousands of dollars and if you want money, you kind of have to ask them for it.

The RA staff at this institution was very supportive of the RHA, due to both the funding mechanisms, which were tied to the organization, and the number of RHA members that became resident assistants. Even with the dependency the RAs had on the RHA and hall council members, the students made a strong effort at being unified for the betterment of the students who reside in the halls. As one hall council member stated:

We're pretty involved with our RAs. I know every single RA in my building, and then I talk to the others because I serve a lot of office hours, so I'll see them at the desk and we'll just kind of talk about what they need on their floors, whether or not we're doing our jobs and if they want to see something get done, and since so many students don't show up to the general body meetings, it helps that we know

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the RAs because they'll tell us what their kids are complaining about, like you

won't know that a microwave is broken unless an RA says something, or unless a

student's really upset about it, they'll come down and say, we don't have a

microwave, or something is burning, you know, so the RAs are big help.

Because the RHA constitution allowed for RAs to be involved as committee chairs and

other positions, it provided greater involvement for the RAs in the organization. This also

led to them being able to attend recognition ceremonies including the end of year

banquet.

The primary friction, which occurred between these two groups of students, had

to do with processes that RHA had for equipment rentals and funds requests. One of the

advisers noted that the RAs might have been even more supportive of the RHA and hall

councils if the processes for resource allocation were not so cumbersome, noting, "RAs

don't feel too good about having to take a month of their, a month of meetings pretty

much in order to get a little bit of money."

Student Government

Student Government at this institution was viewed as financially supportive of the

RHA. Any program that was funded through student government must be open to all

students at the institution regardless of if they have purchased an activity card. Each of

the areas had a voting member to Senate, but the students who served in that capacity

rarely hold responsibilities in the RHA.

Beyond finance, the relationship between the RHA and Student Government was

dependent on who the presidents of the organizations were. This had caused at least one

member to describe the relationship between the organizations as "weird." Some of the

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RHA executives also sat on the Student Government Senate, which caused some "bad blood" which arose in the Senate venue to bleed into relations between Student Government and the RHA. Annually, the new RHA Executive Board was introduced to the student Senate following elections as well as attending budget hearings. The RHA is considered a non-political organization, thus has not endorsed the candidacy of any students running for Student Government. The Senate would like the organization to become more political, but that is not in the future plans of the organizational members. This is even stated in the constitution, which reads that the organization "shall show no preference towards or voice public support for or in opposition to any political organization or party."

The RHA President described the relationship as follows:

We have a very good, I'd say we have a good relationship with Student Government, they know if they need something, they can come and talk with us, but we're kind of more, we're more self sufficient than most of the other student organizations, so we kind of just, do our thing until, until the paths collide I guess.

The one area which the RHA members were discontent with Student Government was in terms of representation on student committees. One of the issues was described as, "We'd like to have a voice in this, and it really comes down to does the Student Body President want us to have a voice in this, because he appoints most of the University Committee seats." To this end, many of the members felt they were underrepresented based upon the fact that although resident students did not comprise a majority of the student population, they were the ones who spent all of their time on campus. The prioritization of resident versus commuter student issues was a large issue with RHA members.

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Many of the hall council members believed the RHA to be more efficient and effective than Student Government. With the length of time that many of the RHA meetings took, they were still shorter than those held by Student Government. The relationship was described by some as a "sibling rivalry" due to the similarity in the organizations. One RHA member stated, "I feel like SG thinks that RHA's always trying to stick their noses in places that SG might think it's not supposed to be, but RHA thinks it's supposed to be, so I think SG gives us the most criticism."

CHAPTER 6

INSTITUTION GAMMA

Student Involvement

According to the constitution, every student residing in University Housing is a member of RHA, however, most were not involved other than attending programs. The students are informed of the organization when they move in during the fall or at their initial building or floor meetings, however, they did not have an awareness of organizational purpose. Benefits of involvement were described to potential members by advisers and students as leadership development, travel, making an impact on where the student resides, and networking with other students as well as staff at the institution.

In an attempt to get more students attending programs, hall councils are awarded points for the number of students that attended not only their individual events, but at campus-wide RHA or hall council sponsored events as well. Students who attended the programs did not necessarily know that RHA was the sponsoring organization as was summarized by the organization's president who stated:

We ask them, oh have you been to this program, they say, oh yeah, I can say, well I've said RHA put that on, so they have been to programs, but they don't know that RHA is out there; but we're like the second biggest on campus organization.

Each year, the hall council starts out from nothing, with elections taking place the first few weeks of school. The hall council elections process is a primary responsibility of the adviser who would post banners and along with the building staff would hold

information sessions. The RHA Adviser placed significant need for the housing professional as well as para-professional staff to be involved in the recruitment of new members, stating that it:

> Depends on the professional staff, graduate staff, and the RAs, I've, I believe and people are welcome to tell me otherwise, but I believe that day one check in is when you get the recruitment going and that first week you find the students out on the margin and you kind of get them involved and get them out of their rooms and that's a lot of effort on the RAs and their supervisors to make them a priority.

Student and staff in first year buildings found it easier to recruit members due to their energy and the immediate want to meet new people, while in an upper-division building it was more difficult due to a focus on graduation or commitment to other activities and organizations.

The resident assistants were relied upon greatly through the recruitment role, however, were not as dedicated to the success of the organization as advisers would have liked. One adviser stated, "Because they're not as dedicated, that it rubs off to the students that actually are involved." This adviser continued by stating that the members, "look at the RA position as the pinnacle position that you can have and seeing that they're not somewhat dedicated to it, I think they had a hard time wrapping their heads around." The advisers believed that as resident assistant interest in RHA and hall councils improved, the organizations would improve as well. Resident assistants are not permitted to hold voting positions on RHA, so once RHA members become RAs their involvement ends.

While one RHA member became involved in their first year through discussion during a mandatory building wide meeting, an RHA member concurred with the adviser's statement, believing that many students have never heard of RHA. This member recruited a friend of hers, stating "She never heard of it and is running for RHA Representative next year, 'cause it sounds really interesting what I do. So they're pretty interested when they know about it, but other than that, they have no clue." Two RHA members became involved in their second year, because during the first, they were not aware that there was a hall council or RHA. Another member who had been involved as a first year student had to approach the housing staff after moving in to a new hall her second year, saying that she had been involved during her first and inquiring about information about continued involvement.

The location of the building and the style of apartments versus suites also had an impact on recruitment. The students that resided farthest from the location where the meetings were held did not want to come to the meetings due to distance. In addition, several members and advisers felt that the environment of an apartment community led to students being separated and not seeking the same community as a general residence hall due to the lack of need of ever leaving their rooms other than to go to class. The areas that housed families or students who were over 21 were integrated with traditional housing in some areas, which caused a problem with student involvement for the hall council as well as the ability to obtain representatives to attend RHA.

It is perceived to be easy to become involved with RHA and while there were people who want to run for hall council president, gaining the number of voting representatives for RHA meetings was challenging. In reference to the elections for hall

council, one RHA member stated, "I was actually surprised because it was a point where we thought we would have to have elections to decide." While hall council is initially popular with some students, there was a lack of interest with most of the residents who live in University Housing to be actively involved in RHA. As one RHA member stated, "Not a lot of people are interested in RHA. They are ok, we have a council, we have Hall Council and they plan stuff, that's cool, so either they don't know about it, or they don't care enough about it." This phenomenon was considered by some to be an institutional effect, as another member stated, "Generally it's not easy to recruit anybody to do anything on this campus. I'm in a lot of activities on campus and a lot of clubs and committees and it's hard." One of the advisers stated that his role is, "A lot of that recruiting and encouraging, motivating, trying to get them going, and then keep that motivating all year because there's not a whole lot of that self-motivation there, keeping them going."

While recruitment was a difficult task for the organization, retention in the organization was also problematic, especially in the hall councils where there were no accountability measures for an inactive floor representative. Many of the hall councils began with between 10 and 15 members, however, by the spring semester; most consisted of 6 or 7 at most. Part of the retention issue was that students were either unaware or unprepared for the level of commitment that was expected of them in joining the organization. Some students became involved in other organizations or work, while others decided that the organization was not providing to be the best outlet for their extra-curricular activities. The RHA members believed that because it was a volunteer position and not paid, this was detrimental to long-term involvement of most students. The RHA

Legislative Body acknowledged the effort needed toward recruitment and retention of members and discussed this as part of their primary goals. One of the RHA Members spoke about the concept of branding the RHA to inform students of how involved and active an organization RHA was on the campus.

While those students that were on the RHA Executive Board tended to exhibit a high level of commitment to the organization, those that were in hall councils or in the RHA Legislative Body did not. As one adviser stated, "Obviously school's always gonna come first, as it should, family, the really important things always come first, but even beyond that, there are different clubs and organizations that they put above it, and other things that they put above that." One of the advisers felt that the executive board members were not open with the students about the level of commitment expected. Many of the students were recruited believing that they had to attend meetings and not any additional responsibilities. However, all of the members believed that in order to be significantly involved a time commitment was necessary. These individuals also believed that if the number of students involved increased, the amount of commitment necessary would decrease.

Many students initially become involved in RHA or hall council and then leave because they become involved in Greek Life. One hall council member stated, "You cannot be in RHA and go Greek, you just can't, they're both too time consuming, it's just not possible." Another RHA member stated, "We had another person interested in becoming a RHA representative and he dropped out because his fraternity was taking up too much of his time." Finally, a hall council leader noted that, "I think it depends on how dedicated you are though, this is my only extracurricular activity, so I'm dedicated to it."

It was also believed that organizational leaders could do a better job getting to know the residents they were meant to represent. Those students who were not involved with the organization many times would believe that the events that RHA or the hall councils planned and implemented were functions of the resident assistants. The RHA Executive Board members agreed believing that they needed to better explain to the students why RHA existed, how they made decisions, and how these decisions impacted the general student population. However, one RHA member did state, "I mean what we do is important, but there's nothing really life or death about being here."

Advisers felt that the executive board could be motivating students to continue their involvement, for example, "I think would be the best way to make it more effective is to keep the students motivated like, not, oh I have RHA meeting, like yes we're going to RHA, then we're gonna do this, then we're gonna do this, like to have them excited to go to the meetings." They also believed that the purposes and benefits of involvement were not well explained to students.

Students did not see the non-material benefits of being involved in RHA and the hall councils, one of whom stated that if the institution "had some incentive, I'm sure that that would, that would make a difference as well, but this is just all volunteering and you don't really get anything from it." One member believed that:

> We finally get people involved and then they'll become an RA because it's paid,
> so it's kind of like we have a really hard time with recruitment and retention
> because of that, because you can go and work in our Student Government and
> they get paid to do that and the same kind of things that we're doing.

The cost of living on campus was viewed as problematic for several of the members who planned on moving off campus the following year.

Leadership Development and Training

Participation in the organization could be frustrating for a new adviser or member joining, as they were not aware of the specific policies and procedures that were required. A three- to four-hour mandatory training session was held on a Friday evening at the beginning of the fall semester, which was organized by the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH) to instruct members on how to coordinate programming, navigate the language of the RHA including parliamentary procedure, and better understand individual positions. Part of this training was also dedicated to teambuilding activities to have the members meet and get to know each other. The training was not a formalized program and topics to be covered were determined by those students coordinating the training annually. This past year, the individuals attended a RHA meeting prior to the training so they would have a stronger idea of what RHA was before entering the training.

Many of the advisers and members did not view the session as RHA training per se, but rather a leadership development opportunity for them. Several specifically stated that there was "no formal training" for them as it related to RHA. Another member stated that she had not received any training at all, but viewed the fall training as an informational session on how the organization was administered and what committees were available. The hall council presidents and members of the RHA Executive Board met for individual meetings with their advisers which members perceived as training. Additionally, each week, the RHA Adviser coordinated a 5 to 10 minute learning

opportunity centered on leadership growth as opposed to RHA specific content. These sessions also served as the opportunity for the adviser to forge relationships with the students and give the students something to look forward to. Additionally, it served to build into the culture of the RHA, that leadership development was an intentional component and outcome of the organization. The members viewed the leadership development session that the adviser facilitated at the weekly RHA meeting as formal training.

Training for positions on the RHA Executive Board was limited to a conversation with the person holding the position prior. There was nothing in the constitution or in any written documents discussing the types of training necessary for members or officers. As such, the organizational leaders and members relied heavily on the advisers for the training and on-going development both in generating program ideas and better understanding of their positions. As one adviser stated:

> There's some training that goes on there but I think that at that point it relies on the adviser to kind of guide them in the correct direction and really during the RHA meetings, if they have any questions about anything, they're willing to answer them, but I think that then it falls on the adviser, then at that point, to show them.

One hall council member who stated that there had been no training stated, "I don't really know how you would train somebody to be in this position cause you're either a leader or not and if you're not, you really shouldn't be a president." The organizational leaders also disseminated information on leadership development initiatives either organized by the institution or through attendance at state, regional, and

national conferences. Those members who were able to attend state, regional, and national conferences saw their attendance as training, specifically those who were involved in executive roles. Much of the leadership development in the organization, however, was learned as students participated in meetings and program planning. As one adviser stated:

> I think it's the experiences that you go through and the lessons you learn as you make the mistakes, so you go through, you do something, it might not have worked out, but you learn how to deal with people, how to work with people, and how to develop an organization and go through, or kind of how to grow as you go through that process.

In terms of leadership, one adviser stated:

> I think the goals of RHA are to one give students another means to get involved, in any capacity whether it's the main leader, whether it's someone who's more of a support role, I think that it's a good opportunity for them to get involved.

Part of the recruitment strategy of RHA was engaging students in developing their leadership skills. Another outcome of involvement in RHA was to allow the students to market their experience through leadership, teamwork, and communication skills developed that they could talk about in an interview setting. One hall council member saw the leadership development component of RHA as the only true asset of the organization stating, "I guess if RHA wasn't at Institution Gamma, I don't think it would make that big of a difference, it wouldn't. The only difference is it wouldn't give residents the opportunity to be leaders as far as this."

Students facilitated as well as spoke in meetings, which gave them public speaking practice, specifically as they related to preparing proposals for RHA. Included in this development were experiences such as working with other people, receiving feedback from their peers and from their advisers, taking on responsibilities and finding success and failures, and learning from the challenges. In addition, there were networking opportunities including the chance to meet others that might be able to assist them in their classes. Finally, students learned to respect other people's ideas especially at the meetings where there are competing priorities.

The committee work was also viewed as a leadership development opportunity for involved students. Each of the three major committees, Programming, Advertising, and Student Concerns taught students how to address different priorities. An additional way that leadership was propagated through involvement in RHA was through the application process to be considered for an executive board position. Though the main reason for the application process was to determine the level of seriousness a student had for running for a position, the President reviewed the application with the individual in an effort to review their resume.

Some students were involved solely due to the resume component of the organization. However, many executive members came from the legislative body and many of the advisers pushed their students to taking on higher-level positions. One hall council member relayed a conversation with an adviser who asked her, "What's the point of doing this for a year, you're not gonna make the next step up, and you're not gonna progress?" Others became involved as a precursor to other campus involvement; one RHA member stated, "I plan to go from here to Student Government and I figure this

would be a good transition, good experience to learn, so, that's kind of why I'm here, so it's my motivation mostly, but I enjoy it, I enjoy making a difference."

In addition to the training on parliamentary procedure that was conducted at the fall training, the back of each of the voting placards held some basics of procedure. Members felt they learned most by following the meeting and understanding when to use which terminology. They generally agreed that the executive board and members were "forgiving when you made a mistake." One of the advisers felt that the increase in productivity over the course of the year was in part due to the comfort level of the members after more than a semester in their positions. He felt that they had learned what types of questions to ask and what points to look for in written or verbal proposals.

Communication and Cooperation

At the RHA Legislative Body meetings, there was formal and informal communication between the general assembly, guests, and executive board. This was generally a time to visit with each other, recall successes, share information, and make decisions. The verbal communication during the formal meeting was dedicated to decision making, while the agenda distributed had important information such as reminders of upcoming events, RHA meetings, and committee meetings. The agenda also contained the minutes from the previous meeting. There were links on the website which were intended to list all minutes from previous meetings, however, the most recent set of minutes on the website was from 2005-2006.

Many of the RHA General Body members viewed their roles as more of messenger, leading to one member stating, "We're gophers, run back and forth, which is fine, I like it." The organizational structure was designed so that several hall council

representatives attended the RHA Legislative Body. This caused more collaboration and greater communication between hall councils and RHA allowing for the general body of the hall councils to be more aware of campus events and activities. However, given the nature of the space where the meeting was held, it was difficult for members as well as the Adviser to hear the discussion. While communication from the executive board to the general assembly was viewed as effective, communication back to the hall councils was not always consistent. The RHA Adviser likened the communication issues between hall councils and RHA as:

> Hall councils, you know there is the telephone game or whatever with communication, information not getting up to the adviser and then the adviser coming to me saying, hey RHA isn't giving all the information, and I'm like, actually it was, but it passed through two or three people to get to you as the adviser.

Several of the Legislative Body members had limited contact with the executive board during the week. They felt that tasks discussed at the RHA Meeting might not be initiated until the week following and this was primarily to have a report to give at the next meeting.

The representatives who attended the RHA meetings enjoyed shorter meetings and for the most part believed the relationship between hall councils and RHA to be positive, however the relationship ended with the voting representatives. These members did view the RHA Executive Board as being in a position of authority, as one member described:

It's pretty cohesive, there are divides, but they are professional divides, because

you know that they're your superiors and you know you have to impress them

with the work and you know listen to what they have to say, but we work really

well together, they're very personable people, so we're pretty cohesive as a group.

Each member of the RHA General Body was required to sit on a committee, of

which there were three whose purposes are advertising, student concerns, and

programming. These committees tended to accomplish a significant amount of the work

effort of the RHA and also reflected the primary goals of the organization. Though these

committees were viewed by the members as productive, there were no standards of

accountability for committee involvement, leading one adviser to comment, "From the

exec board I hear some griping that no one showed up to my committee meeting, why

aren't the representatives doing their job, so it might not be as efficient as they would

like." To respond to this, during the previous year, legislation had been passed to change

the constitution to include that the hall council had to be considered active to be eligible

for co-sponsorships. However, as funding was distributed both directly to the halls in

addition to the co-sponsorships, the limitation on an inactive hall council is insignificant.

While the Legislative Body and committee meetings tended to have purpose, the

executive board and Presidents meetings did not. The RHA Executive Board meeting

took place immediately following the General Body meeting and served as more of a

debriefing of the General Body, than it was planning for the following week's meeting.

By member and adviser admission, they believed that the executive board meetings could

be more organized, but that this was dependent on the President. The timing of executive

board and lack of general organization led to communication issues between the

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President and other executive board members. In addition, while a few of the hall council presidents thought the Presidents Meetings to be positive, most felt that it was more of a way for the RHA President to communicate directly with them in an effort as one President stated, "To keep an eye on them." The RHA Adviser saw the Presidents meetings as a type of on-going training for those in these positions. The lack of attendance by presidents at these meetings has led to proposals for changes in the RHA Constitution seeking to hold presidents accountable for attendance. However, it was stated by several RHA and hall council members that the times for these meetings did not take into consideration student schedules and that the times and locations of these meetings were not consistent. Additionally, one of the advisers who had sat in on some of these meetings felt that the meetings were not taken seriously enough for them to be effective.

Communication issues were apparent between varying entities of the RHA including among and between the executive board members, between the RHA Executive Board and RHA Legislative Body, and between RHA and the hall councils. There were several levels of meetings each week including the RHA Executive Board meeting, RHA Legislative Body Meeting, Hall Council President Meetings, Hall Council Meetings, and committee meetings. If someone knew the meeting was taking place, they might attend, however, there was no identification on the buildings where the RHA General Body or hall council meetings took place to draw attention to any passers-by. RHA General Body Members felt that attendance for meetings and other events was directly linked to poor advertising.

Although there were a significant number of meetings, members of RHA and the hall councils preferred to communicate via phone and e-mail. At one of the hall council meetings, the members decided to plan their program via phone and Instant Messenger rather than meeting in person. The reliance on these methods of communication has led to some ineffectiveness in as one member said, "There's a lot of miscommunication, when people are trying to contact people, sometimes they can't reach them, they can't read their number, their phone number, e-mail address is the wrong e-mail address." Furthermore, there was a general concern that members did not check their e-mail often enough.

Only one of the presidents kept consistent contact with the hall council outside of meetings stating that she would "send out e-mails every week, just to say, hey, hope you had a good weekend, this is what we have to look forward to this week." The hall council members believed that communication in the hall council was dependent on the effort of the hall council president and adviser.

The hall council exists on its own outside of RHA in that those that were not RHA members were not as aware of what was happening with RHA; that was not their focus. The RHA assembly included building representatives who held voting seats; none of the other members of the hall council attended RHA meetings. According to the advisers, in an ideal system, the hall representatives would come back to hall council meetings encouraging the other members to come to RHA and informing them of RHA's purpose. The lack of involvement with RHA led to better attendance at hall council programs than at RHA sponsored programs. Each of the hall councils represented a different student population which led to different needs and wants, thus while there was some

collaboration on programs, organization wide goal setting did not take place. RHA

Executive Board members were asked to select a hall council to liaison with and to serve

as the primary contact to; however, this was not fully implemented. As one RHA

Executive Board member stated, "It's really difficult to get to all the meetings and

unfortunately school and time commitments." However, there was support by the RHA

Executive Board at hall council programs, as one RHA Executive Board member stated,

"I try to make it to every program that the hall council's doing just so I can say, hey I'm

here, you know, I really like you guys' program." The primary accountability of the hall

councils to RHA rested with the financial ramifications for non-compliance and the tie of

the advisers to the Housing Department.

Teamwork was a prevailing theme among all members and advisers. The

members were not only tied by the organization, but through friendships as well.

However, these friendships could keep new members from joining the organization. As

one adviser stated:

> They're all best of friends and I think they do a lot of work outside and I think
>
> they exclude other people cause they got their constant conversations and when
>
> they come together to meet, you know, they assume everybody's on the same
>
> page.

Overall, the members enjoyed the experience and interacting with each other. It was also

viewed as a networking opportunity, given the ability to meet many students as well as

staff. The members felt that this cooperation was essential in order to complete all of the

tasks and goals for the year. At times the relationships were more important than the

business as at the meetings, the members appeared to be having fun and while impatient as the meeting business went on, enjoyed socializing afterward.

Rules and Procedures

There was significance placed on the organizational constitution and following *Robert's Rules of Order* for parliamentary procedures. The RHA and hall council constitutions are the governing documents and followed by the organization. If someone had a question that was unable to be answered, the members referred back to the constitution. The hall councils had a constitution; the template of which was coordinated by RHA, and that year's hall council had the opportunity to revise it, however, at the end of the academic year, the revisions are stricken. In addition to this document, the RHA had several forms to be filled out to borrow equipment, hang flyers, or request funds.

Parliamentary procedure was used to facilitate the RHA General Body meetings, although this was limited by the students' knowledge of procedure. The extent of parliamentary procedure training was that which was covered at the fall training. One adviser stated, " A school that really does a really big parli-pro would come down and realize all the mistakes that are made through the procedures, but as far as the students know, they're following the procedures to where they're supposed to go. The RHA Adviser stated,

> I think they're respectful of rules and procedures, but I don't think they take the
> initiative to find out what they are first in order to abide by them. I think they
> think things are a lot of times common sense and they move forward and as I
> catch and hear of things, I'm able to steer them in the right direction.

However, he did not see this as a primary concern as he felt that too heavy a focus on policy and procedure would inhibit the fun as well as the creativity of the organization, so a balance was necessary. He continued by stating, "I don't want a group that's so structured in rules and procedures that they're penalizing each other that they feel that they can't do anything." One of the RHA Executive Board members stated:

> We're not like killers about the parli-pro stuff at least in the meetings. I think we have Bob's second cousin that we follow. We do try to keep them from talking a lot in the meetings, 'cause it's really hard to hear.

Many of the RHA members felt that parliamentary procedure was heavily enforced, one of whom stated, "Whenever somebody says something that's not parli-pro, they are corrected." Although parliamentary procedure was thought to be a large part of the operations of the RHA, the body only appeared to use it in voting situations. When there was an issue with procedure, the adviser did not attempt to correct, rather allowing it to go unnoticed or waiting for another member to correct it.

The RHA General Body meetings have been held on the same date and time since the inception of the organization in an attempt to assist with the creation of the culture. This was not a strong enough value to be placed in the Constitution of the organization;

however, when the President had a class conflict, the decision was made to keep the meetings on the same date and time. There was a feeling from the senior members of the Housing Department who believed that one of the points for success for an organization was culture and repetition. For all of those involved with RHA, they plan their course and work schedules as much as possible around the RHA meeting time to allow for involvement. As one member stated, "Everyone knows that RHA is on Mondays, everyone in the University knows, it's just kind of easier to say, hey, this frees you to plan for everyone's schedule instead of trying to change them every year."

Most of the participants felt that the processes for the RHA were clearly established including how to reserve space, how to request funds, and how to request the use of equipment. In order to borrow equipment or reserve space, forms needed to be filled out; however, for funds requests, there was a written proposal as well as a presentation to the Legislative Body. Even given the established procedures, exceptions to the rules were made often, especially as it related to programming initiatives. This flexibility was supported by the advisers who believed that if the organization were not as flexible, some of the programs would suffer.

Procedurally, the role of the adviser was to work to ensure that the RHA was following their calendar year including elections cycles, conference attendance, and programming timelines. The RHA Adviser worked with the executive board on being ahead of the cycle in essence anticipating what was going to occur. As a new adviser, he had been frustrated by the lack of planning by the executive board, stating that, "I've got the students saying, oh by the way, this is coming up, " to which he responded, "Ok, if I'd have known, I'd have brought it up a month ago, not when it's due in a week." Due to

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his lack of experience with the organization, he was learning many of the processes for the first time himself.

Transition from year to year in order to preserve the organizational history and continue tradition was seen as important, however, there were no transitional documents passed to newly elected or appointed leaders. Transition was thought to be essential because the leadership of RHA typically was on a one to two year cycle, and hall councils typically regenerated annually. The history of the organization was passed on by the adviser, both for hall councils and RHA. The lack of transition at this institution appeared to be symptomatic of the youth of the organization. First, the founding adviser for RHA was at the institution until recently, thus the lack of written documentation led to a large amount of history and tradition leaving as well. The new adviser has pushed the need for transition and stated, "I'm asking all these questions, I can only imagine what a student is asking cause I don't know what the Treasurer does, what the President does." Secondly, the organization was defining processes that a RHA with a more established history already has engrained into the culture of the organization. One of the advisers felt that in order to establish the type of culture in the organization that would lead to stability and inherent transition was to "build the training, what's the expectations, what's the goals, I think some of that stuff needs to be, that's that solid ground kind of stuff I'm talking about."

When a newly elected officer began their position, the positional responsibilities start with what was listed in the constitution; however, the terms of the office were not listed. There was nothing in the constitution under positional responsibilities that included the need to leave transitional information or to meet with incoming individuals.

The extent to which transition was discussed was limited to the following year's executive board taking office at the last meeting of the semester. The newly elected members chaired the meeting; however, the former executive board was also present to provide support.

The adviser worked this past year to ensure that each officer left a transition binder for the next person in that position which would include a yearly calendar containing all of the traditional programs, when the conferences were, and some of the efforts from the past that were successful and not successful. He hoped that when the person elected into the position had the transitional meeting with the outgoing position holder, that binder could be a guide for the discussion to take place. These binders, according to the RHA Adviser were to, "Leave something behind, you know; what is the tradition, what is the culture, what are the necessities to keep this organization running." One of the current executive board members stated that her transition the previous year had included a dinner with the outgoing individual in her position and a discussion about baseball. Transition binders have been tried in the past; however, they were either lost or not as informative as they were meant to be. In addition to the binders, the new executive board members were slated to receive copies of every file left on the RHA computer. The members also realized the necessity for transition, some worrying that the organization will not continue as successfully after they left their current positions. The adviser mentioned several times during the executive board meeting the need for transition.

The current President had been involved with the organization for six years, and the current Treasurer in her position for three, leaving many, including the RHA Adviser worried that the tradition and growth would leave with them. There was not significant

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competition for executive board positions and much of the productivity was reliant on the directives set forth by the President and follow-through by the members.

In terms of planning, the RHA Executive Board members and adviser met over the course of two to three days over the summer to talk through a general plan of what they wanted to accomplish. The planning tended to emphasize travel, programming, and committee work. Responsibilities were set out for all members and volunteers as to who was going to do what. This session was held in one of the vacant apartments on campus and served as both a teambuilding function and a planning session to work on the annual calendar of programs and the establishment of goals and budget. At this point the organization had received their annual allocation from the Housing Department and was able to determine what their fundraising needs were. The goals held an emphasis on tasks as opposed to strategic planning and were placed on large pieces of paper in the RHA office to allow for the members to look back at them as they went through the semester or year. The RHA planned mostly semester by semester, only going further than this if they wanted to plan to host a conference, which the organization had not done in many years.

Programming

Programming was one of the most significant objectives of the RHA, from small hall council sponsored programs to campus-wide themed weeks of programming. Programming was written in the RHA Constitution as one of the roles of the organization as "serving to generate and support activities and programs with the goal of uniting all halls as a community and governmental body on campus," while the hall councils are to "organize social activities in its area, and serve the needs of its residents." Upcoming

RHA programs were listed on both the weekly agenda at the RHA meeting and the RHA website.

The perceived outcome of programming for the organization was a stronger community on campus. Programming was viewed as having one of the greatest impacts on the students in residence as it was the most visible of objectives. The visibility or measureable achievement that programming offers allowed them to have something they could take pride in or a sense of accomplishment. It also gave them the opportunity to evaluate a single event, rather than the entire year. As one RHA member stated, "It's kind of cool when you throw a program or something that you really want to do and you see all those people come and they're like, oh thank you for doing this."

For the most part, the RHA programs were traditional in that they hold many of the same programs annually. One of the primary foci in programming was a two-week period of time in the spring semester, during which there was a program every night. The RHA and hall council members spoke of this series of programs as one event, the pinnacle of their programming year. Each hall council was expected to plan a program during this time, which was advertised to the entire campus community.

A large part of the financial resources of the organization was allocated toward programming for hall council Annual Events and co-sponsorships. In addition, the organization attempted to include both educational opportunities and social aspects to their programs. The Housing Department allocated more money to RHA and the hall councils than they did to the resident assistants for programming. This financial piece allowed for a greater necessity for the resident assistants to work with the organizations in their programming efforts. It was hoped by RHA members that the resident assistants

and hall councils would collaborate as reflected by the establishment of the floor representative position whose role according to the constitution was to assist their RA with programs and bulletin boards and their hall council with organizing events.

Programming was one area which held the greatest sense of teamwork as well as planning for the organization. There was an executive member dedicated to programming whose role is in part to "organize and execute programs, oversee the Programming committee, initiate and organize inter-council programs, support the hall councils, record hall council events, and post them on the RHA calendar." Although the programming committee took primary responsibility for these efforts, program planning was viewed as a group effort and representative of the entire organization. Each of the RHA members was to take part in programming, as part of their position description was to help "organize area wide programs." There was some question as to the productivity of hall councils implementing individual smaller programs because attendance was minimal and the feeling was that there was much effort being invested with little outcome.

Advisers assisted with idea generation and there was an emphasis on volunteerism for the organization. This is conflicting with the National Residence Hall Honorary organization, which was described in the RHA Constitution as "responsible for coordinating community service initiatives for the residential community." One of the advisers felt that the emphasis on programming by the organization was detrimental in that they failed in the other objectives they wished to accomplish. Additionally, because of the way the programs were advertised, the constituents to whom the RHA or hall council was programming for did not always know who was sponsoring the program.

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Student Voice

Another significant objective of the RHA was to act as student voice, both in the hall councils and the RHA. The RHA Constitution stated this as a primary role for the organization holding the "purpose of representing and helping student residents address issues and concerns about their welfare" while the hall councils were to "deal specifically with issues and events concerning individual residence hall areas." Furthermore, the hall council president was to "act as the representative of the interest of the students in their area." On the weekly RHA agenda there was a quote, which states, "Promoting a higher standard of living" and there was a listserv for students to sign up for which was considered "the voice of the residents." Finally, two executive positions had advocacy in their roles; the President of the organization is to "act as the representative of the interest of the students in the residence halls," while another executive member is to "coordinate and determine how to address resident concerns."

Some advisers felt that in recent years, student advocacy had taken a secondary role to programming for the organizational leaders, but that this role was starting to become more important for the members. As one adviser stated, "They are the voice of the students and they're representing the students and they're more than just a programming body, and I think they're starting to see that shift and moving towards that shift solely and getting to that level." Programming and community development were roles that were covered significantly by the resident assistant staff as well as other campus organizations, leading to some members and advisers believing that the student representation ought to be primary.

The Housing Department recognized the voice of the RHA as an organization. Both the advisers and the students felt that this role was appropriate as change in housing was more likely to come from the students as opposed to the staff. Decisions such as establishing wireless internet in the housing areas, limiting phone service, revising housing policy, cable television selection, and the room and board increases were those that were discussed by many of the research participants. This role had also led to organizational criticism as there were times for example with budget increases, that students who were not actively involved in the organization would not understand why the RHA approved a budget increase. In addition, the RHA members have been held accountable by their peers for the outcomes of decisions as was discussed by one RHA executive member, "We're the ones who voted to have the wireless installed last year, and so, of course it's our fault when the things don't work the right way or their internet got turned off because they had to install the routers."

RHA distributed surveys to the residents to see what their concerns were as well as had concerns communicated from the hall councils through the RHA Legislative Body members. As one member RHA member stated, "We come in each week with some concerns that we've heard from our residents and we'll put them all on a list, and we'll arrange the list from what should get done first and who wants to take this task." The RHA members then took this information to appropriate administrators to respond to student issues and concerns. As one of the advisers stated:

> I think that also a goal of them is to be a voice of the students, like the sole voice
> of the students who live on campus. When they wrap themselves around an idea

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that they want something changed on campus, they'll stop at nothing to get it

changed.

There was a committee to address resident concerns, a sub-committee of which

worked specifically with food services. This committee was seen by some hall council

members as one which made the most important decisions by the RHA because they were

the ones, "fixing everyone's complaints." The committee responded to student concerns

whether it is advising the student of what individual or group they should speak with to

resolve a problem, or acting on the student's behalf. The greater committee had been

successful in addressing concerns with grounds, transportation, and parking. The

subcommittee met with the food service management to address quality and service

issues, changes in menu items, as well as give positive feedback about employees.

However, one hall council member doubted the true responsibility of the student

concerns committee, believing that in the absence of the RHA, students could still

approach their resident assistant or hall director in order to have those concerns

addressed.

<div align="center">Resources</div>

The finances of the organization fell to officers in the hall councils and RHA with

oversight by the advisers. Financial decision making, whether with the fundraising

accounts or departmental allocation, was considered by many to be one of the primary

functions of the RHA. A fundraising goal was stated in the constitution of at least the

total cost of all the leadership training and opportunities that are not open to all residents

which was interpreted by organizational leaders and advisers as off campus travel to

conferences. The RHA worked with a vendor to assist with fundraising, however, when

the members felt they could do something more efficiently, giving greater value to the residents or maintaining higher profit, they would undertake the effort on their own. In addition to specific fundraising activity, the organizational members worked to obtain donations from community vendors. Money gained through fundraising efforts was deposited into an off-campus bank account, which was considered as a reserve.

Most members felt that the RHA had enough money to accomplish their goals, as described by many as "upper-middle class." However, a few members did believe that the organization could expand their contact base or initiatives if more money was available, one of whom stated, "I just think if we had more money, we could put bigger, better programs on, reach out to more people, more residents, even off campus residents." One adviser felt that the RHA was, "Rich, but they're conscientious about not spending it." This notion was echoed by a RHA Executive Board Member who stated, "You don't just want to give money out, we're not the Bank of RHA, as much as people wish we were, I don't like to give money out for frivolous things." Other campus organizations approached RHA to obtain funding for their initiatives, of which the RHA Legislative Body tended to scrutinize what those who come asking for sponsorship plan on doing with monies allocated.

In addition the financial resources, the RHA had an office and a significant amount of equipment that it used for their own events, allowed other housing entities to use for free, and also rented to other campus entities to obtain more funds. If an organization had a piece of equipment that RHA wished to borrow, they would attempt to exchange the use of equipment to save money. There were controls in place to ensure that equipment was well taken care of, one of which is a contract which borrowers signed that

essentially stated that if the borrower damages or breaks the equipment, they were responsible for replacing it. Finally, the members felt that the Housing Department was supportive in lending the RHA their equipment for organizational purposes.

Much of the reason for a lack of collaboration with Student Government including the conscious decision to not seek funding from the organization was to avoid having to follow Student Government policies and procedures as they related to spending. By keeping the funding effort completely through the Housing Department, the RHA and hall councils were held solely accountable to housing policies. One adviser stated, "With the funding there, it's really easier to do certain things that Student Government might not understand and it's really a representation of the people then who live in the halls, who are doing the funding."

Evaluation

Formal program evaluation and member evaluation were areas where most participants felt were lacking in the organization. Most research participants felt that positive feedback was a key source of motivation for continued involvement of members. Feedback for officers of hall councils or RHA came informally as the year progressed, mostly from the adviser during individual meetings. Additional feedback included individual conversations utilized to advance the relationship between advisers and members through positive reinforcement. One of the hall council advisers used part of the weekly meeting to have each member say one good thing that happened to them for the week and then he told them one good thing that he saw them do related to hall council or RHA for that week. In addition, he also provided written notes or candy for them when he wanted to be more formal or substantive. This adviser felt that the positive feedback

was important so the students would remain invested in the organization and not have the perception that they were only recognized for poor performance. Members of the RHA Legislative Body and hall councils saw their adviser as being the primary source of encouragement and recognition as well.

Those who were members of either the RHA Executive Board or the Hall Council Executive Boards tended to be more consistent in their feedback to members; however, this was mostly informal as well. One executive board member stated:

I try to encourage them, hey thanks that was a great thing on the budget, stuff like that, just to make sure they're ok, and kind of every once in a while, take them aside and are you doing ok, are things going on in your life that we need to talk about.

Both advisers and members coupled the recognition of their strongest members with encouragement to run for higher positions in RHA or other organizations in the future.

Negative feedback tended to be more pervasive in the organization as one adviser stated, "Sometimes if somebody doesn't do anything, they'll get on them, a little bit." This was echoed by the RHA Legislative Body members who discussed their attempts to work on their deficiencies in the hope of being better leaders. However, they felt that the negative feedback was more pervasive from the other members than from the adviser. Some members felt that some of the positive outcome of negative feedback was an increased emphasis in teaching, for instance one of the members stated, "I really don't know if I'm not doing something that I need to be doing unless someone tells me I'm not." RHA members felt that the executive board did not always communicate the solutions to issues prior or during an event, stating that "All they did was talk about all

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the bad things that happened" in reference to a program that had been held. This individual felt that those members who were on the programming committee had their feelings hurt in that, "They had all these issues that they could have brought before or even during" the program.

The RHA Legislative Body had two awards, Spirit Pin (a bowling pin painted in the institution colors; passed weekly) and Leader of the Week (a 2 liter bottle of soda) that are meant to be distributed weekly, however, this practice had not been in effect for most of the year. The Spirit Pin was to be distributed to the member that showed the most institutional spirit for that week; he or she signed their name on the Pin. The Leader of the Week is distributed to someone who had "gone above and beyond for RHA and their hall council." Nominations are to be taken from the legislative body by the RHA Executive Board, who then presents the awards at the weekly meeting. The lack of this practice left a void, which was discussed by many participants who felt that the recognition had been suspended due to time considerations or the lack of nominations. This form of recognition was not discussed at all in the meetings nor was it reflected on the website or minutes.

The members of the hall councils noticed the gap in on-going formal recognition and praise. According to the RHA Constitution, there is to be a staff member of RHA who is considered the Spirit and Recruitment Chair. One of the hall council members stated:

> I think one time I saw in like a brochure for RHA that they're supposed to be
> somebody in the position of somewhere in like the spirit position or something

like that, and I think that if our, if our RHA had that, I think that that's what their

job would be, and I don't think we have a person for that position.

However, the constitution also stated that the National Residence Hall Honorary (NRHH)

organization should be responsible for coordinating recognition initiatives for the

community.

The primary source of formal recognition was through the annual RHA Banquet

at which all nominees as well as award winners were recognized. There were individual

awards as well as awards for hall councils with award winners posted on the website;

however the last award recipients posted were from 2003. The forms were accessible to

all as they were located on the RHA website and were able to be submitted electronically.

In addition, some hall council leaders printed the forms and brought them to the

meetings, while others had made submission mandatory for members. Annual recognition

led to rivalry or competition between several of the hall councils. Several hall council

leaders stated that they wanted to be the best and "win." Members felt that positive

reputations from previous years needed to be upheld and negative reputations changed.

Collaborative Partners

The relationship that RHA members shared with the administrators of the

University and the Housing Department was extremely supportive which allowed for the

trust and responsibility provided to the organization in making significant decisions. The

support from senior level administrators had trickled down to the hall administrators who

also provided a high level of support for the growth and development of the organization.

This support was also a reward for the members in part due to the wanting of RHA

members to have the organization's name recognizable in the university community as

being a positive impact on the institution. The importance of approval was reflected in part by the constitution of the organization, which stated that all amendments must have the approval of both the Student Activities Office and the Director of Housing. The executive members of RHA sat on various university wide-committees for allocation of funds or other strategic planning. This provided a venue for senior administrators to receive a student perspective from students who were not employed in any way by the institution.

The RHA Executive Board members enjoyed the University President's recognition of members as individuals and as a collective organization. One member said:

The President of the university knows who we are, we're not some faceless organization to her, like I don't have to remind her who I am every time I see her, so I think that works to the benefit of the residents because they know that we're here and we're here for the benefit of the residents.

Housing

The relationship between the resident assistants and the RHA or hall councils could be seen as a supportive rivalry. According to the RHA Constitution, the resident assistant was responsible for holding an election for a floor representative at the first floor meeting to assist the resident assistant in organizing activities and meetings. Due to the support of the senior administrators at the university, the support was greater than the rivalry from the resident assistants; however, it was believed that the support of the resident assistant staff, while significant in the presence of their supervisors, was not always consistent. One adviser stated:

A lot of times I think even the RA staff will tell students when they're with

students or when they're with supervisors in their formal meetings, they pump it

up, but a lot of times I think those same people when they're in their private little

chats they'll say, oh it's good but you don't have to, or it's not that big of deal.

The two groups of students served the same purposes; however, one group was

student employees while the other was student volunteers. The RHA members felt that

both parties were working toward the same goal, thus the resident assistants should not

view them as competition. Most students saw the resident assistant position as more

attractive than senior leadership in RHA because of the remuneration received. Resident

assistants tended to be more supportive of their hall councils than RHA as a complete

entity. One RHA member stated, "The RAs sometimes, when you talk to them, you kind

of feel like they resent you being there." Last year, the RHA and Housing Staff decided

to do their spring recognition banquet together, which was not well received by the

resident assistants.

Student Government

The RHA did not interact with Student Government in terms of program planning

nor did they receive a budget allocation. Specifically stated in the hall council

constitution is that the organization "exists independently from all governance bodies

other than RHA, including Student Government." The Student Government viewed RHA

as an information distribution point, specifically during elections time where candidates

attended RHA to meet more residential students. Some of the resident assistants were

members of Senate, as were some current and former RHA members, so there was an

informal relationship. These individuals stated that they enjoyed their time in RHA

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because it was far less political than Student Government. There is a SGA liaison to RHA; however, this position had either been inactive or unfilled for several years. The RHA Executive Board found the arrangement with Student Government helpful to them, for example "There's a lot of things that we can do because we're not funded by Student Government. We can go to outside vendors that the university doesn't necessarily have a contract with." They also found the spending processes to be more flexible utilizing their other funding resources. As one executive board member stated:

> It's not like the three weeks of waiting to make sure my budget's approved, and it's a lot of political stuff that I really, I personally have no time for, and I think it's just a waste of our time to try and jump through their hoops to get stuff that we need to get done.

The RHA members viewed themselves as a smaller version of Student Government, representing the interests of the housing population as opposed to the campus population.

CHAPTER 7

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURE AND EFFECTIVENESS

This study gathered data to guide RHA members and staff of housing departments regarding the perceptions of culture and effectiveness of residence hall associations. The purpose was to identify the perceptions of four ideal culture types (Clan, Adhocracy, Market, and Hierarchy) in addition to three effectiveness constructs (RHA Effects, Housing Relationship, and Formal Processes) among three membership groups (Housing Staff, RHA Legislative Body, and Hall Council). This study attempted to describe not only the extent to which members believed these indicators to be reflective in the organization, but to discover what differences, if any, existed among the three groups, the relationship between ideal culture type scores and effectiveness construct scores, and the extent to which ideal culture type scores and effectiveness scores were moderated by group membership. There was distinction among the three member groups in two of the four areas of organizational culture and two of the three constructs of effectiveness; however, no evidence existed to confirm that group membership influenced the relationship between culture and effectiveness. There was evidence pointing to relationships of varying degrees between culture types and effectiveness constructs. Data were collected which pointed to organizational processes and member behavior which contributed to the member perception of both organizational culture and effectiveness. The quantitative and qualitative data, which pointed to the relationship between

perceptions of culture and effectiveness, have implications for practice and point to the need for the on-going study of this topic.

The data gathered for this research were collected during the latter part of the spring semester in 2008 at three sites. At each of the sites, the RHA Effectiveness Instrument and Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) was distributed to students and staff at RHA Legislative Body meetings, hall council meetings, and staff meetings. A total of 217 surveys were distributed at the three sites with 40 collected from housing staff members, 83 from students identifying as legislative members, and 94 from students identifying as hall council members. Those students who were members of both hall council and legislative body were included in the legislative body member's sample based on the governing documents of the organizations. In no areas did hall council and legislative body members' perceptions of organizational culture or organizational effectiveness significantly differ. However, in two of the four ideal culture type scores (Clan and Hierarchy) and in two of the three effectiveness constructs (RHA Effects and Housing Relationship) did the Housing Staff and RHA Legislative Body differ significantly.

In addition to the quantitative data collected, interviews were conducted during the site visits with staff and students to conduct a deeper investigation of the organizational culture and effectiveness of the RHA to determine what impact the behavior might have on the perceptions for the institutions. To this end, the Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Organizational Analysis were utilized to elicit responses from the interview participants. Furthermore, governing documents and organizational documents including award nominations, meeting minutes, and meeting

agendas were studied in addition to observations through attendance at executive board

and legislative body meetings. Verbatim quotes are provided with the findings to answer

the research questions related to perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness.

These quotes provide a contextual story of RHA processes and the experience of staff and

students during their involvement with the organization. The statistical data is presented

in the following section in relation to the research questions as are the cross case analyses

from the three sites.

The instruments were provided to research participants and collected by the

researcher or organizational adviser when completed. These instruments were distributed

to participants during the weekly meeting of the hall council, legislative body, or staff

meetings and divided among the three groups comprising the RHA. Participants were

instructed to leave blank those questions that they perceived to not apply to their

organization, which led to some questions being unanswered on the instruments.

Demographics

Of the 217 participants for the quantitative part of the study, 134 participants

(61.8 percent) identified as female and 83 (38.2 percent) as male. In terms of ethnic

profile, 150 participants (69.1 percent) identified as White/Caucasian; 21 (10 percent) as

Spanish/Hispanic/Latino; 17 (7.8 percent) as Black/African American; 14 (6.5 percent) as

Asian/Middle Eastern/Pacific Islander; 11 (5.1 percent) as Multiracial; 2 (1 percent) as

Native American/Alaska Native/Inuit; and 2 (1 percent) as Other. Class standing was

identified by those individuals who were members of RHA or hall councils as 89 (50.3

percent) Freshman; 49 (27.7 percent), Sophomore; 22 (12.4 percent) Junior; and 17 (10

percent) Senior. Finally, in terms of number of semesters involved with the organization,

143 (66 percent), zero to two semesters; 33 (15.2 percent), three to four semesters; and 22 (10.1 percent), five or more semesters. Nineteen participants, 12 of whom were staff members, did not respond to this question. It is important to mention that although graduate students live on campus at all three institutions, none of the participants identified as such.

The Relationship Between Ideal Culture Type and Group Membership

Clan and Group Membership

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was run on the independent variable Group Membership and dependent variable Clan ideal culture type. The alpha of 0.0125 was used to determine significance due to the use of the same instrument to measure perceptions of four ideal culture types leading to an alpha of 0.05 divided by four. The results of the ANOVA indicated that there is significant difference between perceptions of Clan culture based on group membership ($F(2,212)=7.53$, $p=.001$, $\eta_p^2=.067$), specifically in the significant difference ($p=.001$) between Housing Staff and RHA Legislative Body on the perception of Clan culture. These results confirm for the study that there is a difference in mean scores for the Clan ideal culture type among at least two of the groups, however, only 6.7% of the variability can be explained by group membership. The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Table of Means, Standard Deviations and Significance for Ideal Culture Type Score

(Clan) and Group Membership

Group	M	SD	Housing Staff	Legislative Body	Hall Council
Housing Staff (40)	3.98	0.798		*	NS
Legislative Body (83)	4.61	0.788	*		NS
Hall Council (92)	4.38	0.891	NS	NS	

Note. NS – nonsignificant differences between pairs of means, while an asterisk (*) = significance
using Scheffe's with alpha of 0.0125

Adhocracy and Group Membership

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was run on the independent variable

Group Membership and dependent variable Adhocracy ideal culture type. The alpha of

0.0125 is used to determine significance due to the use of the same instrument to measure

perceptions of four ideal culture types leading to an alpha of 0.05 divided by four. The

results of the ANOVA indicated no significant difference in perceptions of Adhocracy

culture based on group membership ($F(2,209)=.854$, $p=.427$, $\eta_p^2=.01$). The results of the

ANOVA are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Table of Means, Standard Deviations and Significance for Ideal Culture Type Score

(Adhocracy) and Group Membership

Group	M	SD	Housing Staff	Legislative Body	Hall Council
Housing Staff (39)	3.86	0.767		NS	NS
Legislative Body (83)	4.06	0.777	NS		NS
Hall Council (90)	3.97	0.904	NS	NS	

Note. NS – nonsignificant differences between pairs of means, while an asterisk (*) = significance using Scheffe's with alpha of 0.0125

Market and Group Membership

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was run on the independent variable Group Membership and dependent variable Market ideal culture type. The alpha of 0.0125 is used to determine significance due to the use of the same instrument to measure perceptions of four ideal culture types leading to an alpha of 0.05 divided by four. The results of the ANOVA indicated no significant difference in the perceptions of Market culture based on group membership ($F(2,212)=0.504$, $p=.605$, $\eta_p^2=.005$). The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Table of Means, Standard Deviations and Significance for Ideal Culture Type Score

(Market) and Group Membership

Group	M	SD	Housing Staff	Legislative Body	Hall Council
Housing Staff (40)	3.90	1.01		NS	NS
Legislative Body (83)	3.86	0.827	NS		NS
Hall Council (92)	3.74	1.05	NS	NS	

Note. NS – nonsignificant differences between pairs of means, while an asterisk (*) = significance using Scheffe's with alpha of 0.0125

Hierarchy and Group Membership

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was run on the independent variable Group Membership and dependent variable Hierarchy ideal culture type. The alpha of 0.0125 is used to determine significance due to the use of the same instrument to measure perceptions of four ideal culture types leading to an alpha of 0.05 divided by four. The results of the ANOVA indicated significant difference between perceptions of Hierarchy culture based on group membership ($F(2,213)=4.91$, $p<.05$, $\eta_p^2=.044$), specifically significant difference ($p=.009$) between Housing Staff and RHA Legislative Body members on the perception of Hierarchy culture. These results confirm for the study that there is a difference in mean scores for the Hierarchy ideal culture type among at least two of the groups, however only 4.4% of the variability can be explained by group membership. The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 4.

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Table 4

Table of Means, Standard Deviations and Significance for Ideal Culture Type Score

(Hierarchy) and Group Membership

Group	M	SD	Housing Staff	Legislative Body	Hall Council
Housing Staff (40)	3.88	0.784		*	NS
Legislative Body (82)	4.35	0.630	*		NS
Hall Council (92)	4.15	0.894	NS	NS	

Note. NS – nonsignificant differences between pairs of means, while an asterisk (*) = significance
using Scheffe's with alpha of 0.0125

The Relationship Between Effectiveness Constructs and Group Membership

RHA Effects and Group Membership

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was run on the independent variable

Group Membership and dependent variable RHA Effects. The alpha of 0.0167 is used to

determine significance due to the use of the same instrument to measure perceptions of

three effectiveness constructs leading to an alpha of 0.05 divided by three. The results of

the ANOVA indicated significant difference in perceptions of RHA Effects based on

group membership ($F(2,197)=5.49$, $p=.005$, $\eta_p^2=.053$), specifically significant difference

($p=.005$) between Housing Staff and RHA Legislative Body on the perception of RHA

Effects. These results confirm for the study that there is a difference in mean scores for

RHA Effects among at least two of the groups, however only 5.3% of the variability can

be explained by group membership. The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Table of Means, Standard Deviations and Significance for RHA Effects and Group

Membership

Group	M	SD	Housing Staff	Legislative Body	Hall Council
Housing Staff (35)	4.26	0.676		*	NS
Legislative Body (82)	4.74	0.647	*		NS
Hall Council (93)	4.64	0.805	NS	NS	

Note. NS – nonsignificant differences between pairs of means, while an asterisk (*) = significance
using Scheffe's with alpha of 0.0167

Housing Relationship and Group Membership

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was run on the independent variable

Group Membership and dependent variable Housing Relationship. The alpha of 0.0167 is

used to determine significance due to the use of the same instrument to measure

perceptions of three effectiveness constructs leading to an alpha of 0.05 divided by three.

The results of the ANOVA indicated significant difference between perceptions of

Housing Relationship based on group membership ($F(2,188)=6.17$, $p=.003$, $\eta_p^2=.062$),

specifically significant difference ($p=.005$) between Housing Staff and RHA Legislative

Body on the perception of Housing Relationship. These results confirm for the study that

there is a difference in mean scores for Housing Relationship among at least two of the

groups, however, only 6.2% of the variability can be explained by group membership.

The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Table of Means, Standard Deviations and Significance for Housing Relationship and

Group Membership

Group	M	SD	Housing Staff	Legislative Body	Hall Council
Housing Staff (36)	4.35	0.889		*	NS
Legislative Body (77)	4.86	0.657	*		NS
Hall Council (78)	4.56	0.827	NS	NS	

Note. NS – nonsignificant differences between pairs of means, while an asterisk (*) = significance using Scheffe's with alpha of 0.0167

Formal Processes and Group Membership

An Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test was run on the independent variable Group Membership and dependent variable Formal Processes. The alpha of 0.0167 is used to determine significance due to the use of the same instrument to measure perceptions of three effectiveness constructs leading to an alpha of 0.05 divided by three. The results of the ANOVA indicated no significant difference between perceptions of Formal Processes based on group membership ($F(2, 180)=4.12$, $p=0.018$. $\eta_p^2=.044$). The results of the ANOVA are shown in Table 7.

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Table 7

Table of Means, Standard Deviations and Significance for Formal Processes and Group

Membership

Group	M	SD	Housing Staff	Legislative Body	Hall Council
Housing Staff (31)	4.26	0.676		NS	NS
Legislative Body (77)	4.74	0.647	NS		NS
Hall Council (75)	4.64	0.805	NS	NS	

Note. NS – nonsignificant differences between pairs of means, while an asterisk (*) = significance using Scheffe's with alpha of 0.0167

Relationship Between Perception of Ideal Culture and Effectiveness Construct

A Pearson correlation addressed the relationship between each of the Ideal

Culture Type Indicators (Clan, Adhocracy, Market, Hierarchy) and each of the

Effectiveness Constructs (RHA Effects, Housing Relationship, Formal Processes). For

the alpha level of 0.0125, due to the Bonferroni adjustment, a significant positive

correlation between each of the pairings was found.

Table 8

Simple Correlation Between the Perception of Ideal Culture Type Indicator and

Effectiveness Construct

Ideal Culture Type	Effectiveness Score	Correlation	p
Clan	RHA Effects	.707	.001
Clan	Housing Relationship	.632	.001
Clan	Formal Processes	.667	.001
Adhocracy	RHA Effects	.666	.001
Adhocracy	Housing Relationship	.605	.001
Adhocracy	Formal Processes	.623	.001
Market	RHA Effects	.332	.001
Market	Housing Relationship	.345	.001
Market	Formal Processes	.390	.001
Hierarchy	RHA Effects	.570	.001
Hierarchy	Housing Relationship	.587	.001
Hierarchy	Formal Processes	.593	.001

Relationship Between Perception of Ideal Culture and

Effectiveness Construct Moderated by Group

To measure the effect to which group membership would effect the causal

relationship between perception of Ideal Culture Type Indicators (Clan, Adhocracy,

Market, Hierarchy) and each of the Effectiveness Constructs (RHA Effects, Housing

Relationship, Formal Processes) as described in the previous section, a multiple

regression analysis was conducted. Interaction terms were added to the model to measure

the joint effect of the two independent variables group (Housing Staff, RHA Legislative

Body, Hall Council) and Ideal Culture Type Indicator on the dependent variable

Effectiveness Construct. The creation of a centered value for each Ideal Culture Type and a dummy coded variable for two of the three Group affiliations was necessary to produce the interaction terms. As multicollinearity is a relevant concern when using interaction terms, the centered value was created in order to reduce multicollinearity effects due multiple independent variables in the regression equation.

To create the interaction term, dummy coded group was multiplied by the continuous variable, ideal culture type. A test was conducted utilizing SPSS of two regression equations, one with and without the interaction products. The effect of the interaction is measured as the significance of the change in the R^2 for the test with and without the interaction products.

The sample size for this series of tests was 175, after reduction for those subjects who had missing data in any of the Ideal Culture Type Indicators or Effectiveness Construct. In no instance was the change in the relationship between ideal culture type and effectiveness construct found to be significant. The results of the test are shown in Table 9.

Table 9

Relationship Between Ideal Culture Type Indicator and Effectiveness Construct as

Moderated by Group

Group x Culture Type	Effectiveness Score	Change in R^2 F(2,169)	p
Clan	RHA Effects	1.03	.359
Clan	Housing Relationship	.304	.738
Clan	Formal Processes	1.08	.342
Adhocracy	RHA Effects	1.74	.179
Adhocracy	Housing Relationship	1.66	.192
Adhocracy	Formal Processes	.485	.617
Market	RHA Effects	2.40	.094
Market	Housing Relationship	3.74	.026
Market	Formal Processes	2.86	.060
Hierarchy	RHA Effects	2.94	.056
Hierarchy	Housing Relationship	1.51	.224
Hierarchy	Formal Processes	2.98	.053

The discussion and implications for the results found in the previous section are located in the final chapter.

Qualitative Findings

Data analyzed through a cross-case analysis resulted in a total of 10 major findings from emergent themes related to member and staff perception of RHA organizational culture and effectiveness. These include student involvement, leadership development and training, communication and teamwork, finances, rules and procedures, program planning, student voice, evaluation, housing relationships, and student government relationships.

Student Involvement

The student involvement in the hall councils at each of the institutions is highly dependent on the style of residence hall, location on campus, and classification of students who reside there. Similarly, the level of representation that each of the hall councils sends to their RHA Legislative Body is dependent on these features. Those halls that are distant from what is considered the main part of campus, are apartment-style, or that house primarily upper division and graduate students struggle for student representation. For the two institutions which sell activity cards, these factors also affect the number sold, thus influencing the programming budget of these hall councils. At each of the institutions, the initial involvement in RHA and hall councils was strong towards the beginning of fall semester; however, once students became involved in other organizations and activities, the level of involvement waned.

At each of the institutions, involvement in RHA was viewed by students as a gateway to involvement in other leadership positions. The use of the RHA as a gateway to other opportunities was embraced by the members and advisers of the organization. While some students were thought to be involved based upon building their resume, most members and advisers felt that the level of commitment necessary to be successful in the organization served as a deterrent to those primarily interested in the organization for this reason. Involvement was further seen as providing an opportunity to meet and network with students and staff across the institution.

Across two institutions, the RHA Legislative Body and hall councils were viewed as separate entities by the students leading to students' involvement in one or the other. This practice led to a higher level of student involvement in hall council at these

institutions with limited involvement in RHA sponsored events and activity. One of the institutions had funding mechanisms in place to hold hall councils accountable to RHA policy, while the other did not. In addition, the students participating in the hall councils at these institutions did not hold as high a level of commitment to the RHA. In all three institutions, however, those students who considered themselves members of the RHA Legislative Body exhibited extremely high levels of commitment to the organization.

The hall council adviser is viewed by members as someone who has an impact on the level of student involvement and productivity of the council. There are professional and graduate level staff performing the role of adviser for both RHA and hall councils and the training and involvement of hall council advisers with the RHA varies. The role of the hall council adviser was viewed as being the primary facilitator in the recruitment of new students to the organization and holding oversight over the financial resources of the council. The RHA Adviser was viewed as someone to provide training and development as well as lend an historical perspective to discussions affecting the organization. In addition to the advisers, resident assistants at the institutions are thought to play an integral role in the recruitment and retention of members.

Some of the retention issue is that the organizations are thought to be demanding on members' time, proving difficult for a student to be an involved member of their RHA and other organizations on campus. Many advisers across the institutions felt that the level of commitment expected, coupled with the voluntary nature of the organization, was unrealistic. Furthermore, the hall councils are primarily driven by first-year student involvement and had difficulty retaining members into their second year, because these students became eligible to apply for resident assistant positions. The resident assistant

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position at all three institutions allowed students to continue to be involved in their housing community as well as be paid for their responsibilities.

It was also believed by members and advisers that organizational leaders could do a better job getting to know the residents they are meant to represent. Those students who are not involved with the organization many times will believe that the events that RHA or the hall councils plan and implement are sponsored by the resident assistants. The RHA Executive Board members agreed believing that they needed to better explain to students why RHA exists, how they make decisions, and how these decisions impact the general student population.

In all institutions, the RHA is thought to be representative of all of the students living in University Housing and all are considered members of the organization by constitution, however, only a small percentage are aware of or involved with the organization. RHA Legislative Body membership at each of the institutions varies based on the designation of voting representatives as defined through organizational constitution and policy. While hall councils at the three institutions were to be made up of floor representatives and hall council executive boards, floor representation was extremely limited. This is thought to be due to the number of offerings that students have to be involved with on campus. Furthermore, students who were involved in hall council did not always view themselves as members of the RHA as well, even though the hall councils at all three institutions are considered subordinate to the RHA.

Leadership Development and Training

The RHA leaders are focused on the training and leadership development of members through seminars and experiential learning. RHA Executive Board officers

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begin their training in the summer before classes start, typically at some type of overnight retreat where goals and objectives for the semester or year are outlined. Next, either before or shortly after classes begin, a training seminar of varying lengths ranging from one evening to a week for legislative body and hall council members is held to teach them about the organizational purpose and processes. In addition, it is an opportunity for the individual members and hall councils as a whole to network and learn about their specific positions. Teaching students about parliamentary procedure and program planning is conducted at these sessions as well. Finally, leadership development sessions are held which assist members in investigating their leadership types and traits.

Two of the three organizations studied hold on-going development either on a weekly or monthly basis. Furthermore, two of the organizations held a spring leadership development session serving similar purposes to the fall, which lasted one or two days. This session was utilized to reinforce policy and procedure as well as assist new members in meeting others.

In many cases, the leadership development component is seen as of higher priority by the executives and advisers than general members. To many of the advisers, programming is an outcome of the leadership development provided as opposed to programming being a primary goal of the organization. In many cases, advisers felt that if funding was allocated to the resident assistants rather than to the RHA or hall council, the same programming outcomes could be met.

In addition to training serving to ensure that members are conducting their business accurately, most members believed that the training also assisted in engraining the culture of the organization to the new members and played a significant role in the

retention of members. Furthermore, from the perspective of advisers, better trained members of the RHA Legislative Body and hall councils led to a better resident assistant candidate pool. Complimentary, the students felt that involvement in RHA led to a greater chance of them being hired as a resident assistant.

In addition to the RHA sponsored training and development, the adviser served a significant role in training the officers and members of hall councils. This was necessary when students either did not attend the training or were elected following the training. Furthermore, as students got into the day-to-day operation of their hall council, they were more likely to seek an adviser than a member of the RHA for guidance.

Part of the training of new officers includes a transition period or transitioning documents. For hall council members however, this transition period did not occur and many felt this might be beneficial. Two of the institutions had hall council presidents meetings, one of which had each of the executive board members serve as a liaison to their hall council executive counterpart, which served as an asset in initial and on-going training. However, adviser training and on-going development was lacking in all three institutions. This led to some advisers taking their experiences from other institutions and infusing them into their current institution, which in some cases was an asset and some a detriment.

Each of the organizations allowed members to participate in state, regional, and national conferences, although none of the members saw this as a training and development opportunity. Rather, it was viewed as a chance to network with students from other institutions either to showcase what their institution was doing or learn about what other institutions were doing. Two of these institutions required members to utilize

the information gained at the conferences, either in individual goal setting or presenting information to other students upon their return.

At all institutions, the member perspective was that even given the level of training and development provided, nothing could take the place of the experiential component of facilitating meetings, completing administrative forms, or planning programs. As students participated in meetings and programming planning, making inquiry on policy or making procedural mistakes, they were provided an opportunity for further growth and education. Furthermore, the feedback received from advisers or peers assisted in their leadership and skills development as well.

Communication and Teamwork

Across all three sites, communication and teamwork are valued in the organizations. The primary difference among the three organizations has to do with the nature of the relationship and communication between the RHA Legislative Body and hall councils. The level of communication and teamwork appears to be influenced by organizational structure, where one RHA Legislative Body has several members of each hall council coming to meetings, while another has a few, and another only has one. Furthermore, the nature of the delineation between RHA Executive Board and legislative body is not as apparent in one of the organizations, while in the other two they are differentiated between. The RHA which appears to have the most consistent communication includes many participants from each hall council as part of the legislative body of the RHA and does not appear to differentiate between the RHA Executive Board and legislative body.

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By having several individuals from each hall council attend the RHA Legislative Body meeting, there appeared to be a greater likelihood that information was effectively communicated between the RHA and hall councils. Additionally, there was the ability to have a support network from a student's hall to assist them with policies and procedures. While one of the institutions did hold monthly meetings for all of the members of hall councils, the limited frequency of these meetings did not have the same impact as the weekly interaction.

In all three organizations, support for events by members of individual hall councils was significant; however, in all institutions, there was also disconnect between the housing areas which were on the outskirts of campus and those which were centrally located. Although students still communicated at meetings and through electronic medium, the number of students from the central part of campus attending events at those halls at the outskirts of the campus was limited.

Students who were involved in RHAs and hall councils tend to build a support network with members across the campus, which was described by a majority of members as a family. This network expanded beyond RHA related business into academics and personal issues. Furthermore the friendships started in RHA were thought to continue even once a student's involvement in RHA would cease. These relationships however, make it intimidating and provide appearance of exclusivity for new members to join unless they already know people in the organization.

Across all three institutions, the primary communication issues between hall councils were centered on programming initiatives. At each of the institutions, those hall council members who had tried to sponsor events across multiple halls met with

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difficulty. Communication within the hall councils at the three institutions was thought to be efficient; however, there is a significant reliance on e-mail as the primary means of communication among members. The adviser played a primary functional role as it related to communication in two of the institutions. The information distributed by the adviser at these institutions skewed the student view of communication toward believing that it was more effective between the RHA Legislative Body and hall councils than would have been otherwise.

All three organizations have websites, and utilize them to varying degrees. One of the institutions utilizes the website to maximum capacity, posting events, minutes, policy and forms, for both the RHA and hall councils, while the other two utilize their websites for forms, but are only updated with events and information sporadically. All three institutions created written agendas for their meetings, two of which were extremely comprehensive when compared with the third.

It is apparent through interaction at the meetings that there is a strong relationship felt among legislative body members at two of the institutions, while at the third, this relationship is felt solely in the individual hall councils and among the RHA Executive Board. This is evident in part by the type of informal communication and the environment at the RHA Legislative Body meetings.

Each of the RHAs had a committee structure, with some more formalized and structured than others. The more formal the accountability structures, the more productive the committees tended to be. Furthermore, these committees allowed for greater opportunities for the legislative body members in RHA operations resulting in greater involvement by the members.

The RHA Executive Board meets outside of the general assembly meetings at all three institutions, however, the effectiveness of these meetings at two of the institutions is reduced primarily due to the time of the meeting relative to the general body meeting. One of the institutions makes use of a legislative body pre-meeting which assists in ensuring that the executive board members are each aware of what will be discussed at that week's meeting.

Finances

Due to the programmatic goals of the organizations, resource attainment and allocation are pervasive issues among all three organizations. In each, there are separate resources allocated to the hall councils and RHA, with mechanisms by which hall councils can request additional funding from the RHA Legislative Body. In addition, there are fundraising efforts utilized to enhance the programmatic objectives of the organizations. Each of the organizations also received credits from the campus dining program with which to purchase food at events. Finally, each of the organizations receives allocations to travel to state, regional, and national conferences from the housing departments with which they are affiliated. The varying revenue streams taught the students budgeting and to be more responsible with resource allocation as different streams could be utilized for different initiatives.

Most of the formal business conducted at the RHA meetings is centered on entities requesting funds for programmatic initiatives. This caused some members at each of the institutions to feel that too much emphasis was placed on the responsibility of the organization to distribute funds. Furthermore, this caused some students and advisers to

believe that the organization wielded too much influence as it related to the distribution of housing and programming monies.

For two of the three organizations, it was thought that the organizations were only limited by human resources, specifically as they related to time, as opposed to financial resources, to maximize their programmatic goals. For one institution, however, there were enough financial resources allocated to the hall councils, but the RHA struggled financially to achieve all of their programmatic objectives.

In addition to financial resources, each of the organizations has an office where members store supplies and hold meetings. For two of the organizations, this space was provided by the Housing Department, while at the third, this space was provided by the Student Government. All organizations had access to computers, phones, and consumable office supplies.

Two of the organizations own their own equipment for programming including games, and novelty machines including sno-kone and popcorn machines, as well as amplification equipment. At one of the institutions, the RHA owned no equipment nor did the hall councils. For one institution the hall council also owned equipment and games, which promoted collaboration among the hall councils as they would often borrow from one another.

Two of the organizations utilized the sale of activity cards to fund hall councils, while in the third, funds for hall council as well as the RHA were collected through a direct assessment by the Housing Department of all resident students. Thus, the programmatic productivity of the halls in the activity card funded organizations was influenced by the ability of the hall council members to sell the cards. It is important to

note that for the organization whose host Housing Department collects RHA fees, no money is requested nor allocated by the institution's Student Government Association.

Rules and Procedures

The three institutions studied appear to reference their governing documents, however, there are differences in the degree of detail in constitutions and policy books as well as how strict the organizational leaders interpret these documents. Each of the governing documents are found on organizational websites and holds basic information including the purposes of the organizations, responsibilities of officers, elections procedures, financial processes, and voting procedures. Two of the organizations' hall councils have their constitutions as separate from the RHA constitution, while in the third, the hall constitutions are contained as part of the RHA governing documents.

In all three organizations, meetings are facilitated utilizing parliamentary procedure through *Roberts Rules of Order*; however, the level of implementation varies by institution. In almost all of the hall councils across the institutions, *Roberts Rules of Order* are not followed in meetings, although the practice of using parliamentary procedure is called for in hall council constitutions. Members who held strong knowledge of *Roberts Rules of Order* tended to be more vocal in meetings and some members felt that Roberts Rules could be manipulated by those who were better versed. While in some cases the use of Roberts Rules was for the betterment of processes for the organization, in a few, members believed that it allowed some executive board members to push their individual initiatives and agendas. At all institutions, an introduction to parliamentary procedure was offered at the beginning of the academic year during leadership training; however, on-going training was only available at one. Voting placards were distributed

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during the meetings at all three institutions to assist members in following procedure and the executive boards as well as peers were willing to assist members in using accurate phrasing when speaking.

For the most part, the implementation of organizational policy was held primarily to meeting facilitation and funding requests. In all institutions, members felt that policy and procedures were well outlined and easy to follow, however, advisers did believe that procedures were cumbersome and served as a deterrent to organizational involvement and productivity.

The importance of transition of members to new positions was pervasive in all organizations, although only at Institution Beta was this fully implemented. There is a period of shadowing for RHA Executive Board members ranging from one meeting to several weeks in addition to the passing of critical documents. The level of transition is based on the person currently holding that position and how organized they are in preparing task and contact lists and retaining documents from their term of office. At two of the institutions, the organizations had held their meetings at the same date, time, and location for several years in an attempt to develop a sense of organizational culture and tradition through repetition.

The hall councils at two of the institutions held elections for executive board positions during the fall leaving little to no transition for the new students. At one institution, this practice led to a virtual reset of financial and governing records, while at the other, the constitution, a scrapbook, and checking account were left for the new executive board to inherit. The third institution holds their hall council elections in the spring, and each of the officers from the previous year is expected to submit a transition

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report. Transition reports are also required for all RHA committee chairs and executive

board members at this institution as well. Consequently, this institution was the only one

whose members were not fearful that the RHA may not continue at its current level of

productivity once the executive members departed the organization.

Program Planning

The RHAs at all three institutions hold a primary focus on programmatic

initiatives for the students on their campuses. The primary purpose of programming

initiatives is based on the need for community development, specifically providing an

atmosphere for students to meet others and ease their transition into the institution. The

secondary purpose for the programming initiatives is for organizational recognition on

the respective campuses.

In addition, the planning of programs was a large part of the learning experience

for organizational members. The mission statements of the organizations each describes

the planning of social and educational programs. Additionally, a significant part of the

training and on-going development was centered around programming initiatives as were

meeting discussions at all levels of the organizations.

Organizations differed in the advertisement of programs, and this is an area where

institutions could make more effective use of their websites to serve as a clearinghouse

for hall and campus-wide programs. Marketing of events was an area noted by interview

participants at all three institutions who felt there was a need for improvement.

One of the main criticisms of programming initiatives by advisers at the

institutions was that the programs were planned for the organizational members as

opposed to serving the needs of the campus-wide population. It was generally felt that

members planned programs for themselves and friends, who also made up a majority of the programming attendance. Other criticism discussed was the cumbersome nature of the processes for securing additional funding requests that an individual or organization might need.

The most significant time spent by the organizations in general body and committee meetings surround program planning, sometimes beginning more than a semester in advance. Each of the institutions holds a week of programming showcasing their organizations and celebrating living on campus. Programming functions are both social and educational in nature with institutions struggling to keep institutional traditions going while implementing new ideas and initiatives. Hall councils were more likely to address the immediate wants and needs of students while the RHA focus is on traditional events. Even given the emphasis on program planning and implementation, it was noted that the programming piece could be handled by the resident assistants in the absence of the RHA.

One of the measures of success for the organizations is the number of programs planned and implemented in addition to the attendance at these programs. Each of the organizations evaluates the programs at their completion to make necessary changes for future programming initiatives or to change if the same program is held in the future. Each of the RHAs co-sponsor activities with other organizations on campus to reach a greater audience and gain greater name recognition. The organizations have strong reputations on campus as being one of the organizations that comply with all institutional policies and procedures. Hall councils are encouraged to program with other hall

councils; however, this has been problematic at each of the institutions in terms of communication and follow-through.

There is limited collaboration between the resident assistants and hall councils on programming initiatives. Friction can arise between the two groups because they both complete programming responsibilities, but while the RHA and hall council leaders are volunteers, the RAs are paid. Furthermore, the RHA and hall councils have a greater amount of funds allocated to programming initiatives. While the finance piece serves to increase collaboration in a few instances, in most it serves as a point of contention.

Student Voice

The members of the RHAs at all three institutions believed that they served as an advocate for student concerns; however, this was only a strategic focus at two of the institutions. Students at these two institutions felt very strongly about their advocacy role, which was also supported by the Housing Department through staff including the housing directors. This responsibility, however, makes the organizations accountable to their members not only in providing quality programs and social activities, but also for the ability to solve student concerns. For these two organizations in particular, much of the criticism by constituents was that they had been unable to solve their most critical problems, such as housing rate increases or facility concerns.

The organizational structure at all three organizations served as a basis by which student concerns could rise from the building floor level to the RHA President. Believing the organizations too large for each student to voice individual concerns, hall council representatives communicated student concerns to the RHA Legislative Body where a collective voice could be communicated to housing or university staff.

Although the organizations believed themselves to be the voice of the students, only one of the organizations made any formal effort to receive student concerns, which they did through resident survey. Furthermore, this organization had a student concerns committee of the RHA, whereas the other two did not. Otherwise, all feedback came directly through hall councils or at RHA meetings. In all cases, however, students felt that even without the RHA, student concerns could be addressed through the housing staff.

Evaluation

While informal evaluation takes place through individual and group meetings, there is very little formal evaluation of either programmatic or leadership efforts by the executive board, members, or advisers of the organizations. Although recognition is included in the governing documents of the organizations, this is an area where all advisers and several members felt was lacking for the organizations. Advisers were the primary area where recognition and feedback was provided to students.

Formal recognition for participation and programming takes place at annual banquets held at the end of the spring semester. Each of the institutions provides awards for hall councils, which leads to some hesitation to collaborate as each of the halls wishes to be recognized as hall council of the year. The RHA Executive Board at the institutions participates in some informal recognition of members, but primarily was involved in guidance and corrective actions. All feedback was viewed as a strategy for the retention of members as well as development for member progression through the hierarchy of the organizations. Overall, however, feedback was seen as either a corrective action to error

or congratulation of success as opposed to being used proactively as a source of motivation.

There are National Residence Hall Honorary chapters at each of the campuses whose function it is to provide recognition of student leaders, however, at none of the institutions is there a strong relationship between the two organizations. In addition, there are state, regional, and national awards, which the institutions utilize to recognize negligibly.

Collaborative Partner – Housing

Each of the three organizations has a symbiotic relationship with the Housing Department at their respective institutions. The departments serve as a resource base through providing office and marketing supplies, office space, and programming funding, but most importantly through the network of professional and graduate staff that serve as advisers to the hall councils and RHA.

In all cases, the host departments serve as the venue through which members have access to university officials by which organizations can serve in the advocacy role that is part of each of their missions. The RHA President serves in a liaison role to housing and campus administrators to provide voice for the residents on resident concerns. At each of the three campuses, the RHA serves a role in providing feedback to the Director of Housing on rate increases, facility improvements, and issues including food service, safety, and parking, however, only at two of the institutions is this feedback thought to be significantly valued. Finally, RHA members are sought out to serve on housing and university-wide committees.

In some cases, hall student and professional staff members feel that the

relationship between the RHA and Housing Department is too close, and allows students'

access to professionals who circumvent some of the hierarchical processes for minor

issues and concerns. The RHA Adviser at the institutions acts as advocate for the RHA to

the other members of their housing staff, some of whom may not be involved in the

operations of RHA and hall councils. At each of the three institutions the adviser holds

different additional responsibilities; however, discussions take place at all housing staff

meetings about RHA initiatives. At one of the institutions, the RHA President is invited

to weekly housing staff meetings.

The RHA Executive Board members are held in high regard by university

administrators at all levels in the institution. At two of the institutions, specific reference

was made to remarks University Presidents had made with regards to RHA, while at all

three, reference was made to relationships with the Vice-President for Student Affairs.

Finally, there are strong relationships with campus activity boards.

Student Government Relationship

The relationship with student government was referenced at all three institutions;

and while the relationship was very different across institutions studied, the primary tie

was financial. For two of the organizations, this relationship was extremely important due

to the monetary allocation received from student fees collected by Student Government.

A major theme across all institutions however, was the Student Governments at the

respective institutions did not recognize the student advocacy role to the extent that the

RHA members believed they should. Student Governments primarily viewed the

organizations as special interest programming groups and utilized them for information

dissemination as opposed to information gathering. RHA members felt that since their

constituents were on the campus to live as well as attend class, they should receive a

greater voice in addressing university-wide student concerns.

Across all institutions there appeared to be a rivalry between the members of

RHA and Student Government. Many RHA members felt they served their constituents

better than the student government and were also more productive. In addition, in all

organizations, there were members of RHA who also served in the institution's Student

Government.

<div align="center">Chapter Summary</div>

The results of data collection associated with the housing staff and member

perceptions of ideal culture and organizational effectiveness for RHAs were presented in

Chapter 7. Inferential statistics were computed to determine the relationships between

perceptions of Ideal Culture and Effectiveness Construct through analysis of variance,

simple correlation, and multiple linear regression analysis from data collected from the

Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI) and RHA Effectiveness

Instrument. Furthermore, interviews with RHA Legislative Body members, hall council

members, and organizational advisers were conducted in addition to focus group

interviews with legislative body members and hall council members to determine the

processes and practices that influenced the perceptions of RHA culture and effectiveness.

The final chapter provides discussion and interpretation of the findings provided in

Chapter 7 in addition to recommendations for practice and future research based upon

these findings.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

Chapter 8 provides an overview of the purpose and objectives for this study in addition to discussion of both quantitative and qualitative findings as well as the integration of these sets of findings. Finally, conclusions, recommendations, and closing remarks are offered.

Review of Study Purpose and Objectives

The rationale for the study was based upon the increasing accountability for institutions of higher education, including student organizations at these institutions for meeting their intended goals. In addition, there currently exists little research in the area of program development and evaluation for student organizations including residence hall associations. The intent of this study was to contribute to the literature on organizational development, specifically as it relates to student organizations at institutions of higher education. More specifically, the purpose of the study was to evaluate the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness of residence hall associations. The intent of this research was to contribute to the literature on student organizations at institutions of higher education and to offer strategies for housing and other student affairs practitioners in the area of student organizational development.

The researcher conducted quantitative and qualitative inquiry to investigate the relationship between organizational culture as defined by the Competing Values

Framework (Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy, Market) and three constructs of RHA

Effectiveness (RHA Effects, Housing Relationship, Formal Processes) for three member

groups (Housing Staff, RHA Legislative Body, Hall Council) through seven research

questions (four quantitative and three qualitative). The four quantitative research

questions each included a series of null hypotheses formed by the relationship between

culture type and effectiveness construct for each member group and showed: (a) group

affiliation has significant impact on perception of organizational culture as there are

significant differences between the perception by Housing Staff and RHA Legislative

Body of the Clan and Hierarchy ideal culture types; (b) group affiliation has significant

impact on perception of effectiveness constructs as there are significant differences

between the perception by Housing Staff and RHA Legislative Body of the RHA Effects

and Housing Relationship constructs of effectiveness; (c) there are positive correlations

between each of the four Ideal Culture Types and three constructs of RHA Effectiveness;

(d) the relationship between each of the four ideal culture types and three indicators of

RHA Effectiveness are not significantly moderated by group membership; and (e) 10

major findings indicate practices of RHAs which were deemed to contribute to the

effectiveness of the organizations. There were a total of 14 findings for this study, 4

quantitative findings, and 10 qualitative findings. The discussion of the findings related to

the seven research questions can be found in the next section.

<div align="center">Discussion of Findings</div>

Quantitative

The first research question for the study examined the relationship between the

perceptions of organizational culture and RHA group membership. The findings in the

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study indicated that for two of the four ideal culture types, Clan and Hierarchy, there was a significant difference between the scores of Housing Staff and RHA Legislative Body. However, for the other two ideal culture types, Adhocracy and Market, there was no effect based upon group membership. Furthermore, the difference in perceptions between Hall Council and both RHA Legislative Body and Housing Staff for each of the four ideal culture types was not significant. This finding would imply that while the two groups that Hall Councils is subordinate to, Housing Staff and the RHA Legislative Body, differ in their perceptions, the students that they serve are congruent with their thoughts. Schein (1992) addresses organizational culture as evolving out of individuals seeking to find their space in the area of inclusion, control and acceptance. Given this, it is apparent the RHA Legislative Body and Housing Staff could differ in their perceptions as they are in some instances serving in similar community development and educational responsibilities. The outcome of this finding is that organizational culture has not been defined strongly enough in RHAs. This implies that if culture is linked to effectiveness, it is important for organizational leaders and advisers to define what types of culture are to be pervasive in the organization and develop goals to maximize the member perception in the areas that have been defined through appropriate training, development, and assessment. This is reflected by Deal and Kennedy (1982) who describe culture as the shared values and beliefs interacting with the structures, people, and purpose of the organization that result in behavioral norms.

The second research question for the study examined the relationship between perceptions of indicators of RHA Effectiveness and RHA group membership. The findings in the study indicated that for two of the three effectiveness constructs, RHA

Effects and Housing Relationship, there was a significant difference between the scores of Housing Staff and RHA Legislative Body. However, for the other effectiveness indicator, Formal Processes, there was no effect based upon group membership. Furthermore, the difference in perceptions between Hall Council and both RHA Legislative Body and Housing Staff for each of the effectiveness constructs was not significant. This finding is similar to those for ideal culture types in that while the two groups that the Hall Council are subordinate to, Housing Staff and RHA Legislative Body, differ in their perceptions, the students that they serve are congruent with both alternative membership groups in their thoughts. The outcomes of this finding are that there is an inconsistency in the effectiveness of the organization, thus either goals have not been discussed throughout the organization or the evaluation rubrics are not consistent. As student organizations are considered task-oriented groups with a moderately defined purpose and some shared goals to achieve group outcomes (Komives 1987; McKaig & Policello, 1984; Schermerhorn et al., 1988), it is not surprising that there are differences in the perceptions of effectiveness between the organizational members and the staff that advises them. The data supporting Hall Council and RHA Legislative Body members did not share significant differences in their perceptions would imply that the organization is communicating their successes and failures to their constituents appropriately.

The third research question for the study examined the relationship between the perceptions of the four individual ideal culture types and perceptions of constructs of RHA Effectiveness. Each of the pairs had a positive correlation, which reflects Boggs's (2004) review of 22 empirical studies related to organizational culture and effectiveness,

which found that each of the studies showed an influence or relationship between the two. This finding implies that as RHA leaders and advisers work to develop a stronger sense of organizational culture, regardless of the ideal culture type, an improvement in organizational effectiveness should occur as an outcome.

The fourth research question for the study examined the relationship between the perceptions of organizational culture and perceptions of RHA Effectiveness as moderated by RHA group membership. The findings indicated there was no effect on the relationship based on group membership. As the findings from previous research questions did not find significant differences pervasive among subgroups for ideal culture types and effectiveness indicators, it is not surprising that the relationship between pairs of ideal culture types and effectiveness indicators would not be moderated by group membership. This finding is important, however, in that it implies that training and development of advisers, RHA members, and hall council members need not be addressed in separate settings. Rather, it is important for goals, expectations, and strategies for organizational culture development be pervasive for all staff and students.

Qualitative

The 10 qualitative findings for this study were derived from emergent themes which arose from the individual and focus group interviews, observations, and document analysis to answer each of the three research questions. First, individual case analysis was conducted through constant comparative method whereby transcripts were read and re-read until redundancy occurred. Following the individual case analysis, Stake's (2006) method of developing matrices for cross-case analysis was employed. Student and staff perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness were discussed through an

interview protocol adapted from the Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Organizational Analysis (Quinn, 1988). The 10 themes translated to emergent findings reflected in the discussion of the additional three research questions found below.

The fifth research question for the study examined the influence of the operations of the RHA on member perception of ideal culture type. Schmitz (1997) stated that cultural strength impacts organizational effectiveness for student organizations. The themes led to significant findings regarding the processes that the RHA undertakes which could have influence over the development of ideal culture types in the organization. The clan culture is the most heavily reflected in RHA processes including a high level of commitment, significance placed on training and development, communication and teamwork, and programming in the sense that members are thought to plan programs for them to socialize at in addition to those that are meant for others in the community. The hierarchy ideal culture is second in pervasiveness with the emphasis placed on parliamentary procedure, organizational structure, and reliance on governing documents. The adhocracy and market ideal culture types are not as significant, in that the only reflection of adhocracy culture is in terms of acquisition of human and financial resources, and the market culture reflective of competition with other organizations for aforementioned resources.

The sixth research question investigated the influence of group membership on the perceptions of organizational culture. There were two areas where findings reflected differences in perspectives of organizational culture based on group membership. The first was based in a hierarchical ideal culture that the organizational advisers felt that the RHA was limited by the emphasis placed on parliamentary procedure and other

administrative processes. The second was based in the clan ideal culture in that advisers believed that many of the programs sponsored by the RHA were planned for the members to enjoy themselves as opposed to meeting the needs of their constituents. As Komives and Tucker (1993) and McCluskey-Titus and Paterson (2006) believe that a contributing factor for RHA success is related to the values and beliefs that staff members hold about students, the impact that the differentiation of beliefs among advisers and students is an issue that needs to be addressed by host institutions.

The seventh research question examined the manner in which the perception of organizational culture influences the perceptions of organizational effectiveness of RHAs. Wyatt and Stoner (1984) state that there is a hierarchy of five sequential criteria for the initial development of an RHA or for the reevaluation and improvement of an existing RHA including "an identifiable need for the organization, a substantial level of institutional support, a source of income, a means to ensure and maintain effective leadership, and successful strategies for system maintenance" (p. 3). The need for the organization, institutional support, and a source of income can remain constant based on the relationship with the housing department; however, the leadership development role and system maintenance can be directly related to organizational culture.

Similar to the processes that influence the perspective of organizational culture, significant findings were prevalent through the inquiry which pointed to the impact that development of organizational culture can have on the effectiveness of the RHA. The area which this is most prevalent is in the development of the clan ideal culture. Leadership development measured as both an outcome of the student experience, as well as the ability for the organization to function has relation to the human resource

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development function of the organization as one of the prevailing measures of effectiveness. Loyalty and traditions are other tenets of clan culture, which are thought by members to have an impact on the organizational effectiveness. Items such as meeting times and locations and traditional programs support McCluskey-Titus and Paterson (2006) and Komives and Tucker (1993) who stated through their research that contributing factors to RHA effectiveness included leadership development, traditions, and a commitment to organizational history.

Additionally, the feeling of a family away from home is a contributing factor to the level of commitment that members are willing to have to the organization and thus an impact on effectiveness. However, the family atmosphere has limited the perception of non-members from feeling that they are welcomed. As the culture of RHA is cultivated to be more accepting of new members, the acquisition of new members can be impacted. The one area in question is related to the level of commitment that is expected by RHA members. While an important component of the clan culture, it is an area that some members and advisers felt limited many students from joining and remaining with the organization.

The rules and policies in addition to the governing documents, while not necessary for the function of the individual hall councils, are areas that can be perceived as leadership development for those members who wish to progress in the organization. Furthermore, while perceived to be a nuisance to advisers, the procedures are viewed as critical to the organization because of the number of subordinate hall councils they work with. While presently, the hierarchical nature of the RHA is effective in the transmission of information to and through the RHA, the development of the hierarchy ideal culture

type could lead to the organizational members and advisers seeing the importance of following the governing documents in addition to rules and procedure. This finding supports Komives and Tucker (1993) who state that strong RHAs have a formalization of rules and policies, which are carried out through procedural manuals and formal constitutions.

The major setback in the organizations' effectiveness is the ability to recruit and retain new members. There is limited participation by floor representatives and a reliance on the organizational adviser and resident assistants to identify new members. Additionally, there is a perceived competition for resources among the resident assistants, hall councils, and RHAs, all which serve a similar community development role. These flaws can be adjusted through development of organizational culture to facilitate the development of resources; human and financial through the development of adhocracy and clan culture respectively. As a secondary finding in this area, recognition was discussed by members and advisers as a weakness in the RHA. A component of the market culture, being an emphasis on results and competition, recognition could have a relation to retention of members thus the ability to influence organizational effectiveness.

<div align="center">Integrated Discussion of Findings</div>

The primary focus of this study was to determine the relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness in university residence hall associations. This quantitative component of the study investigated the statistical relationship between organizational culture scores and group membership, effectiveness construct scores and group membership, and organizational culture scores and organizational effectiveness scores. Four findings emerged from the quantitative analysis. A qualitative inquiry

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occurred as well, utilizing individual and focus group interviews, document analysis, and observation to investigate the influence of RHA Processes on perception of culture, and further investigate both the relationship between group membership and perception of culture and the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness. Ten findings emerged from qualitative inquiry.

The mixed methods approach utilized in this study, offered a balance of broad data collection through statistical analysis with depth of qualitative inquiry. Given the investigation of three groups comprising residence hall associations from three different universities, the organizational culture assessment and effectiveness assessment yielded few statistically significant findings regarding the influence of group membership on organizational culture and effectiveness. However, it can be deduced from the research that there is a relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness, although this study did not indicate that this relationship is influenced by group membership. The qualitative findings did provide strategies that those students and advisers involved and invested in RHA effectiveness can implement to influence organizational culture in an effort to increase organizational effectiveness. It is important to note, however, that the findings of both the quantitative and qualitative investigation are limited in that they can only conclusively be applied to the three institutions that participated in this study.

The quantitative and qualitative findings for this study were related through the investigation of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness through assessments, which were distributed and qualitative questions, which were answered by research participants. The integration of the data points to some of the differences in

perceptions of RHA members and advisers, specifically as it relates to the level of student commitment, importance on policy and procedure, and communication; each of which influences the perspective on both culture and effectiveness. The purpose of the RHA, as part student organization, part housing advisory board can cause the members to find themselves in a quandary when it comes to serving its multi-dimensional role as coordinating body, programmatic entity, student advocate, and educational experience.

Conclusions

1. There is a relationship between the organizational culture and organizational effectiveness of residence hall associations. The strength of the correlation appears to be greatest between the Clan ideal culture type and the three indicators of RHA effectiveness. However, the pervasiveness of clan culture found in these organizations serves as detriment to the recruitment of new members as well as the retention of those members who do not become immersed in the organization.

2. There is a difference in the perception of the organizational culture by RHA Legislative Body members and housing staff members for two of the four ideal culture types; clan and hierarchy. These differences can be partially explained by the lack of adviser training and unclear delineation of roles for the advisers of hall councils. The lack of adviser training is prevalent for RHA and hall council advisers (Linkous, 2006) in that they often hold other positional responsibilities that push responsibilities for advising to a secondary role. As no formal evaluation is conducted by the organizational leaders or advisers of members, programs, or processes, key components of the clan ideal culture including development and mentorship are not existent.

3.   There is a difference in the perception of two of the three RHA effectiveness constructs, Housing Relationship and RHA Effects. These differences can be partially explained by communication and teamwork based on adviser perceptions of information that is not shared between the legislative body and hall councils or between hall councils. While advisers fill the communication void by communicating information to the respective hall councils, which they advise, this affects the view that hall council members and RHA Legislative Body members have in that since they receive the information, the communication methods are deemed effective. Furthermore, there is a lack of accountability for the hall councils to hold to RHA legislative mandates, which leads to compromised relationships between the RHA and subordinate hall councils.

4.   There is a high level of commitment, communication, and development in the processes of the RHA. These are contributors to the clan ideal culture type as defined by Cameron and Quinn (1999, 2006). Those students that are not fully integrated into the RHA Legislative Body often find their sole alliance with their hall council. Additionally, the level of commitment in the first year can be related to organizational involvement being viewed as a gateway to other campus opportunities including student government or resident assistant positions. This gateway phenomenon is detrimental to long-term efficacy of the organization as the retention of senior members is compromised.

5.   There is a high level of coordination and organization in addition to an emphasis placed on rules and procedures in the processes of the RHA. These are contributors to the hierarchy ideal culture type as defined by Cameron and Quinn (1999, 2006). This phenomenon neglects to analyze what students and staff perceive as positional task completion and leadership development. Though these organizations are

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meant to be learning opportunities for the students, the focus on programmatic outcomes

can be utilized as a primary effectiveness indicator as opposed to evaluation in the other

areas of RHA purpose.

Recommendations for Practice, Policy, and Future Research

1. Recommendations for RHA development:

    a. Provide training on organizational culture development to RHA leaders, hall council leaders, and housing advisers to assist in the development of a pervasive culture. Continual assessment should be utilized to monitor organizational development.

    b. Conduct continuous assessment of RHA effectiveness through the utilization of formal assessment instruments and informal exit interviews of those members who depart the organization.

    c. Maintain an appropriate balance of electronic and in person communication distribution parameters. While the physical structures and location of housing areas where students are less involved can not be changed, increased personal interaction between RHA leaders and advisers with those students who reside in these areas can be increased. Furthermore, the use of different communication techniques may lead to improved communication among and between all members.

    d. Develop an organizational structure through which hall council members believe themselves to play an integral and participative role in the operations of the RHA. Those institutions which had a strong

committee structure or dictated responsibilities for several hall council

members to hold RHA Legislative Body positions had more student

involvement and a stronger feeling of connectedness to the

organization. Furthermore, organizations should develop roles and

responsibilities for students to be involved at varying levels of time

commitment to the organization. The notion of RHA being primary to

the students' lives has proven to be detrimental to the recruitment and

retention of members. Finally, opportunities for resident assistant

involvement and the involvement of students who do not reside on

campus can assist with organizational development for the RHA.

e. Determine what the role for the RHA will be on the campus (i.e.

leadership development, student advocacy, student involvement, etc.).

Work with the RHA leaders and organizational advisers to develop an

appropriate training component to ensure that goals are established,

monitored, and met. RHA must find their role in comparison to

housing staff and the university-wide student government as these

groups often hold parallel responsibilities with the campus RHA.

Student government leaders and RHA leaders in addition to staff and

advisers can investigate areas of overlap or gaps in service to students

to improve the effectiveness of both organizations. Furthermore, these

groups can discuss collaborative opportunities for both training and

development and program planning and implementation.

2. Recommendations for future research

a. Conduct research on students who discontinue their involvement in residence hall associations to determine the contributing factors to attrition of members.

b. Conduct an analysis of an individual university to examine more deeply the relationships between hall council members, RHA members, housing staff members, university staff, and student government members.

c. Conduct research to determine the effectiveness of a staff member whose primary responsibility is the advising of RHA.

d. Conduct a similar study for private institutions to determine if the relationship between organizational culture and effectiveness is relevant.

e. Compare the perceptions of organizational culture and organizational effectiveness for residence hall associations at private and public colleges and universities.

f. Assess several RHAs to determine those that are highly effective; utilize these institutions as part of a cross-case analysis to determine best practices for RHA development.

g. Expand the research base beyond the three institutions for this study to provide a greater number of participants to analyze the statistical data.

h. Examine the relationship between RHA, NRHH, and/or resident assistants as part of a comprehensive look into student leadership in University Housing.

As residence hall associations are dynamic organizations wherein the entire membership turns over every four or five years, the establishment of an organizational culture wherein new members can be indoctrinated and continue effective practices is essential to the ongoing success of the organizations. Residence hall living is one of the cornerstones of the traditional college experience; while administrators strive to develop the student outside of the classroom through leadership and involvement opportunities, it is imperative that in a time of increased accountability and diminishing funds, both financial and human resources are appropriately allocated.

The role of program evaluation and assessment, through the achievement of goals or benchmarking is necessary for evaluating organizational effectiveness (Akdere, 2005; Cutt & Murray, 2000). Residence hall associations, as student organizations meant to serve the needs of students in residence, should be evaluated along with other student or government funded entities that exist at institutions of higher education to teach student leaders the importance of accountability and effectiveness measures. These lessons can transcend to for-profit and non-profit entities once the student graduates.

The campus RHA serves as a representative body, a leadership development opportunity, and programs and services provider. The maximization of effectiveness is not only of importance in terms of resources and accountability, but to serve both the campus living and learning environment. To this end, the continuous development of these organizations must remain a strategic priority for institutional stakeholders to ensure these important organizations are providing appropriate living-learning opportunities for our students.

APPENDIX A

Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

Demographic Information

Class Standing: Freshman/First Year   Sophomore   Junior

                                        Senior   Grad

of <u>Full</u> Semesters Involved with RHA: 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8+

Gender: M   F   Transgendered

Ethnicity: White/Caucasian   Spanish/Hispanic/Latino   Black/African American

            Asian/Middle Eastern/Pacific Islander   Native American/Alaska Native/Inuit

            Multiracial   Other

Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI)

The following statements describe types of operating values which may exist in your RHA. Please indicate the extent to which each statement describes your RHA. None of the descriptions are any better than others; they are just different.

1 = strongly disagree   4 = agree
2 = disagree   5 = strongly agree
3 = neither agree nor disagree

Please answer all questions on this sheet.

		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree	
1	The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to take risks.	1	2	3	4	5
3	The organization is very results oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement oriented.	1	2	3	4	5
4	The organization is a very controlled and structured place. Formal	1	2	3	4	5

policies and procedures generally govern what people do.

5	The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating, or nurturing.	1	2	3	4	5
6	The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify entrepreneurship, innovating, or risk taking.	1	2	3	4	5
7	The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify a no-nonsense, aggressive, results-oriented focus.	1	2	3	4	5
8	The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency.	1	2	3	4	5
9	The management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation.	1	2	3	4	5
10	The management style in the organization is characterized by individual risk-taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.	1	2	3	4	5
11	The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement.	1	2	3	4	5
12	The management style in the organization is characterized by security of membership, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationship.	1	2	3	4	5
13	The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organization runs high.	1	2	3	4	5
14	The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge.	1	2	3	4	5
15	The glue that holds the organization together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment. Aggressiveness and winning are common themes.	1	2	3	4	5
16	The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.	1	2	3	4	5
17	The organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist.	1	2	3	4	5
18	The organization emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued.	1	2	3	4	5
19	The organizational emphasizes competitive actions and achievement. Winning in the marketplace is dominant.	1	2	3	4	5
20	The organization emphasizes performance and stability. Efficiency controls and smooth operations are important.	1	2	3	4	5
21	The organization defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for	1	2	3	4	5

people.

| 22 | The organization defines success on having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| 23 | The organization defines success on the basis of winning in the marketplace and outpacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| 24 | The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Smooth scheduling and low-cost production are crucial. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

APPENDIX B

RHA Effectiveness Instrument

Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument

Each of the following items describes and aspect of your university RHA. Please indicate the extent to which each statement describes your RHA. None of the descriptions are any better than others; they are just different.
If the question does not apply to your RHA, please leave it blank.

1=To No Extent   2= To a Very Low Extent   3 = To a Limited Extent

4=To Some Extent   5=To a Considerable Extent   6=To a Great Extent

#	Statement	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	The RHA has access to the highest level administrators in Residence Life/Housing.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	The constitution of the RHA helps the RHA to be effective.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	There is diversity among the RHA in regards to gender, race, and ethnicity.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	The RHA evaluates its services to resident students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	The RHA has the support of the hall/area student governments.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	The RHA shares ideas from the conferences with the hall/area student government.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	The procedures and guidelines for the RHA are well documented.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	The RHA recognizes or appreciates its members.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	The RHA develops member leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	The RHA communicates facility issues to the Residence Life/Housing administration.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	There is diversity among RHA members in regards to major, class year, and geography.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	The RHA has a clear set of expectations for the adviser.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	RHA members hold each other accountable to complete tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6

14	Members of RHA learn how to run meetings.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15	The RHA communicates policy concerns of resident students to the Residence Life/Housing administration.	1 2 3 4 5 6
16	The RHA receives all the needed financial support from the Residence Life/Housing administration.	1 2 3 4 5 6
17	Parliamentary Procedure, as the RHA uses it, helps participation.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	Members trust one another in the RHA.	1 2 3 4 5 6
19	Members of the RHA are good at planning activities.	1 2 3 4 5 6
20	The Residence Life/Housing administration encourages the academic success RHA members.	1 2 3 4 5 6
21	The RHA does a good job of managing external vendors and fundraising organizations.	1 2 3 4 5 6
22	The RHA has a process to discipline inappropriate behaviors and unethical actions by members.	1 2 3 4 5 6
23	Internal harmony exists in the RHA.	1 2 3 4 5 6
24	The RHA provides enough programs for resident students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
25	The RHA has a strong relationship with the campus student press/media.	1 2 3 4 5 6
26	The RHA membership is stable or growing.	1 2 3 4 5 6
27	The RHA has an effective code of ethics.	1 2 3 4 5 6
28	RHA members form coalitions to promote their interests.	1 2 3 4 5 6
29	The RHA puts on high quality activities during the opening week of the academic year.	1 2 3 4 5 6
30	The Residence Life/Housing administration holds RHA members to a higher standard of conduct.	1 2 3 4 5 6
31	The RHA is successful with its fundraising activities.	1 2 3 4 5 6
32	The RHA has GPA guidelines for officer positions.	1 2 3 4 5 6
33	Conflicts are managed well in the RHA.	1 2 3 4 5 6
34	The RHA promotes community service activities.	1 2 3 4 5 6
35	The RHA acts as a voice for residents at the university level.	1 2 3 4 5 6
36	The RHA provides adequate funding to the hall/area student governments.	1 2 3 4 5 6
37	The voting procedures in the RHA are fair and equitable.	1 2 3 4 5 6

38	RHA committees are run well throughout the year.	1 2 3 4 5 6
39	Each year new and different activities are held by the RHA.	1 2 3 4 5 6
40	RHA members present workshops or programs at regional and/ or national conferences.	1 2 3 4 5 6
41	There is high morale among RHA members.	1 2 3 4 5 6
42	The RHA provides enough social activities for the residents.	1 2 3 4 5 6
43	RHA members serve on committees for the Residence Life/ Housing administration.	1 2 3 4 5 6
44	The RHA conducts a year long calendar planning process.	1 2 3 4 5 6
45	The RHA advocates for issues and concerns of resident students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
46	RHA members are involved in the interviewing team for Residence Life/ Housing job positions.	1 2 3 4 5 6
47	The RHA is good at solving their own problems.	1 2 3 4 5 6
48	RHA members develop better human relations skills.	1 2 3 4 5 6
49	The RHA can challenge Residence Life/Housing policies without fear of reprisal.	1 2 3 4 5 6
50	The RHA is organized.	1 2 3 4 5 6
51	The RHA recommends or gives awards for excellence (such as NACURH of the Month awards).	1 2 3 4 5 6
52	There is good two-way communication between the RHA and the Residence Life/Housing administration.	1 2 3 4 5 6
53	The RHA routinely evaluates itself.	1 2 3 4 5 6
54	RHA activities and events are respectful of human differences.	1 2 3 4 5 6
55	The RHA receives recognition from the Residence Life/ Housing administration.	1 2 3 4 5 6
56	RHA meetings are fun.	1 2 3 4 5 6
57	There is high resident student participation in events put on by the RHA.	1 2 3 4 5 6
58	The RHA role in decision making within Residence Life/Housing is clearly defined.	1 2 3 4 5 6
59	Communication within the RHA is effective.	1 2 3 4 5 6
60	The RHA consistently reaches all its goals.	1 2 3 4 5 6

61	The RHA is aware of the mission and values of the Residence Life/ Housing administration.	1 2 3 4 5 6
62	The RHA learns from its mistakes.	1 2 3 4 5 6
63	The RHA has a positive impact on resident student life.	1 2 3 4 5 6
64	An RHA representative regularly attends Residence Life/ Housing administration staff meetings.	1 2 3 4 5 6
65	The RHA is very creative.	1 2 3 4 5 6
66	There is high resident student participation in regular meetings of the RHA.	1 2 3 4 5 6
67	The RHA has a good relationship with the Residence Life/ Housing administration.	1 2 3 4 5 6
68	Decision-making is effective in the RHA.	1 2 3 4 5 6
69	The RHA generally puts on quality programs for resident students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
70	The RHA is a leader among all campus student organizations.	1 2 3 4 5 6
71	The RHA is responsive to the needs of hall/area student government.	1 2 3 4 5 6
72	The RHA performs an assessment of its services to hall/area governments.	1 2 3 4 5 6
73	The RHA adviser helps the RHA officers to develop their abilities.	1 2 3 4 5 6
74	The RHA budget is well managed.	1 2 3 4 5 6
75	A primary purpose of RHA is to represent the resident student voice to Residence Life/Housing.	1 2 3 4 5 6
76	The Residence Life/Housing administration is responsive to the needs and issues RHA brings forth.	1 2 3 4 5 6
77	The RHA discusses risk management and liability issues during event planning.	1 2 3 4 5 6
78	Members receive excellent training that prepares them for RHA work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
79	The RHA informs resident students about RHA activities and issues.	1 2 3 4 5 6
80	The RHA is consulted by Residence Life/Housing administrators on important issues affecting residents.	1 2 3 4 5 6
81	The RHA is flexible.	1 2 3 4 5 6
82	Residents continue to talk positively about RHA activities and services after they are over.	1 2 3 4 5 6
83	The RHA is involved in the budget development process for Residence Life/Housing.	1 2 3 4 5 6

84	RHA takes time to build a sense of team among members.	1 2 3 4 5 6
85	The RHA encourages residents to become involved as citizens of the hall communities.	1 2 3 4 5 6
86	The RHA represents the collective needs of the hall/area student government(s) to the Residence Life/Housing administration.	1 2 3 4 5 6
87	The executive board of the RHA acts as a team.	1 2 3 4 5 6
88	The RHA meets the needs of the resident students.	1 2 3 4 5 6
89	The RHA appreciates and./or recognizes the hall/area student governments.	1 2 3 4 5 6
90	The RHA has enough programs on diversity.	1 2 3 4 5 6
91	The RHA adviser is effective.	1 2 3 4 5 6
92	The RHA has a high level of involvement in the academic dimension of the residential community.	1 2 3 4 5 6
93	The RHA has high quality meeting locations, offices, space, equipment, technology, and supplies.	1 2 3 4 5 6
94	Overall, the RHA is effective.	1 2 3 4 5 6

For Administrative Use Only: Not on Final Instrumentation

Factor 1: RHA Effects
Questions: 5, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 47, 48, 50, 54, 56, 57, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 73, 74, 79, 81, 82, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 91, 94 (56 items)

Factor 2: Housing Relationship
Questions: 1, 2, 7, 10, 15, 16, 20, 36, 43, 45, 49, 52, 55, 75, 76, 80, 86 (17 items)

Factor 3: Formal Processes
Questions: 3, 4, 17, 22, 27, 28, 32, 40, 44, 46, 51, 53, 58, 64, 72, 77, 78, 83, 90, 92, 93 (21 items)

APPENDIX C

Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Analysis

Individual Interview Guide

Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Analysis

Individual Interview Guide

Name of interviewer: Ethnicity:
Name of interviewee: Semesters in organization:
Place: Class Standing:
Date: E-Mail Address:
Starting Time:
Ending Time:

Introduction: *Hello. Thank you for agreeing to serve as a participant in this study. As I mentioned when we set up the interview, I am a student in the College of Education at Florida Atlantic University working on my dissertation. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and I will be using pseudonyms in the final report. With your permission, I would like to tape this interview. Is that okay? This interview will last approximately 60 minutes.*

General Introductory Questions
1. I would like to know about your position-can you help me understand what you do in your position?
2. What is it like to work with your RHA? How do you feel about working with the RHA?
3. How do others feel about working with the RHA?
4. To your knowledge or recollection, has the RHA always operated the way it does now?

Human Relations/Clan
1. How easy is it to recruit members for the RHA?
2. How are people selected for positions or responsibilities in the RHA? (What procedures and criteria are used?)
3. When a student begins their position, what help is received?
4. Over time, what training and educational opportunities are made available?
5. In terms of performance, how does a student know if he or she is doing well?
6. What are the most important rewards and benefits that people receive here?
7. How much cooperation and teamwork exist in the RHA?
8. Overall, how much commitment do people have to their positions?

Internal Process/Adhocracy
1. What is the work flow like in the RHA? (Where do you/others get your work from, and where does it go when you/others have finished with it?)
2. How is the work flow coordinated?
3. Does the work flow ever get disrupted? (When?) (How?) (How Often?)
4. What are the most critical kinds of decision made in the RHA? How are they made?
5. What are the most common formal communication problems?
6. Do you/others do the same kind of work in the same manner every day, or does your/their work constantly change?
7. How much emphasis is place on rules and procedures in the RHA?
8. Overall, how efficient is the RHA?

Rational Goal Model/ Hierarchy
1. What kind of planning takes place in the RHA?
2. In planning your work, do you/others need to think in terms of hours, days, weeks, months, or years?
3. What are the objectives of the RHA?
4. Does everyone agree on what these objectives are?
5. Do these objectives ever change? (Why?)(How often?)
6. How intense is the work effort?
7. Overall, how productive is the RHA?

Open Systems/Market
1. Of the various outside demands that are made on the RHA, which are the most critical?
2. How predictable are those demands? Are they always the same, or are they always changing?
3. How flexible is the RHA, that is, how well does the RHA adjust to changes? (Can you give some recent examples?)
4. What do outsiders think of the RHA? What is its image or reputation?
5. From what external source does the RHA get the most criticism?
6. From what external source does the RHA get the most support?
7. In terms of resources (That is, money, equipment, staff, and so on), how rich or poor is the RHA?
8. Overall, is the RHA growing, staying the same size, or declining?

Concluding Questions and Remarks
1. Is there any question that I have not asked that I should have asked?

Closing*: Thank you very much for your time today and for participating in my study. Again, all of your responses will be kept confidential. I will e-mail you a typed transcript of our discussion today for you to review for accuracy. Would you mind if I contact you should I need to ask any follow-up questions? If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.*

APPENDIX D

Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Analysis

Focus Group Facilitators Guide

Interview Questions for Doing a Competing Values Analysis

Focus Group Facilitators Guide

Name of interviewer:

Place:
Date:
Starting Time:
Ending Time:

Introduction*: Hello. Thank you for agreeing to serve as a participant in this study. I am a student in the College of Education at Florida Atlantic University working on my dissertation. Your responses will be kept strictly confidential. With your permission, I would like to tape this discussion. Is that okay? This discussion will last approximately 90 minutes.*

General Introductory Questions
1. What is it like to work with your RHA? How do you feel about working with the RHA?
2. How do others feel about working with the RHA?
3. To your knowledge or recollection, has the RHA always operated the way it does now?

Human Relations/Clan
1. How easy is it to recruit members for the RHA?
2. How are people selected for positions or responsibilities in the RHA? (What procedures and criteria are used?)
3. Over time, what training and educational opportunities are made available?
4. In terms of performance, how does a student know if he or she is doing well?
5. What are the most important rewards and benefits that people receive here?
6. How much cooperation and teamwork exist in the RHA?
7. Overall, how much commitment do people have to the organization?

Internal Process/Adhocracy
1. What is the work flow like in the RHA? (Where do you/others get your work from, and where does it go when you/others have finished with it?)
2. How is the work flow coordinated?
3. Does the work flow ever get disrupted? (When?) (How?) (How Often?)
4. What are the most critical kinds of decision made in the RHA? How are they made?
5. What are the most common formal communication problems?

6. How much emphasis is place on rules and procedures in the RHA?
7. Overall, how efficient is the RHA?

Rational Goal Model/ Hierarchy
1. What kind of planning takes place in the RHA?
2. In planning your work, do you/others need to think in terms of hours, days, weeks, months, or years?
3. What are the objectives of the RHA?
4. Does everyone agree on what these objectives are?
5. Do these objectives ever change? (Why?)(How often?)
6. How intense is the work effort?
7. Overall, how productive is the RHA?

Open Systems/Market
1. Of the various outside demands that are made on the RHA, which are the most critical?
2. How predictable are those demands? Are they always the same, or are they always changing?
3. How flexible is the RHA, that is, how well does the RHA adjust to changes? (Can you give some recent examples?)
4. What do outsiders think of the RHA? What is its image or reputation?
5. From what external source does the RHA get the most criticism?
6. From what external source does the RHA get the most support?
7. In terms of resources (That is, money, equipment, staff, and so on), how rich or poor is the RHA?
8. Overall, is the RHA growing, staying the same size, or declining?

Concluding Questions and Remarks
1. Is there any question that I have not asked that I should have asked?

Closing*: Thank you very much for your time today and for participating in my study. Again, all of your responses will be kept confidential. I will e-mail you a typed series of themes that have emerged from our discussion today for you to review for accuracy. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.*

APPENDIX E

Observation Guide – Executive Board Meeting

Observation Guide – Executive Board Meeting

Guidelines for Observation of RHA Executive Board Meeting

The researcher will conduct the observation as an observer spending the entirety of the executive board meeting in the designated location. Should the opportunity present itself to be a participant observer, the researcher may partake in this interaction. Furthermore, should clarification be necessary if questions arise, the researcher may ask meeting participants taking care not to disturb the integrity of the observation.

As the researcher examines the meeting, he will keep detailed notes of the entire goings on from the environment to the individual students to the interaction among students. While taking field notes, the researcher will not be limited to, but will attempt to consider all of the following:

1. Introduction
   a. Location on campus
   b. Date and Time of Observation
   c. Participants
   d. As participants enter, what are they discussing?
      i. Academics
      ii. RHA Business
      iii. Social
      iv. What items do the individuals bring to the meeting?
2. Description of the layout and details of the observation site.
   a. Meeting descriptors
      i. Does the meeting begin on time?
      ii. How is the meeting called to order?
      iii. How are the participants seated?
      iv. What does the meeting agenda look like?
      v. How are the participants dressed?
      vi. What is the process for conducting business? (Robert's Rules, etc.)
      vii. Are any traditions conducted during the meeting, school fight song, pledge of allegiance, national anthem, etc.
   b. Location Descriptors
      i. Art, signage, accessibility
      ii. School spirit
      iii. RHA spirit
      iv. External environment

3. Participant Actions
    a. Is everyone engaged?
    b. Does every participant appear to have a voice at the meeting?
    c. Are people staying on task?
        i. If not, who brings them to task?
        ii. How are they brought to task?
    d. How does the adviser interact with the students?
    e. Do participants come late, leave early?
    f. Do people seem to be following the constitution?
4. What are the concerns of the Executive Board?
    a. What are the priorities?
    b. Are discussions positive or negative in content and tone?
5. When someone errs in procedure, what action is taken?
6. Closing
    a. Conclusion time of meeting
    b. Are people rushing to leave or staying to talk?
    c. As participants depart, what are they discussing?
        i. Academics
        ii. RHA Business
        iii. Social

APPENDIX F

Observation Guide – General Assembly Meeting

Observation Guide – General Assembly Meeting

Guidelines for Observation of RHA Meeting

The researcher will conduct the observation as an observer spending the entirety of the executive board meeting in the designated location. Should the opportunity present itself to be a participant observer, the researcher may partake in this interaction. Furthermore, should clarification be necessary if questions arise, the researcher may ask meeting participants taking care not to disturb the integrity of the observation.

As the researcher examines the meeting, he will keep detailed notes of the entire goings on from the environment to the individual students to the interaction among students. While taking field notes, the researcher will not be limited to, but will attempt to consider all of the following:

1. Introduction
    a. Location on campus
    b. Date and Time of Observation
    c. Participants
    d. As participants enter, what are they discussing?
        i. Academics
        ii. RHA Business
        iii. Social
2. Description of the layout and details of the observation site.
    a. Meeting descriptors
        i. Does the meeting begin on time?
        ii. How is the meeting called to order?
        iii. How are the participants seated?
        iv. What does the meeting agenda look like?
        v. How are the participants dressed?
        vi. What is the process for conducting business? (Robert's Rules, etc.)
        vii. Are any traditions conducted during the meeting, school fight song, pledge of allegiance, national anthem, etc.
    b. Location Descriptors
        i. Art, signage, accessibility
        ii. School spirit
        iii. RHA spirit
        iv. External environment

3. Participant Actions
    a. Is everyone engaged?
    b. Does every participant appear to have a voice at the meeting?
    c. Are people staying on task?
        i. If not, who brings them to task?
        ii. How are they brought to task?
    d. How does the adviser interact with the students?
    e. Do participants come late, leave early?
    f. Do people seem to be following the constitution?
    g. How are the students / staff grouped together?
        i. Separated by demographic or other?
        ii. Are discussions positive or negative in content and tone?
    h. What items do the students / staff bring to the meetings?
    i.
4. What are the concerns of the Executive Board?
    a. What are the priorities?
    b. Are discussions positive or negative in content and tone?
5. What are the concerns of the general body?
    a. What are the priorities?
    b. Are discussions positive or negative in content and tone?
6. When someone errs in procedure, what action is taken?
7. Closing
    a. Conclusion time of meeting
    b. Are people rushing to leave or staying to talk?
    c. As participants depart, what are they discussing?
        i. Academics
        ii. RHA Business
        iii. Social

APPENDIX G

Document List

Document List

Organizational Constitution
Organizational Policy Book
Area/Hall Council Constitutions
Legislative Body Meeting Agendas from present NACURH Year (Close of 2006
NACURH Conference – Present)
Legislative Body Meeting Minutes from present NACURH Year
Department of Housing Website
RHA Website
Department of Housing Marketing Brochures
RHA Marketing Brochures
RHA Training Guides
Award Nominations from 2006 – 2007 NACURH Year

APPENDIX H

Permissions for OCAI & Interview Questions (R. Quinn)

Permissions for OCAI & Interview Questions (R. Quinn)

```
From: Quinn, Robert [requinn@bus.umich.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2007 6:03 AM
To: Larry Faerman
Subject: RE: Request for Use of OCAI

Permission granted.
------------------------------------------------------------------
From: Larry Faerman [mailto:lfaerman@fau.edu]
Sent: Tue 10/16/2007 10:16 PM
To: requinn@umich.edu
Subject: Request for Use of OCAI

Dear Dr. Quinn…
I am writing to inquire as to how I would go about obtaining permission
to utilize the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument designed by
you and Dr. Cameron as well as your 1988 interview protocol for
conducting a competing values organizational analysis. (I have sent a
similar request to Dr. Cameron). I am currently a doctoral student at
Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida and am in the
process of developing the research proposal for my dissertation. The
title of my proposed study is The Relationship of Organizational
Culture and Effectiveness in Residence Hall Associations: A Competing
Values Approach. Residence Hall Associations (RHA) are based within
Housing Departments at colleges and universities acting as leadership
organizations that represent the various halls and the general on-
campus student population.
It is my intention to study three individual institutions in the state
of Florida. I hope that through data collected from the Organizational
Culture Assessment Instrument and Tucker's (2001) Residence Hall
Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument, I will be able to determine
the significance of relationships based on types of culture, cultural
strength, and effectiveness of RHAs. Following the collection of these
data, the interview protocol for conducting a competing values
organizational analysis will be adapted for use with RHAs and conducted
through individual interviews with executive board members and primary
advisers and focus groups of voting members, hall/area council members,
and residential life professional staff members.
Please let me know if you will grant my request, and if so, under which
conditions I might be able to utilize your instruments. I would be
happy to discuss my study with you in further detail if you would like.
Thank you in advance for your consideration and I look forward to
hearing from you.
Sincerely,
Larry Faerman
Doctoral Candidate
Florida Atlantic University
```

APPENDIX I

Permission for OCAI & Interview Questions (K.Cameron)

Permission for OCAI & Interview Questions (K.Cameron)

From: Mandy Liu [mandyliumichigan@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, October 18, 2007 9:25 AM
To: Larry Faerman
Subject: RE: Request for Use of OCAI

You are welcome to use it in the manner you proposed as long as it is
for research and not revenue purposes. Good luck in your research.

Mandy

Larry Faerman <lfaerman@fau.edu> wrote:

Thank you for your quick response. I am requesting the use of these
instruments solely for student use as I conduct the study for my
doctoral dissertation. I was hoping to distribute the instrument in
hard copy at the site to assist with response rate. With permission, I
will tabulate scores for the data. Please let me know if this is
possible and/or approved.

Thank you…

Larry Faerman
Doctoral Candidate

  From: Mandy Liu [mailto:mandyliumichigan@yahoo.com]
  Sent: Wednesday, October 17, 2007 8:51 AM
  To: lfaerman@fau.edu
  Subject: Re: Request for Use of OCAI

  Dear Larry Faerman:

Thank you for your inquiring concerning the following instrument:
OCAI.

The OCAI instrument (Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument) was
copyrighted by Professor Kim Cameron in the 1980s, but because it is
published in the Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture book,
it is also copyrighted by Jossey Bass.

We have a local company (BDS, Behavioral Data Services, 734-663-2990,
sherry.slade@b-d-s.com) which can distribute the instrument on-line,
tabulate scores, and produce feedback reports. These reports include
comparison data from approximately 10,000 organizations--representing

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many industries and sectors, five continents, and approximately 100,000 individuals.

The instruments may be used free of charge for research or student purposes, but a licensing fee is charged when the instrument is used by a company or by consulting firms to generate revenues.

At least two different alternatives exist for accessing the instrument: (a) pay a licensing fee for unrestricted use of the instrument for a specified period of time; or (b) arrange with BDS to administer the survey, analyze the data, and produce feedback reports on a per-use basis. A fee schedule has been generated by BDS for these services.

 I hope this explanation helps. Please let me know if you have other questions.

  Best regards,

  Mandy Liu
  Administrative Assistant for Kim Cameron

  Kim Cameron
  Professor
  Ross School of Business and
  School of Education
  University of Michigan
  Ann Arbor, Michigan 48109
  734-615-5247

    From: Larry Faerman [mailto:lfaerman@fau.edu]
    Sent: Tue 10/16/2007 10:20 PM
    To: kim_cameron@umich.edu
    Subject: Request for Use of OCAI
    Dear Dr. Cameron…

    I am writing to inquire as to how I would go about obtaining permission to utilize the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument designed by you and Dr. Quinn. (I have sent a similar request to Dr. Quinn). I am currently a doctoral student at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida and am in the process of developing the research proposal for my dissertation. The title of my proposed study is The Relationship of Organizational Culture and Effectiveness in Residence Hall Associations: A Competing Values Approach. Residence Hall Associations (RHA) are based within Housing Departments at colleges and universities acting as leadership organizations that represent the various halls and the general on-campus student population.

    It is my intention to study three individual institutions in the state of Florida. I hope that through data collected from the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument and Tucker's (2001) Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument, I will be able to determine the significance of relationships based on types of culture, cultural strength, and effectiveness of RHAs. Following the

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collection of these data, I hope to use Dr. Quinn's (1985) interview
protocol for conducting a competing values organizational analysis
which will be adapted for use with RHAs and conducted through
individual interviews with executive board members and primary advisers
and focus groups of voting members, hall/area council members, and
residential life professional staff members.

Please let me know if you will grant my request, and if so, under
which conditions I might be able to utilize your instrument. I would be
happy to discuss my study with you in further detail if you would like.
Thank you in advance for your consideration and I look forward to
hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Larry Faerman
Doctoral Candidate
Florida Atlantic University

APPENDIX J

Permission to Use the RHA Effectiveness Instrument

Permission to use the RHA Effectiveness Instrument

From: Gardiner Tucker [Gardiner.L.Tucker.Jr@Colorado.EDU]
Sent: Friday, November 23, 2007 12:57 PM
To: Larry Faerman
Subject: RE: Residence Hall Government Effectiveness Instrument

Dear Larry,

I am honored that you wish to use my survey instrument. I give you
permission to use it for your dissertation research. I will look for
the pdf files for the survey and send those your way.

Yours,

Tuck

Gardiner Tucker
Director of Residence Life
Housing and Dining Services
University of Colorado at Boulder
54 Hallett Hall, 154 UCB
Boulder, CO 80309
PH: 303-492-7260
FX: 303-492-4646

E-mail: gardiner.tucker@colorado.edu

From: Larry Faerman [mailto:lfaerman@fau.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, October 16, 2007 8:06 PM
To: Gardiner Tucker
Subject: Residence Hall Government Effectiveness Instrument

Dear Dr. Tucker…

I am writing to inquire as to how I would go about obtaining permission
to utilize the Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument
designed by you in 2001. I am currently a doctoral student at Florida
Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida and am in the process of
developing the research proposal for my dissertation. The title of my
proposed study is The Relationship of Organizational Culture and
Effectiveness in Residence Hall Associations: A Competing Values
Approach. From reading through dissertations, I know that you are
familiar with the Competing Values Framework.

As the adviser to my institutional RSA and state adviser to the Florida
Association of Residence Halls (FARH), I am very excited to work with

and learn about student governance in Housing Departments. I intend to study three individual institutions in the state of Florida. I hope that through data collected from Cameron and Quinn's (1999, 2006) Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument and your Residence Hall Government (RHA) Effectiveness Instrument, I will be determine the significance of relationships based on types of culture, cultural strength, and effectiveness. Following the collection of these data, an interview protocol developed by Quinn (1988) for conducting a competing values organizational analysis will be adapted for use with RHAs and conducted through individual interviews with executive board members and primary advisers and focus groups of voting members, hall/area council members, and residential life professional staff members.

Please let me know if you will grant my request, and if so, under which conditions I might be able to utilize your instrument. I would be happy to discuss my study with you in further detail if you would like. Thank you in advance for your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Larry Faerman
Doctoral Candidate
Assistant Director of Housing for Residential Life
Florida Atlantic University

APPENDIX K

Survey Cover Sheet

Survey Cover Sheet

Residence Hall Association Organizational Culture and Effectiveness Study

Dear RHA member, area/hall council member, or residential life administrator:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the research for my doctoral dissertation. My study seeks to explain the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness of Residence Hall Associations. There are two survey instruments attached to this cover letter; one which asks you questions related to organizational culture of your organization and one which asks you questions related to organizational effectiveness.

The first instrument is not very long, however, the second one will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. I ask you to please remain focused on the questions and answer them based upon the degree to which the statement describes or is practiced by your RHA. Please note that you should select the answer that best fits your RHA.

Each of the surveys requests that you **CIRCLE** the number that correlates to your response. If you change your mind, please place an X over the first response and circle your final response.

I would like to also remind you of the focus group interviews which will take place this week as follows:

Thank you again for your participation.

Larry Faerman

Doctoral Student – Florida Atlantic University

APPENDIX L

Professional Staff Instructions

Professional Staff Instructions

Dear Hall/Area Council Adviser:

Thank you for assisting with the collection of data for my study regarding the relationship between organizational culture and organizational effectiveness of RHAs. The members of your hall council will be asked to please take the survey instruments that you took earlier this week to gain their perceptions of organizational culture and effectiveness of the RHA. Please remind them that the survey is describing the RHA, not the area/hall council. Please first distribute the copy of the consent form for the participants to sign. Once they return the consent form to you, please distribute a copy of the survey to them and ask that they wait to begin until everyone has completed the consent form. Next, please read the instruction sheet on the top of the survey to them. If you have any questions about the administration of the survey or if any participants have questions, please contact me on my cellular phone.

One the surveys have been completed, please place them back in the envelope and give them to your RHA Adviser who will return them to me. Please note the following on the outside of the envelope:

Average attendance at hall/area council meetings during the year:

Attendance on the night of the distribution of the survey:

Thank you very much for helping with the collection of data for my study. I appreciate it.

Warmest Regards,

Larry Faerman
Doctoral Student – Florida Atlantic University

APPENDIX M

Demographic Information for Individual Interview Participant

Demographic Information for Individual Interview Participant

Demographic Information

Class Standing: Freshman/First Year   Sophomore   Junior

Senior   Grad

of <u>Full</u> Semesters Involved with RHA: 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8+

Gender: M   F   Transgendered

Ethnicity: White/Caucasian   Spanish/Hispanic/Latino   Black/African American

Asian/Middle Eastern/Pacific Islander   Native American/Alaska Native/Inuit

Multiracial   Other

Position in RHA: _____

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