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The University of Southern Mississippi

DETERMINANTS OF RESIDENT ASSISTANT JOB SATISFACTION IN
PRIVATIZED UNIVERSITY HOUSING

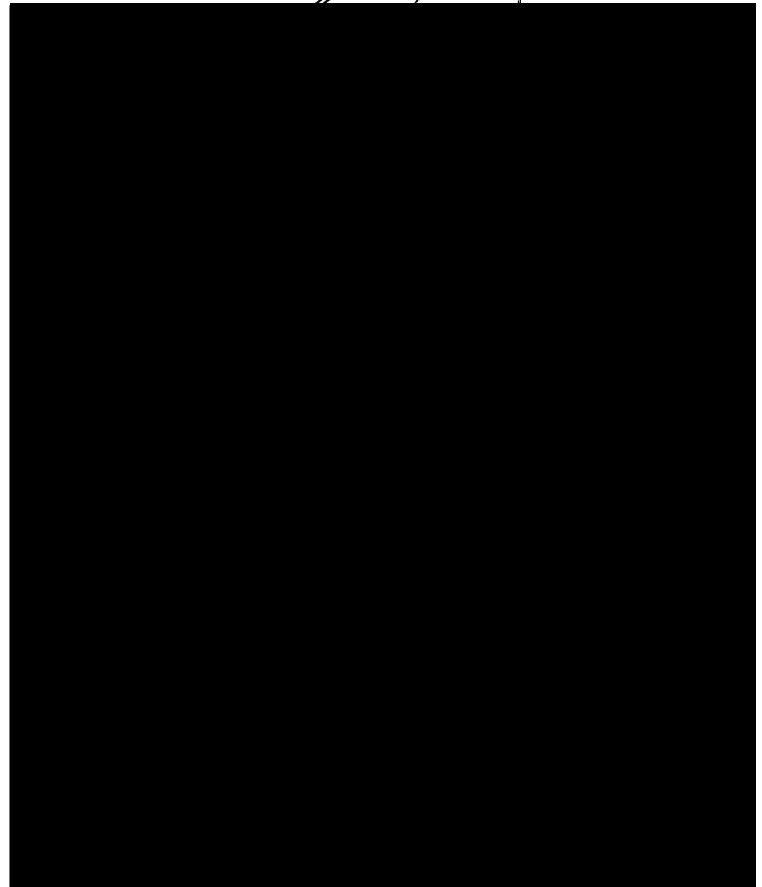
by

Jennifer Lynn Casey

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved:



December 2009

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2009

The University of Southern Mississippi

DETERMINANTS OF RESIDENT ASSISTANT JOB SATISFACTION IN
PRIVATIZED UNIVERSITY HOUSING

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December 2009

ABSTRACT

DETERMINANTS OF RESIDENT ASSISTANT JOB SATISFACTION IN PRIVATIZED UNIVERSITY HOUSING

by Jennifer Lynn Casey

December 2009

The general purpose of a residence life program is the improvement of the on-campus student experience in hopes of promoting personal growth, development, and education as well as bolstering retention rates and cultivating future alumni relationships. A residence life program can be found on most four year college and university campuses. Many colleges and universities facilitate their own residence life programs in whole or in part. Other colleges and universities outsource their residence life programs, in whole or in part, to what is called a privatized university housing company. The goals of a residence life program, be it facilitated by university administrators, or by a privatized university housing company, remains the same; to enhance the student's on-campus college experience.

The resident assistant (RA) is the first line of administration in most residence life programs. The RA position is typically a demanding, sometimes thankless job. It is a job in which the RA lives in, and is responsible for, a geographical sector of his or her peers. The RA position encompasses many roles such as administrator, programmer, disciplinarian, and counselor and is considered an important cog in the residence life wheel at most colleges and universities.

When a student becomes an RA, they are volunteering to give up a great deal of their time and privacy for the betterment of the residents. Since there is so much pressure and responsibility placed on the resident assistants, job satisfaction can waiver.

Job satisfaction within the resident assistant position is crucial since they are the day to day face of the residence life administration. If a resident assistant is not satisfied with the job their dissatisfaction could lend itself to the creation of an unpleasant living environment for their residents; which could result in frustration, chaos, and bitterness towards on-campus housing for the residents who live under the purview of such an RA.

This paper is intended to examine determinants of resident assistant job satisfaction in a privatized university housing setting. It is intended to locate common threads of satisfaction for the purpose of increasing job satisfaction.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The fire alarm is clanging loudly through the 3am air waking the masses soundly sleeping in their beds. Attempting to thwart the shrieking, groggy students cover their ears with pillows, and pull the covers over their heads willing the repetitive siren to go away! But to no avail. And now someone is banging mercilessly on their door yelling “Fire! Get out! Fire!” The sleepy student rolls over dismissively thinking, “No, some drunken idiot pulled the fire alarm. There’s no fire.” The banging ceases temporarily only to return again and now the screeching siren is even louder as someone has used a master key and opened the student’s door. Enter...the resident assistant. “GET UP!” the resident assistant yells. “Can you not hear that ungodly alarm? Get out of bed and get out of here!” The disgruntled newly-awakened student slides out of bed, muttering curse words to the resident assistant as he walks passed him on his way out of the building. “Why do I do this?!” questions the resident assistant. “There’s a fire in this building and I’m running through the hall pounding on doors and pulling people out of bed, when I would much rather be outside safe and sound away from this building. Why do I risk MY life for a bunch of ungrateful people who probably don’t even know my name?”

That is a good question. Why do resident assistants (RAs) do their jobs? The job can be thankless, unappreciated, full of late night hours, and interfere with the RAs personal life. Who are these resident assistants? The resident assistant is a student who chooses to apply for and is selected into a residence life paraprofessional position. The resident assistant is typically an undergraduate student with live-in work responsibilities (Kolek, 1995). The RA is responsible for a geographical sector, be it a floor, wing,

apartment building, or the like, of his or her peers. The RA position is one of the more challenging positions a student can hold within a college or university. It puts the student in a role of administrator, disciplinarian, programmer, and counselor of his or her peers (Millsaps College Resident Assistant Manual, 2003). The RA plays a critical role for colleges and universities, as well as in the promotion of personal development for its students (Onofrietti, 2000).

If a student is chosen to be a resident assistant, he or she is volunteering to give up a great deal of his or her time and privacy for the betterment of the residents and the residence life program. Since there is so much pressure and responsibility placed on the resident assistants, it is not uncommon for their supervisors to hear grumblings of malcontent from them with regard to their jobs.

Problem Statement

Job satisfaction within the resident assistant position is crucial. If a resident assistant is not satisfied with the job, there is a distinct possibility he or she will eventually create a situation that is the antithesis to the purpose of the residence life program. Through the years, unsatisfied resident assistants have been documented by their supervisors as: not performing their job responsibilities, not assisting residents in need, not following policy and procedure, covering up broken policy by residents and going so far as to blatantly break policy themselves. Situations such as the ones described above would lend themselves to frustration and confusion for the residents who live in the hall or apartment complex of such an RA, as well as the residential life upper administration who work with said RA.

A Residence Life program, the general purpose of which is the improvement of the on-campus student experience, striving to facilitate academic and personal growth, development, and education (St. Edward's University Residence Life, para 4) as well as bolstering retention rates and cultivating future alumni relationships, can be found on most four year college and university campuses. Numerous colleges and universities facilitate their own residence life programs. Other colleges and universities outsource their residence life programs, in whole or in part, to what is called a privatized university housing company. The goals of a residence life program, be it facilitated by university administrators, or by the privatized university housing company, remains the same; it is to enhance the student's on campus college experience. And the first level of administration in a residence life program is typically the resident assistant.

In looking at the resident assistant and job satisfaction, focus for this paper is on the RA who works for a privatized university housing company. This being said, it would benefit readers to know what a privatized university housing company is, its history and how it differs from traditional college and university housing programs.

Privatized University Housing, Millennials and Helicopter Parents

Privatized university housing companies are companies that build and/or manage residence halls and apartments on campus in partnership with the university or off campus in close proximity to a university. Privatized university housing companies, whether they be on or off campus, cater to students and faculty. These companies began gaining popularity in the 1990s as colleges and universities began to feel the influx from the children of the baby boomer generation. In preparation for the children of the baby boomers, many colleges and universities began building residence halls in the 1960s,

1970s, and 1980s (Anzia, Davis, Gilroy, Segal, 2007). Existing residence halls are now anywhere from over 100 years old to as new as less than one year old. However, the cost to maintain, renovate, and manage aging residence halls can be quite prohibitive to some colleges and universities. In addition, the new generation of college students, the Millennial generation, is quite different from previous generations. Many Millennials have never shared bedrooms or bathrooms and have been provided luxuries previous generations had to work years to attain. According to Anzia, Davis, Gilroy and Segal in their paper entitled Privatizing University Housing,

The quantity of livable student housing is not the only problem facing housing administrators. Today's students expect a great deal more than the old-fashioned barebones dorms with double-loaded corridors and bathrooms shared by thirty students. Students now expect the modern amenities that they enjoyed in their childhood homes, such as wireless Internet access, cable television, air conditioning, large rooms, security systems, and adaptable furniture. It is not uncommon for students to request even more luxurious accommodations, including kitchens, fitness centers, private bedrooms, and private bathrooms.

(2007, p. 1)

Knowing that the Millennial generation and their baby boomer parents, sometimes referred to as "helicopter parents", are now the universities primary clientele, expectations have changed.

"The term 'helicopter parents' is used to describe those moms and dads who constantly hover over their child, ready to swoop in whenever there's a perceived crisis" (Booher, 2007). Millennial students, having grown up in a world of immediacy with the

Internet, rapidly moving video games, and promises for full dinners delivered to their door in less than thirty minutes, have come to expect what they want when they want it. Parents of Millennials have widely been able to provide this for their children and have done so with pride. Affording ones children luxuries one did not have as a child is what many are taught is the American way. These parents have invested their time and their money in their children's lives to a degree other generations have not. So much so that Howe and Strauss (2000) note the Millennial generation has grown up under close scrutiny of parents, teachers, coaches, and child-care providers, rarely left alone for even a few hours at a time. In an article for Duke Magazine, Bridget Booher (2007) notes:

With so much invested in their children's success, parents are increasingly attentive to how university staff members and administrators contribute to the continued success and well-being of their child, as well. As a consequence, university administrators increasingly find themselves in the position of interacting with parents about a range of issues their students are facing—from housing and roommate problems to academic disappointments and health concerns. (p. 1)

College and university administrators know the Millennials and their very involved Helicopter Parents are their new clientele. They also know the aging cinder block, double-loaded corridor, community bathroom residence hall is not going to provide what these customers require. In an article in the Chicago Tribune, a Columbia College student chose Columbia College in downtown Chicago over two Indiana schools in part because of the residence hall choices. According to the article, and Anna Allen of Elkhart, IN:

“Their dorms were kind of nasty,” said Allen, 19, of the Indiana schools. “The floors weren’t carpeted and the students all shared a bathroom down at the end of the hall.” At Columbia, Allen and three roommates share a two-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment with a kitchen and a view of Lake Michigan.

(Stangenes, 2006)

College and university administrators have a choice to make. Do they renovate existing residence halls? Do they build new residence halls? Do they ask their students and parents to accept what they have as it is and hope it is sufficient? Or do they look to outside vendors to help accommodate the needs of their clientele? These questions do not appear to be going away anytime soon as college enrollment is expected to continue increasing over the next eight years. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, in the Projection of Education Statistics to 2017 report, college student enrollment until 2017 is forecast to increase ten percent for students aged 18-24 and 27 percent for ages 25-34. Those projections are expected to manifest in a 12 percent increase for undergraduate students in private institutions and a 13 percent increase for undergraduates at private institutions by the year 2017 (Projections of Education Statistics to 2017).

Residence Hall Planning

College Planning and Management published a special report on College Housing in 2005. It was noted that “The majority of college and universities in the United States need more residence hall space than they currently have” (Abramson, 2005). Abramson conducted an e-mail survey of 596 chief housing officers with a response rate of 127. Permission was granted by Abramson to recreate his tables for the purposes of this

research (see Appendix A). Listed in Table 1 is the base numbers of the survey, showing the average number of students versus the average number of beds on campus. Listed in Table 2 is the construction planned and underway from the respondents. It was noted in the report that, “more than half of the reporting institutions (53.6%) said that they do not have enough residence hall space. In previous years, less than half indicated more space was needed” (Abramson, 2005). Listed in Table 3 is the manner in which the respondents are funding their residence hall projects. The report noted:

When a new residence hall is planned, the primary means to fund it is through the use of revenue bonds, with more than half the respondents indicating that as their primary funding method. If not using revenue bonds, public colleges tend to private developers for funding. (Abramson, 2005, p. 4)

If not building new halls, there is always the option to renovate existing residence halls. Table 4 shows the frequency of upgrading residence halls. Per the College Housing Special Report survey conducted by Paul Abramson (2005), twenty percent of the respondents have a scheduled upgrade and adhere to that schedule. Thirty four percent reported not having a schedule, and more than forty five percent reported making upgrades as needed, with no schedule in place.

Table 1

The Base Numbers for Abramson's Survey

	Public	Private	All Institutions
Responses	73	54	127
Total Students	857,004	166,547	1,023,551
Average Number of Students	11,906	3,084	8,123
Median Number of Students	6,950	1,550	3,500
Residence Hall Buildings	1,150	935	2,085
Total Number of On-Campus Beds	222,651	85,682	308,333
Total Additional College-Related Beds	30,075	5,361	35,436
Average Number of Beds Per Campus	3,050	1,587	2,368
Median Number of Beds Per Campus	1,937	1,110	1,550
Average Number of Beds per Residence Hall	232	138	208
Median Number of Beds per Residence Hall	194	112	151
Average Percentage of Students Accommodated	41.10%	73.00%	54.80%
Median Percentage of Students Accommodated	29.60%	72.10%	42.60%

Table 2

Abramson's Survey, Construction Planned and Underway

How much residence hall space does your campus currently have?

	Public	Private	All Institutions
Sufficient	41.20%	44.40%	42.30%
Too Much	4.40%	3.70%	4.10%
Too Little	54.40%	51.90%	53.60%

Is your college planning to increase its stock of residence hall beds?

	Public	Private	All Institutions
Yes, Underway Now	42.60%	29.60%	36.60%
Yes, Within Five Years	26.50%	38.90%	32.50%
No, No Plans	30.90%	31.50%	30.90%

If you do have plans to add more beds, how many would be added?

	Public	Private	All Institutions
Median Number of Beds Planned	300	150	200
Percentage in Traditional Rooms	12.30%	22.10%	14.40%
Percentage in Suites	44.10%	28.70%	40.80%
Percentage in Apartments/Efficiencies	43.60%	49.20%	44.80%

Table 3

Abramson's Survey, New Residence Halls

Primary Funding Method Is

	Private	Public	All Institutions
Revenue Bonds	58.90%	43.30%	52.40%
Bank Loans	3.90%	16.20%	9.10%
State Appropriations	1.90%	0.00%	1.10%
Operating Funds	3.90%	13.50%	7.90%
Reserve Funds	7.80%	5.40%	6.80%
Donor	1.90%	10.80%	5.70%
Private Developer	13.90%	2.70%	9.10%
Other	7.80%	8.10%	7.90%

They Will be Owned By

	Private	Public	All Institutions
The College/University	77.10%	91.90%	82.80%
An Institutional Foundation	2.10%	0.00%	2.20%
A Private Foundation	4.20%	0.00%	2.20%
A Private Developer	12.40%	5.40%	8.60%
Other	4.20%	2.70%	4.20%

Table 3 (continued)

They Will be Managed By

	Private	Public	All Institutions
The College/University	84.60%	97.50%	90.20%
An Institutional Foundation	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
A Private Foundation	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
A Private Developer	3.80%	0.00%	2.20%
A Private Property Manager	11.50%	0.00%	6.50%
Other	0.00%	2.50%	1.10%

Table 4

Abramson's Survey, How Often are Residence Halls Upgraded?

Does Your College Have a Regular Schedule for Upgrades?

	Private	Public	All Institutions
Yes, We Have a Schedule	59.70%	48.10%	54.60%
We Adhere to a Schedule	19.40%	22.20%	20.70%
Have a Schedule but do not Stick to it	40.30%	25.90%	33.90%
No, Upgrades on an as Needed Basis	40.30%	51.90%	45.40%

If There is a Policy, How Often are the Following Scheduled to Take Place?

	Private Median Years	Public	All Institutions
Replacement of Beds	10	10	10
Replacement of Loose Furniture	10	10	10
Replacement of Lounge Furniture	10	10	10
Replacement of Kitchen Equipment	10	10	10
Replacement of Laundry Equipment	5	5	5
Replacement of Carpet	7	7	7
Residence Halls Painted	4	3	3

Table 4 (continued).

What Major Projects Are You Considering Right Now for Existing Residence Halls?

	Private	Public	All Institutions
Replacement of Furniture/Furnishings	81.20%	70.40%	76.40%
Painting	71.00%	72.20%	71.50%
Replacement of Carpet/Flooring	65.20%	64.80%	65.00%
Adding/Upgrading Key or Card System	49.30%	64.80%	65.00%
Upgrading Security System	56.50%	37.00%	48.00%
Upgrading Lighting	47.80%	40.70%	44.70%
Upgrading Fire Safety System	42.00%	40.70%	41.50%
Upgrading HVAC	44.90%	33.30%	37.40%
Adding Sprinkler Systems	40.60%	33.30%	37.40%
Major Electrical Upgrades	36.20%	35.20%	35.80%
Remodeling Rooms to Create Suites	24.60%	9.30%	17.90%
Other	11.60%	11.10%	11.40%

Privatized vs Traditional Housing

When considering the dilemma of aging residence halls and the increasing expectations of the millennial generation and their parents, privatized university housing provides a good option for colleges and universities who want to build but find they do not have the funds to dedicate to new housing. When considering all that needs to be funded within a university, residence halls don't typically rank highest when compared to salaries, new technology, new classroom buildings and keeping tuition costs reasonable. A privatized university housing company is able to partner with a university, utilize a plot of the university's land, build the style of building the university wants inclusive of amenities the university desires to have for its students, at no cost to the university. A ground lease will go into effect in this instance. It allows the privatized university housing company to build, run, and maintain the building for a set number of years, usually 30 years. After the 30 years is over, the university owns the building free and clear and the housing company is out of the picture. During the 30 years, a contract is in place between the two parties which allows for an annual distribution of revenue to the university from the housing company. The privatized university housing company works closely with the university to ensure all expectations are being met on both sides. The privatized company works for the university and will adhere to university policies within their building. For instance, if the university wants the partnered building to be alcohol-free because the university owned buildings are alcohol free, the partnered building will adhere to that policy as well. The goal is for the privatized building to be as seamless as possible with all the other residence halls and apartments on campus.

Privatized university housing and traditional college/university housing differ in a variety of ways, but are also very similar. This is depicted through their mission statements. One mission statement below is from a privatized university housing company and the other is from a university which encompasses a traditionally run residence life program as well as a privatized program. The mission of the privatized university housing company, Campus Living Villages (CLV), is as follows:

The mission of CLV is to excel as a leader in the management of high quality student housing projects across the nation. CLV strives to support the individual mission of the colleges and universities by providing opportunities for residents to grow and develop in harmony with each institution's unique educational philosophy and ideology. Dedication, ethics and quality in performance and service to residents and the community of higher education is the CLV goal. It is the mission of CLV to create exceptional student housing communities encompassing a commitment to the following:

- A comfortable learning environment
- Outstanding customer service
- Attractive, clean, well-maintained facilities
- Sound, ethical business practices. (Mission Statement, 2009, para 1)

The mission of The University of Texas at Arlington's housing program is as follows:

1. To provide convenient housing facilities for students of UT ARLINGTON at an affordable cost.

2. To create and maintain an environment conducive to individual and community growth and development.

3. To ensure that our facilities are safe and regularly maintained and serviced.

(Residence Hall Guide, 2009, p.4)

Both mission statements bear great similarities. The University of Texas at Arlington's mission statement lists three criteria. Campus Living Villages (CLV) incorporates two of the university's three criteria; they both commit themselves to provide well maintained facilities and student growth and development. Drawing from another institution that incorporates a traditionally run residence life program and a privatized housing program, the University of Missouri – St. Louis's residence life mission statement is as follows:

The Office of Residential Life and Housing at the University of Missouri-St. Louis is committed to designing and maintaining a learning environment that encourages academic success, student engagement, personal growth and personal responsibility. (Residential Life and Housing, 2009, para 1)

Again, the two mission statements from the University of Missouri – St. Louis and CLV, are similar in their commitments to providing conducive learning environments and promoting personal growth.

One of the ways the two are different is that the privatized university housing company is a for-profit company where most universities are non-profit. In thinking about the RA and their job satisfaction, why focus solely on privatized university housing? Research has been done on job satisfaction from many angles, some include looking at resident assistant satisfaction. In considering the resident assistant position in

a traditional residence life program, it is very holistic. As stated previously, the position is multi-faceted and requires students to be counselors, friends, disciplinarians, and so forth. Privatized university housing companies do incorporate resident assistants and the traditional requirements of that job, but there is also an element of sales and leasing that the traditional residence assistant position doesn't incorporate.

Below is an excerpt taken from the Campus Living Villages RA Training Manual:

The first role that the RA will master is the role of tour guide. You will be called upon to sell future residents our product, the property. To fulfill our customer service image we will need to explain the property and its many features. Talk with your prospect, remember his/her name and use it often during your tour. Make it clear what we have to offer and do not make promises that cannot be kept. If questions are asked that you cannot answer, tell the prospective resident you will find out for them and be certain to follow up with the answer. Admitting you don't know the answer instead of making up an answer, assures all persons involved that we are making every attempt to sell our property without stretching the truth. (Marketing of CCHM Properties, 2009, para 2)

Resident Assistants working for Campus Living Villages are expected to put in between 12-20 hours per week in the office. These hours can be filled answering phones, giving tours, distributing flyers or bills to residents, answering questions, or any number of administrative tasks. It seems as though resident assistant job satisfaction in privatized university housing might differ from traditional resident assistant job satisfaction due to the different demands of the position. More specifically, the privatized university

housing RA position incorporates the role of the traditional RA and is compounded with a marketing element.

The RA job description for the University of Texas at Arlington states:

Resident assistants (RAs) are student leaders who have experienced residence hall or apartment living for a minimum of two semesters. Students living in a residence hall or apartment community are provided a specific RA in their living area who is there to assist them. RAs are responsible for promoting an academic environment, referring students to campus resources, developing community among residents, enforcing university and housing policies, completing administrative tasks to include checking residents in and out of their residence hall room, and providing social and educational programming to their residents. The resident assistants report to the residence director. (Residence and Office Assistants, 2009, para 2)

The RA job description for Campus Living Villages states:

The Resident Assistant will be responsible for the development and enhancement of the community and each individual resident under their care and supervision. The position will require that the Resident Assistant supplement and complement the process of formal education by enhancing the quality of life in the community. The position will require that the Resident Assistant be a known, visible and an active resident within their given community area of responsibility and the entire facility as well. The basic expectations will include the maintenance of communications between the residents and Management; the implementation of the policies, procedures, and regulations of the facility as well as those of the

University; and participation in any phase of the operation of the facility as assigned by the Resident Director, Managing Director or any of their representatives. The Resident Assistant is expected to provide leadership to all residents and assist in the planning of educational and social activities that will make the group living experience a success. The Resident Assistant is to maintain confidentiality at all times and should never discuss any issues with anyone other than personnel having a professional need for the information. (Resident Assistant, 2009, para 4)

The two job descriptions mirror each other in many ways; both explain requirements for leadership, educational programming, community promotion and policy enforcement.

Research Questions

This paper is intended to examine determinants of resident assistant job satisfaction in a privatized university housing setting. It is intended to locate common threads of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and subsequently, make recommendations to student affairs professionals working with or in a privatized university housing setting to steps they may take to increase their resident assistant job satisfaction resulting in better RA retention, and ultimately creating a stronger live on experience for the residents in their facilities. More specifically, the answers to the following questions are the target of this research:

- 1) What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors outlined in the RASS?

- 2) What is the general affect level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to the RA job?
- 3) Are there differences in the affect levels based on gender, ethnicity, or age?
- 4) Is there a relationship between the eight employment aspect factors and intended tenure as an RA in privatized housing?

Definition of Terms

HELICOPTER PARENTS– Parents of youth who hover over them and are hyper actively involved in their lives

MILLENNIAL STUDENTS – College students who were born between 1980 and 2000.

PRIVATIZED UNIVERSITY HOUSING COMPANY – A company builds and/or manage residence halls and apartments on campus in partnership with the university or off campus in close proximity to a university

RESIDENT ASSISTANT – RA – a paraprofessional student staff member, a part of the housing administration, university-based or privatized university housing company based

RESIDENCE LIFE – College housing program/system/department

Delimitations

Age – Respondents will be between 18-24 years of age

Company – Only RAs employed with Campus Living Villages, a privatized housing company, will be surveyed

Geographic Location – RAs surveyed will be located in 12 states across the United States

Assumptions

It is assumed all respondents will answer the survey questions honestly. It is assumed the director or designee distributing the survey will read the accompanying informed consent page. It is assumed confidentiality will be maintained by the director or designee collecting the surveys.

Justification

Research has been done on the RA position and job satisfaction. But very little has been done on the privatized university housing side of the house where RAs are concerned. Privatized university housing is a growing option for colleges and universities and has been since the 1990s when colleges and universities first began to feel the effects of the baby boomers children. Privatized university housing provides on campus housing to many and sometimes all university students at schools that partner with a privatized housing company. And since these for-profit companies are running the residence halls and apartments, investigating the determinants of job satisfaction for them could prove equally as important as the determinants of job satisfaction for traditional RAs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

The Resident Assistant position is a job taken on by a select group of college and university students across the United States. This position is one which requires students to not only be students, but also to be peer mentors, disciplinarians, administrators, community builders, counselors, educators, role models, friends, and employees (Millsaps College Resident Assistant Manual, 2003). The job requires students to be available and on-call twenty four hours a day with little time away from campus. The Resident Assistant position is one that is grueling, demanding and more often times than not, thankless. In college and university settings where privatized university housing is utilized, resident assistants have the option of choosing to work for the university itself or the privatized university housing company.

Due to the many demands placed on resident assistants across the country, burn-out occurs easily and retention becomes a problem. To help curb burn-out and increase retention housing administrators need to know what determines job satisfaction among resident assistants. Also, resident assistants working in privatized university housing may face varied and increased job requirements from the traditional resident assistant. This study focuses on specifics of the resident assistant position in privatized university housing to help administrators better understand which elements of the position provide the greatest job satisfaction to in turn help decrease RA resignation and improve RA job satisfaction and retention in privatized university housing.

There has been much research done on job satisfaction looking at such varied angles of jobs from days of the week to the type of task a person is performing. However, there has not been nearly as much research done on resident assistant job satisfaction, and even less on the resident assistant working in privatized university housing. The RA position is a student job, however since it is so demanding and virtually a twenty four hour a day job, these students feel many similar stresses as persons employed in full time post-baccalaureate jobs. An RA has job responsibilities, specified hours to be on call, tasks which must be completed in relation to their responsibilities as well as the charge to build relationships, foster a healthy community and be present for their residents. In addition, the privatized university housing RA has an element of marketing and leasing tacked onto the traditional job description.

The RA position falls under a professional hierarchy at any institution as well as in privatized university housing. A typical outline of a traditional as well as a privatized university housing chain of command would look something like this: The RA reports to a Senior RA, one who has more tenure and experience as an RA, receives more compensation, and is seen as “in charge” of a specific building. The Senior RA reports to a Hall Director or Assistant Director. Hall Directors are usually graduate students where as Assistant Directors are typically individuals with a bachelors degree and housing experience or a masters’ degree in higher education, counseling, or the like. If there is a Hall Director system in place, the Hall Director would report to the Assistant Director. Above the Assistant Director is the Director who usually reports to the Dean of Students or the Regional Director in the case of a privatized housing company.

Although the RA position is a student job, it very much reflects a professional position in many ways and carries many of the same stressors and responsibilities. In addition, we must keep in mind, these are full time college students whose main “job” is to go to class and be a student. They are not only balancing a full course load, they are juggling the RA job with all it entails for example, participation in organizations, sports teams, and social clubs, finances, internships, graduation and eventually a full time job search. These students have a lot on their plates and it would behoove privatized housing administrators as well as traditional housing administrators to understand why they continue to push themselves to be successful students as well as resident assistants. What is it about their jobs that keeps them coming back year after year? And what is it they wish was different about their jobs that may be the reason for turnover?

Motivation

Determinants of job satisfaction have been researched for years looking at various professions, in different countries and numerous professional environments. Herzberg (1966) proposed a two factor hygiene and motivation theory breaking down motivation into two theories: Hygiene Theory and Motivation. Herzberg theorized that motivation came from one of two sources, either the hygiene factor, which includes:

- the company
- its policies and its administration
- the kind of supervision which people receive while on the job
- working conditions
- interpersonal relations
- salary

- status
- security

Or satisfaction came from the motivation factor which is derived from what people do within their jobs, including:

- achievement
- recognition
- growth/advancement
- interest in the job

(“Three basic approaches to improving productivity”, 2003)

According to the article, Three basic approaches to improving productivity, which looks at Herzberg’s theory in relation the business world, the first set of hygiene factors “do not lead to higher levels of motivation but without them, there is dissatisfaction” (“Three basic approaches to improving productivity”, para 3). Herzberg deduced hygiene and motivation factors must occur concurrently for growth and satisfaction in employees (Herzberg, 1966). Therefore, to increase job satisfaction, dissatisfaction must be decreased, providing for the hygiene aspect of the theory. A growth must be increased, providing for the motivation factors.

Job Satisfaction Factors

One factor of job satisfaction that has been researched has been days of the week. Are people more satisfied with their jobs at the beginning of the week than at the end, or vice versa? In a study by M. Taylor entitled, Tell Me Why I Don’t Like Mondays: Investigating calendar effects on job satisfaction and well being. Taylor (2002) cited:

Economic research into well-being, mental health and job satisfaction has proliferated in recent years in attempts to discover the levels and sources of peoples' general happiness. Do employees systematically report being less satisfied in their job at the beginning of the week than at the end of the week? Our results confirm that self-reported levels of job satisfaction and levels of mental distress systematically vary according to the day of the week on which respondents are interviewed. These day of interview effects are particularly pronounced for levels of mental distress among women. In particular, our results suggest that men and women interviewed on Friday report higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of mental stress than those interviewed in the middle of the week. (Taylor, 2002, p. 5)

Additional job satisfaction factors that have been researched and reviewed include, gender, emotion, intelligence, and values. Do these factors make a difference in a person's overall job satisfaction? Are females generally happier at work than males? If you're more intelligent, are you more satisfied or dissatisfied with your job? In looking at gender differences to ascertain if there are differences between males and females in regards to what provides them with job satisfaction, Dalton and Marcis report from an NLSY study:

(A sample consisting of 967 females and 1,230 males) the results indicate gender differences in the determinants of job satisfaction. For males, job satisfaction is more closely associated with general back ground characteristics, such as education level, marital status, and racial/ethnic differences. Job satisfaction for

females is more closely linked with the workplace; for example, the wage rate, experience in the labor market, and job tenure. Five of the seven workplace variables produced conflicting signs on the coefficients for males and females. (Dalton & Marcis, 1986, p.85)

Intelligence, as mentioned previously, has been researched regarding job satisfaction. Jayaratne and Crewson discovered that indeed, education level has been shown to positively influence job satisfaction (Jayaratne, 1993; Crewson, 1997). In research conducted by Y. Ganzach (1998), he states:

Intelligence is associated positively with job satisfaction because more intelligent people get better, more interesting and more challenging, jobs. But intelligence is also associated negatively with satisfaction when job complexity is held constant: many jobs, at least most of the jobs held by the participants in our sample, are not challenging and or interesting enough, and the dissatisfaction that stems from this lack of interest is stronger for more intelligent people (Ganzach, 1998, p. 21).

Ganzach's findings support as well as refute Jayaratne and Crewson's research. Ganzach's research eludes to findings that indicate intelligent persons will attain more interesting jobs than less educated persons. However, when an educated person attains a less challenging, more dull position s/he is likely to be bored and unchallenged and therefore have a lower level of job satisfaction.

Emotion has also been researched to determine if it has an impact on a person's job satisfaction. Kim (2001) cited, "Job satisfaction is an emotional response to an employee's work situation. This can be defined as an overall impression about one's job in terms of specific aspects of the job (e.g., compensation, autonomy, colleagues) and it

can be connected with specific results, such as productivity” (Kim, 2001, p.1). Over the years, studies have shown both intellect and emotion to be noted variables in job satisfaction.

Flow

In his research to discover what people enjoy about their lives and their experiences, Dr. Csikszentmihalyi discovered a phenomenon termed “Flow”. According to Dr. Csikszentmihalyi, Flow consists of eight components: clear goals; immediate feedback; balance between opportunity and challenge; deepening of concentration; being in the present; control is no problem; sense of time is altered; loss of ego (Csikszentmihalyi, 2003). Csikszentmihalyi suggests when each of these components is being met, a person achieves “flow.” He or she loses him or herself in the action taking place. Csikszentmihalyi’s research (2003) demonstrated when a person’s ability is matched with his or her goals, which are clear and immediate feedback is given, a person is likely to lose track of time and ego and work harder to achieve the stated goal.

Job satisfaction research has typically been much broader than the field of residence life, more specifically the resident assistant position. The vast majority of job satisfaction research that has been done has incorporated a variety of professions utilizing participants at tiered educational levels and has not focused much on student employees.

Housing Officer Specifics

Moving a little closer to home, Dr. D. Jones from the University of North Carolina conducted research on Chief Housing Officers, those Student Affairs professionals to whom the resident assistants ultimately reports. Jones (2002) created and distributed the Chief Housing Officer Satisfaction Survey (CHOSS) to Chief

Housing Officers associated with the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I). Jones's survey was intended to uncover elements of job satisfaction among chief housing officers. The survey contained 77 questions focusing on 8 job aspects: "Work Achievement; Work Role Clarity; Supervisor; Institution; Pay; Promotions; Facilities; Co-workers" followed by 3 criterion aspects such as "general affect, intended tenure, and non-involvement measures" (Jones, 2002). Jones used a likert-type scale, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, in the instrument and it was distributed via letter to 3,995 members of the ACUHO-I, while also extending an invitation to participate to all members of ACUHO-I. 1,629 surveys were received, a response rate of 41 percent (Jones, 2002). The findings indicated those surveyed seemed to be most satisfied with: work achievement (71%) and their co-workers (75%); and least satisfied with the facilities in which they work and serve (23% dissatisfied, 19% satisfied, and 58.6% chose neutrality) (Jones, 2002).

Resident Assistant Particulars

In the *Journal of College Student Personnel*, Gibbons, Hanson and Nowack (1985) found healthy lifestyles led to less burnout and exhaustion among resident assistants. They specifically reported:

Social support and health habits significantly contributed towards predictions of job burnout outcomes. Resident assistants practicing regular and healthy lifestyle habits reported significantly less emotional exhaustion and psychological distress than those with poor habits (Gibbons, Hanson, & Nowack, 1985, p. 141).

Gibbons, Hanson and Nowack also deducted, from that same study, “Resident assistants reporting greater emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and negative feelings towards others tended to receive significantly lower evaluations of job performance.”

Additionally, a Resident Assistant study by L. Gardner conducted in 1987 at West Virginia University was intended to look at predictors of resident assistant job satisfaction. The study surveyed 77 Resident Assistants to gather information regarding “job satisfaction, burnout, and supervisor rating” (Gardner, 1987, p.1). Gardner reported:

Multiple regression analysis indicated the following to be significant. Predictors of job satisfaction were: (1) sex; (2) seeing the resident assistant position as useful to a future career; and (3) being motivated by a desire to be helpful to others.

General predictors of burnout were: (1) fewer years of resident assistant experience; (2) higher grade point average; (3) greater number of students on the floor; (4) major; and (5) sex. (1987, p.1)

Per Gardner’s research, “These findings formulate a basis for establishing local norms and have practical implications for the practitioner regarding guidelines for RA interview, team assignments, and ongoing training and supervision” (1987, p. 1).

In the spring of 1999, a satisfaction survey of Resident Assistants was conducted by ACUHO. “More than 9600 RAs participated in the survey nation-wide. This represented 87 institutions, of which 23 were Research I Universities” (ACUHO, 2000, p. 1).

The satisfaction part of the survey was broken down into 13 factors. The factors addressed issues such as overall satisfaction, training, supervision, the impact that RAs have on students, and questions about the environment on their floors. The

response opinions were a 7-point scale, ranging from very dissatisfied (1) to very satisfied (7), with 4 being neutral. The analysts took the data from each of the questions related to a specific factor and came up with one factor mean.

(ACUHO, 2000, p. 2)

From the survey, it was determined the RA/Resident ratio needed to be examined further. There was a higher level of dissatisfaction from RAs who had a higher RA/Resident ratio from those who had a lower RA/Resident ratio. (ACUHO, 2000)

Another factor from the ACUHO survey which suggested the need for further examination, was RA time constraints and being tied to campus. Said RAs were not satisfied with leaving campus a restricted amount of time per semester. (ACUHO, 2000)

Another ACUHO study, *The Most Important Factor for Improving Overall Satisfaction*, found:

The factor “Satisfaction with RA position (terms/room/privacy/remuneration)” remains the most highly correlated with overall satisfaction for the third year. Nationally, the factor scored a 5.0 on a 7.0 scale. Some RAs are feeling the pressure of too many hours worked. 28% of the RAs responded that they work more than 20 hours per week on their RA jobs. That same population scored their overall satisfaction a 5.02 while those who work 20 or fewer hours per week scored their satisfaction at 5.29. (ACUHO, 2001, p. 1)

ACUHO conducted another survey asking “Which RA Group is More Satisfied?”

Their findings included the following:

GENDER: Women (surveyed) are statistically more satisfied on 9 out of 13 factors including Overall Satisfaction compared to men RAs.

CLASS STANDING: 29% of RAs (surveyed) are sophomores. These RAs are statistically more satisfied on 8 out of 13 factors including the most important factor (RA working/living conditions) compared to junior and senior RAs.

NUMBER OF RESIDENTS: 58% of RAs (surveyed) are in charge of fewer than 40 residents. These RAs are statistically more satisfied on 10 out of 13 factors (including “RA working/living conditions” and Overall Satisfaction) compared to those in charge of more than 40 residents.

PLANS TO RETURN: 65% of RAs (surveyed) who are not leaving campus intend to return to their RA position. Not surprisingly, these RAs are statistically more satisfied on 12 out of 13 factors compared to those that could return, but chose not to.

HOURS WORKED: 28% of RAs (surveyed) report that they work more than 20 hours per week as an RA. These RAs are more satisfied on 3 out of 13 factors compared to those that work 20 hours or fewer. These factors deal with enhancing resident’s lives (responsibility/cooperation, self-management/values, drug/alcohol awareness). Those who work less than 20 hours are more satisfied on 4 out of the 13 factors including the most important factor (RA working/living conditions). The other 6 factors (including Overall Satisfaction) were scored similarly by these two groups. (ACUHO, 2001, p. 1)

In 1995, Dr. L. Johnson, a Kent State University graduate, researched the relationship between resident assistant stress and personal and environmental variables. Johnson used the Person-Environment Fit Theory as the theoretical framework for this study and utilized the Resident Assistant Perceived Time Demand Discrepancy Inventory

(RAPTDDI), which he developed. The Resident Assistant Stress Inventory was the instrument utilized to measure the level of stress (Johnson, 1995). The study incorporated 543 resident assistants from across five different states (Johnson, 1995). According to Johnson,

Data analysis suggested the presence of several personal and environmental stressors. The sources of stress identified by the η^2 test for the curvilinear relationship suggested by P-E fit theory were discrepancies perceived by the RAs to exist between the amount of time spent and the amount of time they desired to spend on “the RA Job Overall” and on ‘non-job-related activities.’ Additional sources of stress were discrepancies perceived by RAs to exist between the amount of time spent and the amount of time students on their floor, supervisors, significant others, and parents/family members expected them to spend on selected activities. A significant correlation was found to exist between the degree to which non-job-related activities were relevant to RAs’ personal development and stress as measured by the RASI. (1995, p. 1)

A 1992 doctoral dissertation by Dr. S. Bierman at Texas A&M University was done to “identify differences in work motivation factors of resident assistants. The questionnaire used was an adaptation of Miskel’s 1972 Educational Work Components Study Questionnaire” (Bierman, 1992, p. 1). According to Bierman,

The 36-item survey was theoretically based on Herzberg’s (1965) theory of intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation and divided desirability of specific job aspects into six factors: Potential for personal challenge and development, Competitiveness, desirability and reward of success, Tolerance for work pressure,

Conservative security, Willingness to seek reward in spite of uncertainty versus avoidance of uncertainty, and Surround concern. Following the 36-items were two open-ended questions which asked the respondent to list the three most satisfying and dissatisfying aspects of the RA job. (1992, p. 1)

Bierman (1992) chose to randomly administer the survey to 327 resident assistants affiliated with the Southwest Association of College and University Housing Officers (SWACUHO).

The results Bierman found “supported Herzberg’s theory that intrinsic factors are associated with job satisfaction and extrinsic factors are typically listed with job dissatisfaction” (Bierman, 1992). Bierman’s survey also showed:

Responses indicated that female RAs found job aspects pertaining to development and security to be more desirable than did males. New resident assistants found the extrinsic financial rewards to be more desirable than more experienced RAs. Resident Assistants assigned to either all female or coeducational halls found the intrinsic personally challenging aspects of the job more desirable than RAs working in all male halls. (1992, p.1)

In the study “Correlates of Resident Assistant Stress in Colleges and Universities,” Kolek was looking for “the extent of self reported stress by resident assistants” (1996, p. 1). Kolek administered the Resident Assistant Stress Inventory (RASI) to 258 RAs and produced a return rate of 58% (Kolek, 1996). According to Kolek,

The six factor scores of the (RASI) are: Emotional Resiliency; Facilitative Leadership; Counseling Skills; Environmental Adjustment; Confrontive Skills;

and Values Development. Overall, Counseling Skills was the least stressful factor and Facilitative Leadership was the most stressful factor. (1996, p. 1)

Kolek's study goes more in depth to say:

A stepwise multiple regression was used to determine the extent and manner in which the following variables: ratio of resident assistants to students, size of institution, control of institution, Carnegie type of institution, resident assistant years of experience, perceived expectations of pre-employment training and preparation, perceived level of administrative support from supervisor, race and gender are related to perceived levels of stress by resident assistants. This study determined that three of the six factors (Emotional Resiliency, Counseling Skills, and Values Development) had a small significant relationship at the .05 level with the independent variable gender. A t-test was used to cross-validate the results of the stepwise multiple regression examining the predictor variable gender. The gender of the RA as a predictor indicated significant differences on Emotional Resiliency and Values Development. Female RAs had a higher level of perceived stress on all six factors of the RASI. (1996, p. 1)

ACUHO-I, which is the international branch of ACUHO (Association of College and University Housing Officers) mentioned earlier in this review, partnered with EBI (Educational Benchmarking, Inc.) in 2002 to conduct another RA job satisfaction survey. The study included 88 schools and had a respondent number of 7,071 (EBI, 2002). The study was based on a seven point scale, one being the lowest score possible and seven being the highest score possible. The study was rating 12 different factors in job satisfaction. This study showed, the top factor in RA job satisfaction was "RA

working/living/conditions,” with a score of 6.15 (EBI, 2002). The next highest factor was “clear job expectations established” and it ranked with a score of 3.55 (EBI, 2002).

The other factors in descending order of importance were:

Supervision by hall director (direct supervisor)	2.59
RA selection process	1.75
Training provided necessary skills	1.36
Assignments/Maintenance/cleaning for students	.49

Additional factors were: enhanced student responsibility and cooperation; enhanced student drug/alcohol/cultural awareness; lack of respect for diversity impacts on students; enhanced student self management and values; impact of inappropriate behaviors on students; residence hall policies all had no significant impact on RA job satisfaction (EBI, 2002).

Looking further into the realm of the resident assistant, doctoral research was conducted in 2000 by Onofrietti with the purpose of investigating “whether job related stress influenced job satisfaction and persistence among Resident Assistants at Massachusetts State Colleges.” Onofrietti used the Resident Assistant Stress Inventory (RASI), as Kolek used in 1996. Onofrietti (2000) also developed an instrument specifically for this study which collected demographic, job satisfaction and attrition information. The instruments were completed by one hundred and sixty three Resident Assistants drawn from seven state colleges across Massachusetts (Onofrietti, 2000).

According to Onofrietti’s study:

No significant relationship was found between levels of stress and decision to return to the Resident Assistant job for another year. However, students reported

a significant inverse relationship between stress and job satisfaction. Even though only moderate levels of stress were reported, results indicated that values development caused the most stress to the overall sample of Resident Assistants as well as the sub sample of persisters (RAs returning for another year of work). Environmental adjustment caused the most stress among non-persisters (RAs choosing not to return for another year of work). No significant difference between persisters and non-persisters were associated with gender, race, class year, grade point average, and number of years as a Resident Assistant. (2000, p. 526)

In 1997, Enders of Truman State University researched and wrote about how Resident Assistants influence resident satisfaction. He suggested RAs do influence resident satisfaction through such means as building rapport, programming, and daily interaction (Enders, 1997). In his study, Enders used the Residence Evaluation Surveys (RES). It was completed by 1,958 residential students (Enders, 1997). The results of the survey indicated that Resident Assistants do influence resident satisfaction and therefore play an important role in student satisfaction and ultimately retention (Enders, 1997).

According to Blimling (1995), resident assistants are in a position to influence students. They are responsible for every hall program on campus and have daily interaction with their residents. Professors have daily interactions with students as well, but the RA actually lives with the residents and has an hour to hour ratio of time spent near/with the residents that is much greater than almost any other position on campus. Blimling also indicated that Resident Assistants are role models and to have a positive influence on their residents, must possess characteristics such as availability to residents

and a charisma to develop a strong rapport with them (Blimling, 1995). Through research, Blimling identified seven areas where residence hall living significantly influenced the residents. They are: retention; participation in co-curricular activities; perception of the campus social climate; satisfaction with the college; individual development and growth; interpersonal relationships; faculty interaction (Blimling, 1995).

Winston and Anchors suggest it is the resident assistant's responsibility to develop a positive community model by not only building a rapport with each resident, but by fostering and enabling residents to build relationships with one another (Winston & Anchors, 1993).

Further research has been done on the benefits of living in a residence hall. Chickering (1974) and Astin (1977) found through their research that students who live in residence halls (on campus housing) were more satisfied with their college/university experience than their counterparts who did not live in residence halls (on campus housing).

In 1991, Pascarella and Terenzini noted through their research strong evidence which supports the thought that students living in residence halls are more likely to complete their education and attain a degree as opposed to students who do not live in residence halls. They also found that living in a residence hall had a positive influence on cultural and intellectual values (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

Running a Residence Life program, and not just a housing program on a campus, be it privatized or traditionally run, is an investment from not only the RA, and the Student Affairs or privatized housing staff, but also from the college or university as a

monetary investment. RAs may receive a monetary stipend, a reduction in room rent, or a free meal plan as compensation for their job. When a program utilizes 35-100 resident assistants, that amount of money adds up.

According to an article published by The University of Massachusetts, A Brief History of the resident assistants' union/UAW Local 2322, The University of Massachusetts RAs joined a local union after the Massachusetts labor commission ruled they had the right to do so as state employees (www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~geo/rahistory.htm). The RAs chose to form their union and named specific issues they were dealing with, such as:

differential treatment in the workplace including arbitrary firings and suspensions, being 'on-call' day and night (as opposed to shifts), having to pay for the double-single rooms they are required to work and live in as conditions of their employment, unsafe working conditions, an unclear job description, a paycheck of \$50 a week and an unfair grievance procedure. (www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~geo/rahistory.htm)

Adversely, the university refused to negotiate with the union, even though the state sanctions the RA union.

The university is in violation of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 150 E. They are also in violation of the Massachusetts state law, Chapter 7: Section 56, which prohibits state institutions from spending money on union busting. Perhaps most importantly, they are in violation of the international law, adopted by the United Nations, which guarantees union membership as a basic human right. The administration has vowed that they will drag the process through the courts for

“four or five years,” deliberate tactic to prevent negotiating with the RAs, and thus attempt to break the union. (www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~geo/rahistory.htm)

According to The University of Massachusetts article, after the universities response to the RA union, RA union supporters staged a sit-in at the student union. The university subsequently arrested 35 protesters. This action may include suspension, criminal charges encompassing resisting arrest and trespassing (www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~geo/rahistory.htm).

It seems apparent from the review of literature that more research on what determines resident assistant job satisfaction is necessary, in particular in the privatized housing sector. This research is important to promote resident assistant as well as residential student retention throughout colleges and universities utilizing the ever growing privatized housing option.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

As noted in the review of literature, research has been conducted on job satisfaction around the world. Research has also been conducted on RA job satisfaction. However, research has not been conducted on the specific group of RAs working for a privatized university housing company. With the ever tightening economy and the growing popularity of utilizing privatized university housing as an on-campus housing option, the need to understand what the privatized housing RAs derive job satisfaction from is important.

The principal reason for this study is to determine what the job satisfaction determinants are for resident assistants working in a privatized university housing company. Resident assistants are imperative to a housing administration, be it privatized housing or traditional university run housing, in the attempt to keep residential students retained, focused, and happy. Resident Assistant attrition however, is a common problem. Investigating which factors contribute to RA job satisfaction may help privatized university housing companies and the colleges and universities they partner with to assess RA programs which may decrease attrition and increase RA and residential student retention.

As college enrollment continues to increase over the next seven years, so will the need for more housing and strong student retention. And as the privatized university housing sector continues to grow, learning what motivates and drives RAs working in that sector would lend itself to creating a stronger more sound residential environment for

the students living with them. If the RAs are satisfied in their jobs and performing at a higher level than if they were unsatisfied, it stands to reason the living environment for the residents would better achieve the goals of the university and the privatized company. Such goals would include, but not be limited to: a comfortable learning environment, and well maintained facilities (mission statement), as well as “an environment conducive to individual and community growth and development” (Residence Hall Guide).

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to examine relationships between specific elements of the RA position in privatized university housing and job satisfaction. The following questions will be answered:

- 1) What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors outlined in the RASS?
- 2) What is the general affect level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to the RA job?
- 3) Are there differences in the affect levels based on gender, ethnicity, or age?
- 4) Is there a relationship between the eight employment aspect factors and intended tenure as an RA in privatized housing?

Instrumentation

The relationship between elements of the privatized university housing RA position and job satisfaction will be examined using an altered version of the College Housing Officers Satisfaction Survey (CHOSS) called the Resident Assistant Satisfaction

Survey (RASS). The CHOSS was initially used to survey the job satisfaction of college housing professionals. The CHOSS was tested for reliability per the following:

A measure of reliability was conducted using Cronbach's alpha test of internal consistency for each of the eight job satisfaction factors and the three criterion factors. The coefficient for each factor was: Work Achievement, .88; Work Role Clarity, .83; Supervisor, .90; Institution, .82; Pay, .86; Promotions, .87; Facilities, .57; Co-workers, .85; General Affect, .93; Intended Tenure, .86; and Non-involvement, .83. These coefficients ranged from .90 to .57 for the employment aspect factors and from .93 to .83 for the criterion factors. A coefficient of .94 was obtained for the sample on the CHOSS. (Jones, 2002, p.72)

RASS

Permission was granted by Dr. David Jones (see Appendix B), creator of the CHOSS to adapt his instrumentation to create the RASS. The RASS is a fifteen question survey pertaining to job satisfaction which uses a likert-type scale with a five choice distinction ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (see Appendix C). It provides a quantitative analysis of determinants of resident assistant job satisfaction in privatized university housing with regard to the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors. In working with Dr. Jones and tailoring the CHOSS to create the RASS, both instruments measure eight different employment aspect factors:

Work Achievement – The feeling of accomplishment one gets from the job.

Work Role Clarity – The sense of purpose one gets from the job.

Supervisor – The relationship between supervisor and employee.

Institutions – The employee's perception of the greater organization.

Pay – Feelings about compensation in contrast to the amount of work completed.

Promotions – The chances for advancement on this job.

Facilities – Physical aspects of one's work.

Co-workers – How one gets along with co-workers. (Jones, 2002, p. 77)

For the purposes of creating the RASS and gearing it towards privatized university housing RAs, "Institutions" was changed to "Company" to reflect the privatized university housing company. Work Achievement is measured through twelve questions outlined in question five on the RASS. Work Achievement questions pertain to the respondent's feelings of his/her responsibilities at work, significance of job, sense of variety and accomplishment. Work Role Clarity is measured through five questions listed in question six on the RASS. Work Role Clarity questions pertain to the respondent's feelings of purpose in the job. Supervisor is measured through ten questions listed in question seven on the RASS. Supervisor questions pertain to the respondent's perception of his/her supervisor and how the supervisor works with the respondent. Company is measured through eight questions listed in question eight on the RASS. Company questions pertain to the respondent's feelings towards the privatized university housing company in relation to how the company tends to the respondent's specific site. Pay is measured through five questions listed in question nine on the RASS. Pay questions pertain to the amount of pay the respondent receives and is it fair and enough. Promotions is measured through three questions listed in question ten on the RASS. Promotions questions pertain to the fairness and clarity of criteria in regards to being promoted. Facilities is measured through five questions listed in question eleven on the RASS. Facilities questions pertain to the safety and adequacy of the facilities for the

respondent to do his/her job. Co-workers is measured through three questions outlined in question twelve. Co-workers questions pertain to helpfulness of the respondent's co-workers in supporting the respondent.

The CHOSS incorporates three major criterion: general affect, intended tenure, and non-involvement (Jones, 2002). In adapting the CHOSS to create the RASS, the same three criterion were used. General Affect is measured through twelve questions listed in question thirteen on the RASS. General Affect questions pertain to overall job satisfaction of the respondent. Intended Tenure is measured through four questions listed in question fourteen. Intended Tenure questions pertain to if the respondent is planning to stay in the RA job, leave, or search for another job. Non-Involvement is measured through six questions listed in question fifteen. Non-Involvement questions pertain to the respondent's energy level when it comes to the job and desire to work.

The RASS also contains a short personal data section to gather information regarding specific characteristics of the respondents. The personal data section is listed before the questions regarding job satisfaction. The personal characteristics questions and definitions are as follows:

Gender: refers to the gender of the respondent and is measured by asking "female" or "male"

Age: refers to the years the respondent has been alive and is measured by asking the respondent to write in their age in years.

Year in school: refers to the academic class ranking currently achieved by the respondent and is measured by the respondent circling "Freshman" "Sophomore" "Junior" "Senior" "Grad".

Current working title: refers to the job title the respondent identifies with and is measured by the respondent writing in his/her job title.

Current pay range: refers to the amount of money the respondent makes in a year's time and is measured by the respondent marking the line that most appropriately corresponds to the monetary range the respondent makes.

I do not receive a set salary: refers to respondent who are compensated hourly and is measured by the respondent indicating the amount of money earned per hour and the number of hours worked per week.

Further compensation: refers to additional compensation the respondent may receive and is measured by the respondent marking the lines which most closely correspond to the further compensation s/he receives.

Please indicate the number of residents on your floor/hall/building: refers to the number of residents living on the same floor/hall/building as the respondent and is measured by the respondent filling in a number.

How many residents are you responsible for: refers to the number of residents the respondent is responsible for in the specific scope of his/her job.

US census ethnic identification: refers to US census ethnic identification of the respondent and is measured by the respondent marking the line corresponding to the ethnicity descriptor the respondent most closely identifies with.

State of employment: refers to the state where the respondent works and is measured by the respondent marking the line corresponding with the state the respondent works in.

Reliability

Reliability for the RASS was tested using Cronbach's alpha test of internal consistency for each of the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors. The coefficient for each factor was: Work achievement .916; Work role clarity .741; Supervisor .892; Company .914; Pay .884; Promotions .722; Facilities .817; Co-workers .842; General Affect .909; Intended Tenure .810; Non-involvement .834

Procedure

In the spring of 2009 permission was granted from Campus Living Villages to survey their RAs (see Appendix D). The RASS was then reviewed by the University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board and permission was granted to send the survey to the identified subjects (see Appendix E). The RASS was then mailed to on-campus sites owned or managed by Campus Living Villages (CLV). CLV is a privatized university housing company whose main corporate headquarters is located in Sydney, Australia and whose United States headquarters is located in Houston, Texas. CLV, formerly Century Campus Housing Management, has been managing on campus student housing since 1990 (Welcome, 2008, para 2).

A copy of the instrument was sent to the Managing Directors at the CLV on-campus properties. The properties selected for this distribution include:

- Abilene Christian University
- Academy of Art University
- Arizona State Polytechnical University
- Arizona State University
- George Mason University

Henderson State University
Illinois Central College
Louisiana State University-Eunice
Louisiana State University-Shreveport
McMurry University
Northwestern State University
Texas Southern University
Texas State Technical College-Waco
University of Advancing Technology
University of Houston
University of Houston-Clear Lake
University of Missouri-St. Louis
University of Nebraska-Omaha
University of New Orleans
University of Texas at Arlington
University of Texas at San Antonio
University of Texas at Tyler
Weber State University
Webster State University

Included with this distribution, was an explanation of the survey and description of the work in progress. The directors, or their designees, assistance was requested in disseminating the survey, and the intention of the survey, to their RA staff members. They were asked to distribute the survey, preferably via a designee such as a senior

resident assistant, to all of their staff members and not discriminate based on performance, tenure, gender or plans to return to the position the following year. The directors, or their designee, were to read the instruction sheet (see Appendix F) that accompanied the RASS to their RAs and then distribute the surveys to their resident assistants during a staff meeting. The resident assistants were able to choose whether or not they desired to fill out the RASS. The RASS should have taken between 7-10 minutes to complete. The director, or designee, instructed the RAs who fill out the survey to place all completed surveys in the self-addressed, postage paid envelope that was included in the RASS mailing. The director, or designee, then sealed the envelope and sent them back to the principal investigator. The sample of RAs range in age from 18-24, including both female and male, and the survey asked the students to identify their ethnicity based on US census categories. The survey was estimated to reach 250-300 Resident Assistants with a return rate of an estimated 40-60%.

Risks

Students filling out the survey may feel ill at ease by answering questions regarding their supervisor or how they feel about their job since their supervisor will be collecting the RASS and returning them to the investigator. The instruction sheet, shown above, will include direction that each student who completes the survey is to place it in the return envelope and the director's, or their designee's, responsibility at that point is strictly to seal and mail the envelope.

The RASS asks very few identifying questions in an effort to maintain anonymity. The surveys will not be numbered or identified by school or site. The only moderately identifying questions are: sex; age; year in school; ethnic identification; state of

employment. All surveys will be kept together so as not to differentiate by institution. The surveys will be kept in a file in the principal investigator's office and will only be seen and compiled by the principal investigator. All surveys will be shredded and disposed of after the results have been compiled.

Benefits

The results of this survey, once compiled, will be sent to the aforementioned institutions affiliated with Campus Living Villages (CLV) privatized university housing as well as the CLV corporate office. It is intended for this survey to shed light upon what is and is not important to students functioning in a privatized university housing environment as resident assistants in relation to their job satisfaction. The suggestions from the compiled research should help facilitate greater RA job satisfaction, better RA retention, and in turn higher on campus student retention.

Variables

The research is being conducted using the on-campus owned or managed sites through Campus Living Villages (CLV), a privatized university housing company. The research is being distributed to sites located on private and public universities across eleven states. The choice to utilize one privatized housing company may have an impact on the results. It is not expected that there will be a difference in results varying from state to state or from the sites on public or private campuses, as the company and its RA job description are the same.

Analysis

Tables will be generated for each job satisfaction factor outlining the number of respondents (N), the mean score (M), the standard deviation (SD), and the significance

(p). Analysis of research question one, What is the general affect level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to the RA job?, will be produce a mean and standard deviation for the general affect level. Analysis of research question two, What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors and three criterion factors outlined in the RASS?, will produce a mean and standard deviation for the satisfaction level with regard to the eight employment aspect factors and three criterion factors. A Pearson Correlate will be run on research question three, Is there a relationship between the eight employment satisfaction levels and intended tenure as an RA in privatized housing?, to determine if there are correlations. A one way ANOVA will be run on research question four, Are there differences in the affect levels based on gender, age, or race?, to determine if there are differences across gender, age or race.

Findings

The findings from this research will be reported to Campus Living Village (CLV) American headquarters in Houston, TX as well as their main headquarters in Sydney, Australia. The findings will be distributed to all the managing directors of all the sites who participated in the survey. If it is desired, the findings will be shared with the university partners of the sites which participation of the RASS data collection. The findings will also be offered to the Association of College and University Housing Officers-International (ACUHO-I), Southwestern Association of Housing officers (SWACUHO), Association of College Personnel Administrators (ACPA), and the National Association for Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) for conference

presentation review. In addition, the findings will be presented to the Talking Stick, the ACUHO-I quarterly publication for publication.

Summary

In summary, resident assistants are the foundation of college and university housing programs. And as the economy slumps, alternative methods of building university housing are being sought out, privatized university housing companies being a forerunner in the alternative pool. As privatized university housing grows and more and more students are housed in privatized housing options, learning what the job satisfaction determinants are for resident assistants working in a privatized university housing company would benefit the residents, the RAs, the partnering university and the privatized company.

Research has been conducted on RA job satisfaction, but not to the specific degree of seeking out the determinants of privatized university RA job satisfaction. Therefore, as the population of privatized RAs grows, so does the importance of learning what keeps them doing what they're doing in a generally thankless job.

Utilizing the RASS and distributing it the resident assistants across twelve states which utilize on campus privatized housing through Campus Living Villages, this study intends to research four questions:

- 1) What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors outlined in the RASS?
- 2) What is the general affect level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to the RA job?

- 3) Are there differences in the affect levels based on gender, ethnicity, or age?
- 4) Is there a relationship between the eight employment aspect factors and intended tenure as an RA in privatized housing?

After the responses have been returned, the information will be analyzed to produce statistical data that may lead to a better understanding of the determinants of resident assistant job satisfaction in privatized university housing. Once the findings have been compiled they will be shared with Campus Living Villages as well as their partnering universities, if desired. The findings will be offered to conferences for presentations as well as to journals for publication.

Identifying elements of job satisfaction is critical in any position. Learning what determines job satisfaction in a student working as an RA in an ever growing, ever challenging college environment will lead to the enlightenment needed to better the on campus living environment and therefore better the overall college experience for their students.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the findings and analyze the data that was collected during the study of job satisfaction among privatized university housing RAs in the spring of 2009 using the Resident Assistant Satisfaction Survey (RASS). This chapter is broken down into three main sections.

The first section of the chapter is the descriptive and personal data reported by the respondents inclusive of: gender, classification in school, race, age range, state of employ, benefits received, number of residents on their hall/floor/building, and number of residents for whom they are responsible.

The second section of the chapter begins to report on the research questions, starting with research question one which addresses the satisfaction level of the RAs with the eight employment aspect factors: work achievement, work role clarity, supervisor, company, pay, promotions, facilities, and co-workers as reported by the respondents. Question one also addresses the satisfaction levels with the criterion factors: general affect, non-involvement, intended tenure. This section also goes on to address research question two, which looks at the general affect level of the RAs with regards to the RA job.

The third section of the chapter analyzes the responses of the criterion factor of general affect as it corresponds to gender, ethnicity, and age. And the criterion factor of intended tenure as it relates to the eight employment aspect factors.

The Resident Assistant Satisfaction Survey (RASS) contained nine descriptive questions that were answered by the respondent filling in a blank, such as is represented in question 2a in regards to age. Or the respondent choosing from a multiple choice list, such as is represented in question 2b in regards to year in school.

The RASS contained 52 questions tied to the employment aspect factors and 23 questions tied to the criterion factors. All questions used a likert-type scale ranging from 1-5. The median response was a neutral response indicating neither agree nor disagree with the question.

Descriptive and Personal Data

The RASS was completed by 290 resident assistants across ten states. In regards to gender, more females responded than males, resulting in 154 female respondents, 53.1%. The male respondents totaled 133, 45.9%. And 3, 1%, chose not to respond.

Table 5

Frequency of Respondents by Gender

	Frequency	Percent
Female	154	53.1
Male	133	45.9
No Response	3	1
Total	290	100

Respondents were asked to identify their classification in school. Classifications ranged from Freshman (1), Sophomore (2), Junior (3), Senior (4), to Graduate (5). The highest percentage of respondents reported themselves as having Junior year

classification, 27.9%. The next highest percentage of respondents reported themselves as having Senior year classification, 25.2%; followed by Sophomore, 23.8%, Graduate, 7.6%, and Freshman, 2.8%.

Table 6

Frequency of Respondents by School Classification

	Frequency	Percent
Freshman	8	2.80
Sophomore	69	23.80
Junior	81	27.90
Senior	73	25.20
Graduate	22	7.60
Total	290	100

Respondents were asked to self identify their ethnicity based on the US Census ethnic identification classifications. The questionnaire was structured for the respondents to place a mark on the line next to the classification with which they most closely identified. Classifications offered were: White (1), Black or African American (2), Hispanic or Latino/Latina (3), Native American or Alaska Native (4), Asian (5), Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (6), Two or more races (7), and Other (8). The highest percentage of respondents reported themselves as being White, 49%. The second highest percentage of respondents reported themselves as being Black, 20%, followed by

Hispanic, 11.7%, Two or more races, 7.6%, Asian, 4.8%, Other, 4.1%, and Native Hawaiian, 1.7%.

Table 7

Frequency of Respondents by US Census Classification

	Frequency	Percent
White	142	49.00
Black	58	20.00
Hispanic	34	11.70
Asian	14	4.80
Native Hawaiian	5	1.70
Two or more races	22	7.60
Other	12	4.10
No Response	3	1.00
Total	290	100

Continuing on with personal descriptive data, respondents were asked to self report their age in years. The ages ranged from 18 to 36 years of age, with an average age of 21.51.

Table 8

Mean of Respondents by Age (N=279)

Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
18	36	21.51	2.26

Respondents were asked to self identify in which state they were employed. The states listed in the questionnaire were the states Campus Living Villages has on campus housing accommodations. The states the respondents were given to choose from: Arizona (1), Arkansas (2), California (3), Florida (4), Illinois (5), Louisiana (6), Missouri (7), Nebraska (8), Oklahoma (9), Texas (10), Utah (11), and Virginia (12). The largest number of respondents identified themselves as being employed in Virginia, 36.9%. The next largest group of respondents identified themselves as being employed in Texas, 26.2%. After these two groups, California had the next largest group of respondents with 12.4%, followed by Utah, 7.2%; Louisiana, 6.6%; Nebraska, 2.8%; Arizona and Missouri with the same percentage of 2.1%; Arkansas, 1.7%; and Illinois, 1.4%.

Table 9

Frequency of Respondents by State of Employ

	Frequency	Percent
Arizona	6	2.1
Arkansas	5	1.7
California	36	12.4
Illinois	4	1.4
Louisiana	19	6.6
Missouri	6	2.1
Nebraska	8	2.8
Texas	76	26.2
Utah	21	7.2
Virginia	107	36
No Response	2	0.7
Total	290	100

Respondents were then asked to self report their pay range per year and the benefits, if any, they received. The options for pay range were: None; less than \$500; \$501-\$1000; \$1001-\$1500; \$1501-\$2000; \$2001-\$2500; \$2501-\$3000; \$3000 or higher. The most frequent monetary remuneration reported was \$500-\$1000, 24.5%. The second most frequent reported monetary remuneration was \$1001-\$1500, 18.6%. These were

followed by: \$1501-\$2000, 16.9%; None, 11%; Less than \$500, 8.3%; \$3000 or higher, 7.6%; \$2501-\$3000, 7.2%; and \$2001-\$2500, 4.1%.

Table 10

Frequency of Respondent's Monetary Remuneration

	Frequency	Percent
None	32	11.00
Less than \$500	24	8.30
\$501-\$1000	71	24.50
\$1001-\$1500	54	18.60
\$1501-2000	49	16.90
\$2001-\$2500	12	4.10
\$2501-\$3000	21	7.20
\$3000-higher	22	7.60
No Response	5	1.70
Total	290	100

In keeping with compensation, the question of receipt of other benefits was asked through a multiple choice question. The options for other benefits received were: Discounted room rate; Discounted room rate and free meal plan; Free room; Free room and free meal plan; Other. 99% of respondents reported receiving another form of benefit than money.

Table 11

Frequency of Respondent's Other Benefits Received

	n	Percent
Responded	287	99.00%
No Response	3	1.00%
Total	290	100.00%

The most frequently reported benefit received outside of monetary remuneration was free room, 71.1%. The second most frequently reported benefit was free room and free meal plan, 22.6%. These were followed by discounted room rate, 5.2%, and discounted room rate and free meal plan, 1%.

Table 12

Frequency of Breakdown of Other Benefits Received

	n	Percent
Discounted room rate	15	5.20%
Discounted room rate and free meal plan	3	1.00%
Free room	204	71.10%
Free room and free meal plan	65	22.60%
Total	287	100.00%

Respondents were asked to identify the number of residents in their floor/hall/building, as well as the number of residents for whom they were responsible.

This was not a multiple choice question. The respondents were to fill in the blank corresponding to the question. 284 respondents answered both of these questions. In regards to the question pertaining to the number of residents on a floor/hall/building, the minimum reported was 5 and the maximum reported was 1456, with an average mean of 132.4. In regards to the number of residents for whom they were responsible, the minimum reported was 5 and the maximum reported was 512, with an average mean of 64.29.

Table 13

Mean of Number of Residents Reported

	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation
Number of Residents on Hall/Floor/Building	284	5	1456	132.40	279.17
Residents Responsible for	284	5	512	64.29	64.33

Employment Aspect Factors

Research question one:

What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors outlined in the RASS?

In order to answer the first part of research question one, “What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors?” The RASS incorporated multiple questions within the eight employment aspect factors all utilizing a 1-5 likert-type scale. The Work Achievement section

contained twelve questions. The Work Role Clarity section contained five questions. The Supervisor section contained ten questions. The Company section contained eight questions. The Pay section contained five questions. The Promotions section contained three questions. The Facilities section contained five questions and the Co-Worker section contained three questions.

The Work Achievement questions were answered by 288 respondents. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.50 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score (M) of 3.96 and a standard deviation (SD) of .64. 287 respondents answered the Work Role Clarity questions. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 3.70 and a standard deviation of .68. 287 respondents answered the Supervisor questions. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.30 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 3.84 and a standard deviation of .67.

The Company questions were answered by 242 respondents. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 4.14 with a mean score of 2.78 and a standard deviation of .63. 288 respondents answered the Pay questions. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 2.73 and a standard deviation of .98. 284 respondents answered the Promotions questions. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 3.20 and a standard deviation of .69. 288 respondents answered the Facilities questions. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.20 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 3.65 and a standard deviation of .68. The Co-Workers questions were answered by 288 respondents. The responses resulted in

a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 4.08 and a standard deviation of .84.

Table 14

Frequency of Responses to Employment Aspect Factors

	n	Minimum	Maximum	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
Work Achievement	288	1.50	5.00	3.96	0.64
Work Role Clarity	287	1.00	5.00	3.70	0.68
Supervisor	287	1.30	5.00	3.84	0.67
Company	242	1.00	4.14	2.78	0.63
Pay	288	1.00	5.00	2.73	0.98
Promotions	284	1.00	5.00	3.20	0.69
Facilities	288	1.20	5.00	3.65	0.68
Co-Workers	288	1.00	5.00	4.08	0.84

Note: Scale = 1=SD to 5=SA

The data in Table 14 measures the respondent's feelings regarding the eight employment aspect factors of their job as outlined in the RASS. Per the data, the respondents rated their satisfaction with their Co-Workers higher than any other employment aspect factor (4.08 M, .84 SD). This indicates the RAs are highly satisfied with their colleagues who surround them in the workplace over any other employment aspect factor. Although there was a relatively high standard deviation of .84, indicating a

wider breadth of responses, the responses still indicate a high level of satisfaction with co-workers.

Work Achievement followed closely as the next highest ranked employment aspect factor (3.96 M, .64 SD). Work Achievement encompasses the significance, variety, responsibility, and ownership the RA feels with their job. The ranking of Work Achievement so highly indicates the RAs feel strongly about the job they are doing, that it is significant and they feel ownership of it and are not stagnant in it.

The employment aspect factor which ranked the next highest was Supervisor (3.84 M, .67 SD). Supervisor is comprised of questions pertaining to the RAs feelings towards their supervisor in regards to support, honesty, fairness and respect. The scores recorded indicate the RAs have an overall good feeling regarding the jobs their supervisors do and feeling supported by them.

Work Role Clarity followed Supervisor as the next highest mean score (3.7 M, .68 SD). The Work Role Clarity employment aspect factor refers to the clarity of position the RA feels; are expectations clear and consistent? The scores on Work Role Clarity indicate the RAs feel they know what is expected of them in their job.

The next highest employment aspect factor was Facilities (3.65 M, .68 SD). Facilities ascertained the RAs feelings towards their physical work and living space and if it was conducive to doing their job. The scores recorded indicate the RAs are above marginally satisfied with their workplace and living space.

The last employment aspect factor that fell above the median was Promotions (3.2 M, .69 SD). Promotions encompasses the RAs feelings towards fair and equitable

promotion system. The score was slightly above the median which indicates overall the RAs are satisfied with the promotion system set in place for them.

From the data in Table 14, the two remaining job aspect factors that have not yet been discussed, Company and Pay, fell below the median of 3 on the RASS. Company (2.78 M, .63 SD) was ranked slightly higher than Pay (2.73 M, .98 SD). The questions contained within Company were to discern how the RAs viewed CLV as a company in regards to communication, honesty, resources, and respect. From the responses to the RASS, the RAs indicated they felt less than averagely about the CLV. The questions regarding Pay were to determine how well the RAs felt their compensation was equitable. Being the lowest ranked employment aspect factor with a mean of 2.73, it stands to reason that the RAs do not feel they are being sufficiently compensated by CLV.

The second half of research question one addresses the satisfaction level with the criterion factors of general affect, intended tenure and non-involvement:

What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors outlined in the RASS?

These responses are reflected in Table 15 and also tied to the data inquired about in research question two:

What is the general affect level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to the RA job?

There were three sections of questions on the RASS that took into consideration the criterion factors. These factors were General Affect, twelve questions; Intended Tenure, four questions; and Non-Involvement, seven questions. As opposed to a specific

employment aspect factor such as pay or facilities, these three questions looked more at the overall attitude towards the RA position that the respondents held.

The General Affect questions were answered by 288 respondents. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.67 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 3.62 and a standard deviation of .69. 287 respondents answered the Intended Tenure questions. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.00 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 3.12 and a standard deviation of .97. 286 respondents answered the Non-Involvement questions. The responses resulted in a minimum score of 1.20 and a maximum score of 5.00 with a mean score of 3.52 and a standard deviation of .76.

Table 15

Frequency of Overall Criterion Responses

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean (M)	Std. Deviation (SD)
General Affect	288	1.67	5.00	3.62	0.69
Intended Tenure	287	1.00	5.00	3.13	0.97
Non-Involvement	286	1.43	5.00	3.52	0.76

Note: Scale= 1=SD to 5=SA

All the criterion questions ranked above the median which indicates overall positivity and contentment towards the RA job.

General Affect rated highest of the criterion factors on the RASS (3.62 M, .69 SD). The General Affect questions were intended to construe the RAs overall feeling about their job. The questions were geared towards determining the RAs positivity

towards the job as a whole. Does the RA feel positively about the job? Does the RA feel positively about their supervisor in regards to the job? Does the job give the RA a sense of happiness and feelings of being in control? The recorded responses indicate the RAs do feel a general sense of positivity towards the job.

The next highest ranked criterion was Non-Involvement (3.52 M, .76 SD). The Non-Involvement questions were probing the RAs feelings of negativity towards the job. Does the RA feel like getting someone else to cover their duty night? Does the RA feel depressed, lazy, and non-energetic when it comes to their job? Since the mean score was 3.52, this indicates the RAs overall do not feel lethargic, depressed, or negatively towards their job. This response goes hand in hand with the response to the General Affect questions with a mean of 3.62. RAs are generally more positive than negative towards their job.

The third criterion was Intended Tenure (3.13 M, .97 SD). Intended Tenure looked at the RAs desire to return to the RA position for subsequent terms. Although there was a higher standard deviation of .97 indicating the responses were of a wider deviation from the mean, the mean still ranked above the median. This indicates overall, the RAs plan to return to the RA job.

Criterion Correlation

This section looks at the remaining two research questions to determine if there are differences in the general affect levels based on specific personal descriptors. As well as, are there relationships between the eight employment aspect factors and intended tenure in the RA position?

Research question three:

Are there differences in the affect levels based on gender, ethnicity, or age?

In order to answer research question three, elements of the descriptive data were extracted. In Table 16 the descriptor of gender in relation to general affect is reported.

Table 16

Gender Response Regarding General Affect

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Female	154	3.63	0.68
Male	133	3.60	0.70

The data concluded there is no significant difference between females and males regarding general affect level towards the RA position (3.63 M, .69 SD for females; 3.60 M, .70 SD for males) as recorded in table 16. There was no significant difference in general affect by gender, $t(285) = .31, p = .76$.

The second personal descriptor reviewed for correlation to general affect was ethnicity. Table 17 displays the results of ethnicity as it applies to general affect levels in RAs.

Table 17

Respondents Ethnicity on General Affect

	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
White	142	3.61	0.71
Black	58	3.45	0.71
Hispanic	34	3.85	0.64
Asian	14	3.84	0.6
Native Hawaiian	5	3.32	0.53
Two or more races	22	3.65	0.65
Other	12	3.69	0.65
Total	287	3.62	0.69

The mean scores across all the ethnicities reported range from 3.32-3.85 with standard deviations ranging from .53-.71. An ANOVA was run between the ethnicity groups which resulted in non-significance, $F(6, 280) = 1.63, p = .138$.

The results of these two tests indicate there is no significant difference in the general affect level of RAs based on ethnicity.

The third descriptor investigated for correlation in regards to general affect was age. A Pearson's Correlation test was run to determine if there was a significant difference in general affect levels towards the RA position based on the age of the RA. The results reported a correlation of .042 and $p = .490$, determining that age is not a significant factor in general affect levels of RAs regards the RA position.

Research question four:

Is there a relationship between the eight employment aspect factors and intended tenure as an RA in privatized housing?

was asked to determine if there was a relationship between the scores on the RASS in the categories of the eight employment aspect factors and the intended tenure of the RA, a Pearson's Correlation test was run. The data in Table 18 displays the results of the test.

Table 18

Frequency of Respondents Intended Tenure as Tied to the Employment Aspect Factors

	Pearson Correlation	n
Work Achievement	.456(**)	287
Work Role Clarity	.393(**)	286
Supervisor	.393(**)	286
Company	.353(**)	241
Pay	.382(**)	287
Promotions	.358(**)	283
Facilities	.340(**)	287
Co-Workers	.229(**)	287

**Correlation is significant at $p < .001$

Per the results in Table 18, there is a significant correlation between the eight employment aspect factors and the intended tenure of the RA. This indicates the more satisfied the RA is with an employment aspect factor, the more likely the RA is to stay in the RA position.

The correlation scores of the employment aspect factors to intended tenure indicate which factors the RAs deem most important when determining their return to the position. From the data collected, Work Achievement had the highest correlation (.496). Therefore revealing Work Achievement as the employment aspect factor which carries the most weight when RAs consider returning to the position for another term. Based on the correlation scores, Work Role Clarity (.393) and Supervisor (.393) are tied for the second most important employment aspect factor correlated to intended tenure. Pay was the third highest correlate to intended tenure (.382), followed by Promotions (.358) and then Company (.353). The facilities correlation score was second to lowest (.340) and the lowest correlation to intended tenure was Co-Workers (.229).

Summary

Per the data collected, 290 privatized university housing RAs responded to the RASS. The respondents ranged from a classification of freshman to graduate student and in age from 18-36 years. The respondents encompassed ethnicities of white, black, Hispanic, Asian, Native Hawaiian and other, and were employed in the states of: Arkansas, Arizona, California, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Texas, Utah, and Virginia. The respondent's earnings ranged from \$0 to higher than \$3000 with the predominant benefit of free housing. Residents the respondents are responsible for ranged from 5-515.

In relation to the eight employment aspect factors, the respondents rated their satisfaction with their co-workers to be the highest. The Co-Workers category was followed in descending order by: Work Achievement, Supervisor, Work Role Clarity, Facilities, Promotions, Company and Pay.

Regarding the criterion factors of General Affect and Intended Tenure, it was determined from the data that the RAs have an overall positive general affect towards the RA position and do plan to return to the position.

Correlations were run regarding gender, ethnicity, and age in relation to general affect. From the data it was concluded there is no significant difference in general affect levels as it is related to gender, ethnicity or age of the RA. Correlations were also run regarding intended tenure and the eight employment aspect factors. From the data it was concluded that there are significant correlations between intended tenure and the eight employment aspect factors. This indicates the more satisfied the RA is with the employment aspect factors the more likely the RA is to return to the position.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Introduction

In an effort to determine elements of resident assistant job satisfaction in the arena of privatized university housing, research was conducted on a select group of privatized university housing RAs. In the spring of 2009, the Resident Assistant Satisfaction Survey (RASS) was distributed to privatized university housing RAs employed by Campus Living Villages (CLV). The RASS was only sent to Campus Living Villages' on-campus owned or managed sites. The sites were spread out across 11 states including: Arizona, Arkansas, California, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah and Virginia and were inclusive of the following 24 schools:

Abilene Christian University

Academy of Art University

Arizona State Polytechnical University

Arizona State University

George Mason University

Henderson State University

Illinois Central College

Louisiana State University-Eunice

Louisiana State University-Shreveport

McMurry University

Northwestern State University

Texas Southern University

Texas State Technical College-Waco

University of Advancing Technology

University of Houston

University of Houston-Clear Lake

University of Missouri-St. Louis

University of Nebraska-Omaha

University of New Orleans

University of Texas at Arlington

University of Texas at San Antonio

University of Texas at Tyler

Weber State University

Webster State University

Copies of the RASS were sent to the CLV managing directors at each of the aforementioned properties. Included with this distribution, was an explanation of the survey and description of the work in progress. The directors were asked to distribute the survey, preferably via a designee such as a senior resident assistant, to all of their RA staff members and not discriminate based on performance, tenure, gender or plans to return to the position the following year. The directors, or their designee, were to read the instruction sheet (see Appendix B) that accompanied the RASS to their RAs and then distribute the surveys to their resident assistants during a staff meeting. Completion of the RASS was voluntary.

After the survey was completed, the RAs were asked to place all completed surveys in the self-addressed, postage paid envelope that was included in the RASS

mailing. The envelope was then sealed and sent back to the principal investigator. The survey reached 311 RAs returning 290 completed surveys, which resulted in a return rate of 93%.

The RASS contained ten personal descriptor questions, 52 employment aspect questions and 23 criterion questions. The personal descriptors were used to clarify how the respondent's identified themselves. The employment aspect questions looked at eight aspects of the RA job to determine the RAs feelings towards those job aspects. The eight employment aspects were: work achievement, work role clarity, supervisor, company, pay, promotions, facilities, and co-workers. The criterion questions were intended to get a general view of how the respondent's perceive the RA job as a whole, if they plan to return for subsequent terms in the position, and their perceptions of their level of involvement with the position. The three criterion factors were: general affect, intended tenure, and non-involvement.

Conclusions and Discussion

From the study, four research questions were posed and answered. They were:

- 1) What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors outlined in the RASS?
- 2) What is the general affect level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to the RA job?
- 3) Are there differences in the affect levels based on gender, ethnicity, or age?

- 4) Is there a relationship between the eight employment aspect factors and intended tenure as an RA in privatized housing?

Satisfaction with the Individual Employment Aspect Factors

Regarding research question one “What is the satisfaction level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to each of the eight employment aspect factors and the three criterion factors outlined in the RASS?” the respondents rated their satisfaction with their Co-Workers higher than any other employment aspect factor. Indicating the respondents are highly satisfied with their fellow RAs.

The respondents ranked Work Achievement as the next highest in the employment aspect factor list. This ranking indicates the respondents feel worth in their RA position. Work Achievement encompassed the significance, variety, responsibility, and ownership the RA feels within the job. The high ranking of Work Achievement indicates the RAs feel strongly about the job they are doing.

Supervisor was the third highest ranked out of the employment aspect factors. This ranking indicates the RAs have an overall good feeling regarding the jobs their supervisors do and feeling supported by them.

Work Role Clarity came next in the descending order of what the RAs find satisfying about their jobs. Work Role Clarity encompasses the clarity of position the RA feels. The scores on Work Role Clarity indicate the RAs feel they know what is expected of them in their job.

The RAs ranked Facilities above the median in the list of employment aspect factors. They were still satisfied with the facilities in which they worked and lived, but less so than with their co-workers or supervisor.

Promotions was the next ranked employment aspect factor. It questioned the RAs feelings towards fair and equitable promotion system. The promotions score was slightly above the median which indicates overall the RAs are satisfied with the promotion system set in place for them. But they are much less satisfied with the promotions system as compared with co-workers, work achievement, or work role clarity.

Company and Pay are the two remaining employment aspect factors left to be discussed. Per the respondent's answers, both fell below the median which indicates dissatisfaction with company and pay.

The questions regarding Company were to discern how the RAs viewed CLV as a company in regards to communication, honesty, resources, and respect. The questions regarding Pay were to determine if the RAs felt their compensation was equitable. Being the two lowest ranked employment aspect factors and falling below the median score indicates the RAs are not satisfied with the company and do not feel their pay is equitable to their job. Overall, the RAs were satisfied with six of the eight employment aspect factors indicating they are generally satisfied with the elements of the RA job.

The findings regarding the employment aspect factors as they relate to the RA job support previous research. More specifically, they support Herzberg and his theory of hygiene and motivation. Herzberg (1966) proposed a two factor hygiene and motivation theory breaking down motivation into two theories: Hygiene Theory and Motivation. Herzberg theorized that motivation came from one of two sources, either the hygiene factor, which includes:

- the company
- its policies and its administration

- the kind of supervision which people receive while on the job
- working conditions
- interpersonal relations
- salary
- status
- security

Or satisfaction came from the motivation factor which is derived from what people do within their jobs, including:

- achievement
- recognition
- growth/advancement
- interest in the job. (“Three basic approaches to improving productivity,” 2003)

According to the article, Three basic approaches to improving productivity, which looks at Herzberg’s theory in relation the business world, the first set of hygiene factors “do not lead to higher levels of motivation but without them, there is dissatisfaction” (“Three basic approaches to improving productivity”, para 3). Herzberg deduced hygiene and motivation factors must occur concurrently for growth and satisfaction in employees (Herzberg, 1966). Therefore, to increase job satisfaction, dissatisfaction must be decreased, providing for the hygiene aspect of the theory. A growth must be increased, providing for the motivation factors.

The RAs surveyed reported their satisfaction with their co-workers, work achievement, and supervisor among the highest. This finding mirrors Herzberg’s theory

that ties interpersonal relationships, achievement, growth/advancement, interest in the job and supervision together cohesively to create job satisfaction.

A Resident Assistant study conducted by L. Gardner in 1987 at West Virginia University looked at predictors of resident assistant job satisfaction. The study surveyed 77 Resident Assistants to gather information regarding “job satisfaction, burnout, and supervisor rating” (Gardner, 1987, p. 1) Gardner reported:

Predictors of job satisfaction were: (1) sex; (2) seeing the resident assistant position as useful to a future career; and (3) being motivated by a desire to be helpful to others. (1987, p. 1)

The desire to help others predictor as reported by Gardner is a part of the work achievement employment aspect factor. Both Gardner’s report in 1987 and the RASS findings in 2009 have indicated similar findings regarding RA job satisfaction and its link to feeling the job is purposeful.

The RASS was based on the Chief Housing Officer Satisfaction Survey (CHOSS) created by Dr. David Jones in 2002. Jones surveyed chief housing officers to determine their level of job satisfaction. Since the RASS was based on the CHOSS, the same employment aspect factors were investigated. Jones’ findings indicated those surveyed seemed to be most satisfied with work achievement and their co-workers (2002). These findings were echoed in the findings from the RASS with the RAs ranking their two highest employment aspect factors as co-workers and work achievement.

Satisfaction with the Criterion Factors

The criterion questions were asked to get an overall feeling of satisfaction or dissatisfaction from the respondents regarding the RA job as a whole and not the

individual elements of the position as were focused on by the employment aspect factors. Elements taken into consideration and inquired about were general affect, intended tenure, and non-involvement. The general affect questions were intended to construe the RAs overall feeling about their job. The questions were geared towards determining the RAs positivity towards the job as a whole. The respondents indicated that overall they do feel a general sense of positivity towards the RA job.

The second criterion factor was intended tenure. Intended tenure looked at the respondent's desire to return to the RA position for subsequent terms. The responses to intended tenure were above the median which indicated an overall plan for the respondents to return to the RA job.

The third criterion factor was non-involvement. The Non-Involvement questions probed the RAs feelings of negativity towards the job. The responses to the non-involvement questions indicated that overall the respondents do not feel lethargic, depressed, or negatively towards their job. The responses to non-involvement and general affect go hand in hand. The RAs are reporting that generally they are more positive than negative towards their job. All the criterion questions ranked above the median which indicates overall positivity and contentment towards the RA job.

General Affect as Tied to the RA Job

Regarding research question two, "What is the general affect level of privatized university housing RAs with regard to the RA job?" The RAs who responded to the RASS reported a positive general affect level in relation to the RA job. From the responses, it seems clear that the majority of RAs surveyed is happy with their job and have a higher level of positivity towards it than negativity.

Gender, Ethnicity, and Age

Research question three investigated if there were differences in the general affect level based on personal descriptors. The question asked, “Are there differences in the affect levels based on gender, ethnicity or age?” What the research found was that indeed, no, there are no differences in the affect levels of the RAs when broken out by gender, ethnicity, or age.

The findings on gender were generally expected as job satisfaction regarding gender has been across the board in prior research. For instance, in looking at gender differences to ascertain if there are differences between males and females in regards to what provides them with job satisfaction, Dalton and Marcis report from an NLSY study:

(In a sample consisting of 967 females and 1,230 males) the results indicate gender differences in the determinants of job satisfaction. For males, job satisfaction is more closely associated with general back ground characteristics, such as education level, marital status, and racial/ethnic differences. Job satisfaction for females is more closely linked with the workplace; for example, the wage rate, experience in the labor market, and job tenure. Five of the seven workplace variables produced conflicting signs on the coefficients for males and females (1986, p. 85).

The majority of workplace variables in Dalton and Marcis study were conflicting when it came to gender.

However, the Association of College and University Housing Officers, ACUHO, conducted a survey in 2001 asking “Which RA Group is More Satisfied?” They found the following, “GENDER: Women (surveyed) are statistically more satisfied on 9 out of

13 factors including Overall Satisfaction compared to men RAs” (ACUHO, 2001). These findings are in contrast to Dalton and Marcis inconclusive findings on gender. The RASS determined no significant differences between males and females in regards to general affect.

The RASS did not report any significant differences between ethnicities and general affect or in age and general affect. However, ACUHO did find a difference between RA job satisfaction and age. In the 2001 study on “Which Group is More Satisfied?” they reported:

CLASS STANDING: 29% of RAs (surveyed) are sophomores. These RAs are statistically more satisfied on 8 out of 13 factors including the most important factor (RA working/living conditions) compared to junior and senior RAs.

(ACUHO, 2001, p. 1)

The ACUHO survey broke down the RAs by class standing which is not always indicative of age. However, generally speaking the majority of sophomores are younger than the majority of juniors. So from the ACUHO research, there is a difference in satisfaction/general affect as it relates to age.

Intended Tenure

Intended tenure and how it is linked to job satisfaction was the basis of the final research question in this study. The question asked, “Is there a relationship between the eight employment aspect factors and intended tenure as an RA in privatized housing?”

If the respondent chooses to stay in the RA position, is that decision linked to satisfaction with the individual elements of the job, the employment aspect factors?

From the results on the RASS, yes, there is a positive link between satisfaction with the employment aspect factors and intended tenure.

From the data collected the RAs linked work achievement highest to intended tenure. This information is taken to mean if the RA feels the job is meaningful and makes a difference, they are more likely to return to being an RA for subsequent terms.

Not surprisingly, it would stand to reason if an RA is satisfied with the job, s/he will return to the position. The 2001 ACUHO study found the same results:

PLANS TO RETURN: 65% of RAs (surveyed) who are not leaving campus intend to return to their RA position. Not surprisingly, these RAs are statistically more satisfied on 12 out of 13 factors compared to those that could return, but chose not to. (2001, p. 1)

Deduction

The results of the RASS were not surprising. Based on the literature and previous research conducted, it was expected that there would be differing levels of satisfaction regarding the employment aspect factors. It was expected that work achievement would rank highly among the satisfaction levels, as would co-workers, supervisor and work role clarity. While specifically utilizing privatized university housing RAs for this research, company was a new employment aspect factor to be included. The RAs did not rank their satisfaction with the company very highly.

The overall general affect level was good. Based on previous research, this result was also not unexpected. Although burnout and attrition is a problem in the RA field, those who remain tend to possess a positive general affect level.

The result from the personal descriptor of gender, with no difference in general affect levels based on gender, was not unexpected as research has shown a variety of differing results regarding gender and job satisfaction. The result from ethnicity, that result being no difference in general affect levels based on ethnicity, was neither expected nor unexpected. Surprisingly, there does not appear to be much data regarding RA ethnicity and job satisfaction.

The result from age was unexpected as it indicated there was no difference in general affect levels based on age. Prior research would indicate the older the RA the less satisfied they were with the position (ACUHO, 2001). Perhaps this was due to disillusion with the position or a heavier workload as the RA moves into a more challenging level of study at the college or university?

The results of job satisfaction on intended tenure were not unexpected. It would stand to reason the more satisfied a person is with their job, the more likely they would be to return to it. So it is with the RAs, they are more satisfied than dissatisfied with their position which results in higher levels of intended tenure in the position.

Limitations

The predominant limitation of this research revolved around the surveyed group. The only privatized university housing RAs surveyed were those who work for Campus Living Villages. There are many other privatized university housing companies in the market who employ hundreds of RAs. The RAs surveyed only worked and lived in the on-campus sites and therefore the subgroup of those who work and live in privatized university housing off-campus, were not included in this research. Although it is not

guaranteed that the data would be different from RAs living off-campus or employed by other companies, but the possibility does exist.

Recommendations for Practice

These recommendations are based on the survey results from the RASS as administered to resident assistants employed in on-campus privatized university housing by Campus Living Villages. Although the focus group was privatized university housing RAs, based on previous research in conjunction with this research, there does not appear to be much difference in the determinants of job satisfaction between traditional residence life RAs and privatized university housing RAs. The recommendations should be reviewed by housing administrators while taking into consideration the sample group surveyed when discerning what steps should be taken in order to maintain or enhance the RA satisfaction level.

Pay increases should be considered. With the minimum wage rate rising to \$7.25 per hour and the average RA working 15-20 hours per week, that nets out to cash of \$108.75-\$145.00 per week, if simply paying minimum wage for the minimum hours required. Considering most RAs receive free housing as well as a stipend, that does help balance out the remuneration. However, there are some RAs who do not pay for their housing, whether it is covered by financial aid, or another source of support or income. In these cases the remuneration of free housing does not benefit those RAs.

Communication to the RAs from upper level administration should be improved. Whether the direct communication comes from their immediate supervisor or from a higher level administrator, communication lines should be bettered.

That communication could help create a feeling of respect and care from upper level administrators towards the RAs and their sites.

If a residence life program entails a promotions system for RAs, there should be clear communication as to what the promotion would entail and what steps the RA needs to take to be eligible for the promotion. This would give the RA a professional goal for which to strive. Many residence life programs do not have a promotions system in place. If this is the case, perhaps a tiered pay structure could be set in place. For instance, more compensation could be provided for returning RAs who have performed exemplary work.

RAs reported finding the most satisfaction in their jobs from their co-workers. RAs work very hard. They work where they live and are constantly “on” regardless of if they are on duty or not. Once the academic year begins, the nature of the RA position creates a silo-esque work environment. The RA is attempting to be successful in the classroom, maintain satisfaction and order in their hall/building/floor, carve out some personal time for themselves, and meet all programming and office hour requirements. This can be not only taxing, but isolating. Creating avenues for RAs to interact with their co-workers more may increase job satisfaction. Cross programming between RAs, weekly RA staff meetings, on-duty rounds with other RAs, sharing office time between RAs, staff development with the entire RA team. These are all ways to increase the RAs time with their co-workers and theoretically maintain or improve job satisfaction.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research was a look not only at the RA position as it relates to job satisfaction but to go a step further and narrow the sample to an ever growing population of RAs working in the privatized university housing field.

This was an introductory look at this group of RAs. As the option of utilizing privatized university housing on campuses across the world increases and becomes more common, so will RA attrition and dissatisfaction. If research is not done and the field continues rapidly expanding, the RAs will get lost in the cross fire. And with that loss, the residents will suffer.

Further research is needed regarding RA job satisfaction and in particular within the privatized university housing sector. By simply using the data already obtained from this research a much more in depth job satisfaction report could be generated. For example, is a higher satisfaction level with any one specific employment aspect factor tied to ethnicity? Are higher levels of job satisfaction related to state of employ? Do some states pay more or provide more benefits that relate to higher levels of job satisfaction? Is gender related to higher levels of satisfaction with any particular employment aspect factor? From this research alone noteworthy relationships could be extracted.

Other groups of RAs need to be analyzed and surveyed for varying job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Investigating other subsets of RAs would generate valuable data. Looking at other privatized university housing companies, are there differences in satisfaction levels from the RAs in this study? Comparing and contrasting private university RAs with public university RAs, do they have similar responses to the same questions? RAs working at religiously affiliated institutions and those working at non-religiously affiliated institutions, are their job satisfaction levels the same when asked the same questions?

Other questions need to be researched. Is there a difference in job satisfaction as it ties to college majors? What causes an RA to not return to the position? What are the elements of job dissatisfaction that cause apathy? What drives an RA to possess feelings of malcontent toward the position and in turn create, or add to, an unpleasant housing experience for residents?

The RA position is so vast, there are numerous questions to be answered relating to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. And the RA position is so crucial, we as housing professionals cannot afford not to ask the questions. It is imperative to colleges and universities that possess a housing program to continue investigating determinants of RA job satisfaction. The RAs are on the frontlines each and every day working for their institution, be they privatized university housing RAs or traditional housing RAs. They attend the same school as their residents, they walk the same paths as their residents, and they influence their residents. Satisfied RAs help foster satisfied residents, who will one day become satisfied alumni. This study is merely the tip of the iceberg.

APPENDIX A

AUTHORIZATION FROM PAUL ABRAMSON TO REPRINT HIS FINDINGS

Re: College Planning and Management, 2005 article - question for you

Wed, April 15, 2009 10:09:25 AM

From: "IntellEd@aol.com"
<IntellEd@aol.com>

Add to Contacts

To: jencasey00@yahoo.com

2009 Residence hall tables.xlsx (13KB)

Jennifer -- No problem at all so long as credit is given. You may, however, want to note that the same basic study of residence hall construction was done in 2006, 2007, 2008 and will be in the 2009 edition of College Planning & Management. I believe in each case, the material was in the May issue of the magazine. For any help it may be, I am attaching the tables from the 2009 report, to be published next month.

I hope it is helpful.

Paul

Paul Abramson
President
Stanton Leggett & Associates
CEFPI 2008 Planner of the Year

910 Stuart Ave, Suite 6F
Mamaroneck, NY 10543

914-834-2606
914-473-3444 (cell)

APPENDIX B

AUTHORIZATION FROM DR. JONES TO UTILIZE THE CHOSS



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT
CHAPEL HILL

Department of Housing and Residential Education
Assistant Director
David P. Jones, Ph.D.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
CB # 5500, 101 Carr Bldg.
Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5500
(919) 962-1317 david_jones@unc.edu

January 15, 2004

Dear Jennifer Casey,

Please consider this communication as full authorization to use any portion of the College Housing Officers' Job Satisfaction (C.H.O.S.S.) questionnaire developed for studying housing professionals' job satisfaction from my 2002 dissertation of the same name.

Please contact me with any of your questions or concerns. Best of luck with your studies. Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David P. Jones".

David P. Jones, Ph.D.

APPENDIX C

RESIDENT ASSISTANT SATISFACTION SURVEY (RASS)

An adaptation of the
College Housing Officers' Satisfaction Survey (CHOSS)

Section: Personal Information

1. Gender:
 - Female
 - Male

2. Please indicate:
 - a. Your age _____
 - b. Your year in school: Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior, Grad

- 2c. Please indicate your current pay range (per year):
 - I do not receive any monetary compensation
 - Less than \$500
 - \$501-\$1500
 - \$1001-\$1500
 - \$1501-\$2000
 - \$2001-\$2500
 - \$2501-\$3000
 - \$3000 or higher

- 2d. If you do not receive a set "salary", but rather an hourly rate, please indicate the hourly rate you receive and the average number of hours per week you work.
Hourly rate _____ Number of hours worked per week: _____

- 2e. Please indicate further compensation (benefits) you may receive:
 - I do not receive any compensation other than money
 - I receive a discounted room rate
 - I receive a discounted room rate and a free meal plan
 - I receive a free room
 - I receive a free meal plan
 - I receive a free room and a free meal plan
 - I receive other compensation not listed above.
Please list other compensation received: _____

- 2f. Please indicate the number of residents on your floor/hall/building(s):

- 2g. How many students are you responsible for? _____
3. Using the US Census categories, what is your racial ethnic Identification (please check all that apply)?
- _____ White
 _____ Black or African American
 _____ Hispanic or Latino/Latina
 _____ Native Indian or Alaska Native
 _____ Asian
 _____ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 _____ Two or more races
 _____ Other
4. Please indicate your state of employment:
- _____ Arizona
 _____ Arkansas
 _____ California
 _____ Illinois
 _____ Louisiana
 _____ Missouri
 _____ Nebraska
 _____ Oklahoma
 _____ Texas
 _____ Utah
 _____ Virginia

Section: Job Satisfaction Inventory

Please select your level of agreement for each Job Satisfaction Inventory Item listed below:

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

5. Work Achievement:
- | | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| My RA position is significant. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| My RA position is interesting. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| I have responsibility for decisions as to how I do my RA job. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| I learn new things in my RA position. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| I use my skills and abilities in my RA position. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| I have a sense of accomplishment through my RA position. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| I have a sense of progress in my RA position. | SA | A | N | D | SD |
| I have variety in my RA position. | SA | A | N | D | SD |

I have a sense of completion in my RA position.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I have a sense of failure in my RA position.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My RA position is boring.	SA	A	N	D	SD
There is no variety in my RA position.	SA	A	N	D	SD

6. Work Role Clarity

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

I get feedback on how well I'm doing.	SA	A	N	D	SD
It is clear what is expected of me.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Different people's expectations are consistent.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I have a chance to participate in decisions affecting my hall/floor.	SA	A	N	D	SD
It is not clear what I am supposed to do.	SA	A	N	D	SD

7. Supervisor

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

My supervisor facilitates getting my work done.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor facilitates recruitment of good colleagues.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor is fair in recommending raises.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor is fair in recommending promotions.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor is honest.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor keeps me informed.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor shows me respect.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor is unfair in allocating rewards.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor hinders my work.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My supervisor does not always tell the full story.	SA	A	N	D	SD

8. Company (clv)

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

Not Applicable (NA)

CLV helps get resources for my site.	SA	A	D	SD	NA
--------------------------------------	-----------	----------	----------	-----------	-----------

CLV leadership is fair in recommending promotions.	SA	A	D	SD	NA
CLV leadership is honest.	SA	A	D	SD	NA
CLV leadership keeps me informed.	SA	A	D	SD	NA
CLV leadership cares about my site.	SA	A	D	SD	NA
CLV leadership takes resources from my site.	SA	A	D	SD	NA
CLV does not respect my site.	SA	A	D	SD	NA
CLV does not keep my site informed.	SA	A	D	SD	NA

9. Pay

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

The pay is fair compared to similar jobs at other institutions.	SA	A	N	D	SD
The pay is enough for financial needs.	SA	A	N	D	SD
The benefits are fair in relation to other institutions.	SA	A	N	D	SD
The pay is too little to meet expenses.	SA	A	N	D	SD
The pay is unfair.	SA	A	N	D	SD

10. Promotions

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

Promotions are fair.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Promotion criteria is clear.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Promotions are unfair.	SA	A	N	D	SD

11. Facilities

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

The facilities are safe.	SA	A	N	D	SD
The facilities make my work more effective.	SA	A	N	D	SD
The facilities help my work.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Support services are adequate.	SA	A	N	D	SD
The facilities prevent me from doing my best work.	SA	A	N	D	SD

12. Co-workers

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

My co-workers help each other to get work done.	SA	A	N	D	SD
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My co-workers are friendly and easy to get along with.	SA	A	N	D	SD
My co-workers work against me.	SA	A	N	D	SD

13. General Affect

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

I am agreeable overall.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Mine is a good job.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I am likely to end up in this job again.	SA	A	N	D	SD
This job makes me feel in control of my life.	SA	A	N	D	SD
This job makes me feel depressed.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I have good thoughts about work when I am home.	SA	A	N	D	SD
The job makes me have a positive outlook on life.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I am in a good mood more often than a bad mood when working.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I feel good when dealing with my supervisor.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I feel good when talking with colleagues about my job.	SA	A	N	D	SD
When I talk to friends about my job, I talk of good things.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I encourage others to get into the same type of work.	SA	A	N	D	SD

14. Intended Tenure

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

I intend to be in this job as long as I am a student.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I think about not returning as an RA.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I think about other types of work.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I think about changing jobs.	SA	A	N	D	SD

15. Non-involvement

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD)

I feel like getting others to cover my duty nights.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I don't feel like doing my job.	SA	A	N	D	SD
I feel energetic.	SA	A	N	D	SD

I feel like not doing anything more than what is required of me.

SA A N D SD

Duty nights are depressing.

SA A N D SD

I feel like being lazy at work.

SA A N D SD

I feel like I need a break from work to relax.

SA A N D SD

APPENDIX D

APPROVAL TO SURVEY CLV RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

To: Institutional Review Board, University of Southern Mississippi

From: Dr. Doris Collins, PhD, Assistant Vice President

Date: April 8, 2009

RE: Endorsement of research

As the Assistant Vice President for Campus Living Villages, I endorse and approve Jennifer Casey to distribute the Resident Assistant Satisfaction Survey (RASS) to the resident assistants employed by Campus Living Villages. This survey will serve as the research tool used to gather data for the completion of her doctoral degree at the University of Southern Mississippi. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need further documentation, 713-871-5146.

APPENDIX E

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL OF RESEARCH



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Institutional Review Board

118 College Drive #5147
 Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
 Tel: 601.266.6820
 Fax: 601.266.5509
 www.usm.edu/irb

**HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE
 NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION**

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months. Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 29041601
 PROJECT TITLE: **Determinants of Resident Assistant Job Satisfaction
 in Privatized University Housing**
 PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: 04/21/09 to 12/11/09
 PROJECT TYPE: **Dissertation or Thesis**
 PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: **Jennifer Casey**
 COLLEGE/DIVISION: **College of Education & Psychology**
 DEPARTMENT: **Educational Leadership & Research**
 FUNDING AGENCY: **N/A**
 HSPRC COMMITTEE ACTION: **Expedited Review Approval**
 PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 04/27/09 to 04/26/10

Lawrence A. Hosman
 Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
 HSPRC Chair

4-28-09
 Date

APPENDIX F
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

To the Managing Director, or Designee, distributing this survey:

Please read aloud the following statements of purpose, intent, and confidentiality to your students before distributing the survey. After you have read the following aloud to them, please sign below indicating you have read the statements to them and have followed the instructions included in the statements. Please include this sheet in the return envelope along with the surveys.

Thank you so very much for your participation!

PURPOSE:

This survey is being distributed as a critical piece of research for a doctoral dissertation being completed at the University of Southern Mississippi. The general purpose of this study is to determine what Resident Assistants in privatized university housing find most satisfying about their jobs.

INTENT:

It is the intention of this research to determine what RAs working in privatized university housing find most satisfying about their RA positions and pass that information on to the corporate office and site administration at Campus Living Villages in an effort to increase RA job satisfaction and RA retention.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Enclosed is a 5 page survey that should not take more than 5-7 minutes to complete. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary. And the surveys are anonymous. If you choose to participate, please do not include your name or any information other than what is asked. The person distributing this survey is not to read the surveys, they are confidential. Once you complete your survey, please place it in the addressed envelope your Administrator has with them. Once all of the data for this project is collected, each survey will be shredded and disposed of.

If you have any questions regarding this survey or this research, please feel free to contact me, Jennifer Casey, Regional Director for Campus Living Villages (512) 786-9713.

“This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, Box 5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406, (601) 266-6820.”

Managing Director:

Date:

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