Relationship Between Supervisor Locus Of Control And Employee Satisfaction In A Residential Care Facility

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPERVISOR LOCUS OF CONTROL
AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION IN A RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITY

by

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this research was to identify factors that may contribute to employee satisfaction. Review of the literature revealed potential factors influencing employee satisfaction, such as locus of control, difficulty of the work itself, and working conditions. These literature findings guided this research, to establish if a relationship existed between employee satisfaction of caregivers employed in a developmental institution and locus of control. Supervisors and their employees were given a locus of control scale; employees were additionally given a job satisfaction survey. The relationship between the supervisors' locus of control and employee satisfaction was evaluated as well as the relationship between the employees' locus of control and their job satisfaction. The resignation rate and rate of transfers within the agency were established for each of the supervisors and were assessed in relationship to the locus of control of the supervisors. Factors such as the level of physical exertion required by employees in their job duties and the level of behavioral intervention in their homes were assessed as they related to their own job satisfaction, their transfers, and their rates of resignations.

Findings from the correlation procedures revealed no relationship to a statistically significant degree between the locus of control of supervisors and their employees' job satisfaction. The locus of control of supervisors was also not found to be statistically significantly correlated with the numbers of employee transfers within the organization; however, a relationship between the locus of control of supervisors and employee resignations

was established. The supervisors who had an internal locus of control had fewer resignations. A statistically significant negative relationship was also found between employees' job satisfaction and their own locus of control. The employees who had an internal locus of control reported higher job satisfaction. Although there was no relationship established between the employees' job satisfaction and type of exertion, there was a statistically significant negative relationship between behavioral exertion and requests for inter-agency transfers and resignations, and a positive correlation between physical exertion and number of resignations.

Results of this study suggest that locus of control is an impacting variable for job satisfaction and turnover. Combining attribution training with effective management practices with all employees may increase employee satisfaction. Findings from this research suggest a need for a better refinement of the theoretical construct of job satisfaction and a need to evaluate the effectiveness of the instrumentation currently used to determine job satisfaction.

I dedicate this dissertation to the caregivers of Gulf Coast Center for their dedication and devotion helping others have better lives. They come from all over the world, and in spite of cultural differences and adversities, they respectfully work together to achieve the best care they can provide to the residents of Gulf Coast Center. Their perseverance, guiding, teaching, and caring for the men and women living at Gulf Coast Center has touched me greatly, in my heart and in my soul.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Employees are an organization's most valuable asset. Employee turnover is increasingly

becoming a major concern for supervisors and researchers (Lambert, Hogan, & Barton, 2001) as

the employment forecast has changed over the years for employers (Harkins, 1998).

Employee turnover, leaving employment voluntarily, often a byproduct of employee

dissatisfaction, is extremely costly and organizations have attempted to reduce it through the

implementation of various procedures. According to the US Department of Labor, it costs a

company one-third of a new hire's annual salary to replace an employee. Secretan (2001)

examined an organization of over 10,000 employees and found that staff turnover was averaging

22%, an annual cost of losing 2,200 employees. He found that the overall financial cost was

staggering and debilitating. Harkins (1998) also reported that turnover is devastating for

organizations, typically resulting in lost business and lower profits.

Statement of the Problem

Although a variety of management programs provide sound and useful strategies to

combat turnover, successful implementation of such strategies may be impacted by the personal

characteristics of supervisors. Buckingham and Coffman (1999) contended that the front line

supervisor is the key to attracting and retaining talented employees. They asserted that if

turnover is a concern, the organization should look foremost at the supervisor's skills and practices. While many supervisors believe they are doing all they can to achieve employee satisfaction, their effectiveness may be impacted by personal characteristics such as locus of control (Rotter, 1966). Locus of control may be an underlying construct either aiding or hindering their effectiveness as supervisors and affecting employee satisfaction.

<u>Conceptual Framework</u>

Several theoretical approaches can be brought to bear on the problem of employee turnover. Attribution research focuses on the beliefs people hold to explain events and the implication of those beliefs (Gredler, 2001). Attribution theory began with the work of John Atkinson (1957) and Fritz Heider (1958) and was later developed by Bernard Weiner (1980). Weiner (2000) proposed three dimensions to attribution theory: internality, controllability, and stability. The locus of control theory, developed by Rotter (1966), originated from social learning theory. Social learning theory, dating back to the late 1800s, postulated that reinforcements strengthen the expectancy that a specific behavior or event will be followed by that same reinforcement in the future. On the other hand, if no reinforcement occurs and it was expected to occur, the absence of the reinforcement will begin to decrease the expectancy of that reward (Rotter 1966). These ideas will be further elaborated in the next section and again in more detail in Chapter 2.

Theoretical Background: The Human Factor

In 1927 a set of experiments known as the Western Electric Studies, often referred to as the Hawthorne Studies, was conducted (Owens, 2001). The initial purpose of these studies was to find the optimum level of illumination required for workers to be most productive in their jobs. Taylor's principles of scientific management, prevalent at the time, had predicted that there would be an optimum level associated with greater productivity. In fact, in the actual study, regardless of the illumination, productivity kept rising. These unexpected results led the researchers to the examination of other factors beside environmental manipulation and to a new way of thinking about employees. This discovery was the beginning of looking at how personal characteristics of humans affected work performance, the human factor.

During the 1980s a resurgence of interest in the impact of personality factors was observed in the organizational domain (Spector & O'Connell, 1994). Benjamin (2003) reported that Peter Drucker and Douglas McGregor were very influential in inducing change in the human resource department. In earlier times, its main functions were hiring and firing; later a third dimension was added: employee satisfaction.

One of the most explored concepts in the discipline of psychology is the locus of control concept introduced by Rotter (1966). He developed the Internal–External Control Scale (I–E scale), a self-report inventory with a forced-choice format and six categories: academic recognition, social recognition, love and affection, dominance, social-political beliefs, and life philosophy. Rotter defined internal locus of control as a person's perception that an event was contingent upon his or her behavior or permanent characteristics. Conversely, he defined external locus of control as a person's perception that an outcome was not contingent upon action but

instead was the result of luck, fate, or the actions and influences of others. Since that time, over 200 locus of control measures were developed. Some have been designed to assess a general concept of locus of control, while some were designed for a more specific use. Some were designed for adults and some were designed for children. The domains assessed most frequently have been in physical and mental health, career, economics, and, more recently, in the domain of work (Spector & O'Connell, 1994).

Rotter (1966) reported that individuals' perceptions of control appear to have strong implications for problems of acquisition and performance. His hypothesis was that if someone perceived reinforcement to be contingent upon a certain behavior, the occurrence of a positive or a negative consequence would strengthen or weaken the potential for that behavior to recur in a similar situation. Conversely, if someone perceived a reinforcement to be outside of his or her control, then the preceding behavior would be less likely to be strengthened or weakened. This fundamental difference would affect the outcomes and subsequent performance of individuals in a learning situation. It would be expected that efforts would be minimized if a person felt success was based on only a chance factor. James and Rotter (1958) conducted a study in which two of four groups were told that guessing correctly on a task was entirely a matter of luck; the other two groups were told that some people were skilled at that task. The researchers concluded that although the performance of the groups did not differ statistically significantly after the training trials, the number of trials to extinction differed to a statistically significant degree.

Factors Impacting Turnover

O'Malley (2000) reported that many employers perceive worker shortages as a barrier to company growth. Moreover, demographic data do not indicate upcoming improvements. In 2001, the baby-boom generation came of age for early retirement. The number of retirees is expected to steadily increase in the next twenty years. At this time in history, finding and keeping good employees is imperative but difficult. Employers have placed a growing emphasis on attracting and retaining competent employees. Harkins (1998) reported that employee benefits were again increasing, and employment advertising expenditures had doubled since 1990. Although opportunities for higher pay can be enticing, Stum (1998) reported that pay was not the deciding factor in an employee's final decision to leave. Harkins reported that employees did not leave for just one reason, but instead left because of having unmet needs.

Low unemployment rates and unfilled jobs provide an environment conducive to job turnover. The US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2003) listed the unemployment rate at 5.9% for the month of November 2003. By the year 2008, there will be 161 million jobs in the United States but only 154 million people to fill these jobs (Branhan, 2001). He reported that more than 13% of workers each month quit to take other positions, this being more than 1 in 7, compared to 1 in 10 workers in 1995. The average public company loses half of its employees every 4 years, and 55% of employees think of quitting or plan to quit within a year. Subsequently, the average time required to fill job openings has increased from 41 days to 51 days. More than half of organizations reported increasing turnover rates and only 9% believed their retention efforts were highly successful. According to the 2000/2001 Survey of Office Personnel Compensation, the healthcare field has the second highest industry turnover

rate, 19%, second only to banking. This rate was projected to increase by 1.4% at least for the next four years (Jardine & Amig, 2001).

Locus of Control and Its Applications

The terms locus of control and self-efficacy have been used interchangeably in research articles. On occasions it has been suggested that these words were variations of the same construct, whereas at other times it has been implied that they were different terms emanating from the same construct. Bandura (1997) summarized the essential difference between these two constructs. He explained that self-efficacy is derived from a person's perception of his or her ability to accomplish a task, whereas locus of control is derived from a person's perception of being able to control the outcome of the task. Typically, individuals who have an internal locus of control believe that outcomes are directly related to their efforts and investment, whereas individuals who have an external locus of control believe that the outcomes are not related to their actions but instead to external forces beyond their control.

Locus of control is one of the three properties of attributions, along with stability and controllability. Changing someone's attributions is sometimes called attribution retraining. Changing attributions has been used as an intervention for a variety of purposes, although in the past it has been mostly used in the school setting, in the mental-health setting, and for career counseling. Luzzo and Funk (1996) studied whether attribution training in the form of watching a videotape to increase career decision-making self-efficacy would produce changes to students' attributions. Students having an internal locus of control did not change their career decision-

making self-efficacy, whereas students having an external locus of control experienced an increase in self-efficacy.

<u>Organizational Sciences</u>

The integration of attribution theory within the organizational sciences is a relatively recent phenomenon (Martinko & Gardner, 1987). The leader's attribution of member behaviors is based on past experience. These experiences generate expectancy for future performance and biases that can impact the leader's ability to determine causality. Attributions made about subordinates' performance is critical, because they influence the subsequent behaviors of supervisors (Green & Liden, 1980).

Spector (1982) reported that individuals having an internal locus of control tended to exert greater effort and typically performed better in their positions. He stated that those with an internal locus of control were better at assigning, distributing, and planning. More specifically they assigned work more logistically, designed better workflow, had more effective operating procedures, and established a better rapport with both superiors and subordinates. Ashkanasy (1991) concluded in his study that supervisors having an external locus of control were less sensitive to subordinate performance than those having an internal locus of control. Gueritault-Chalvin, Demi, Peterson, and Kalichman (2000) conducted their study with nurses providing services to AIDS patients. They found that locus of control was a statistically significant predictor of burnout scores reported by the nurses, accounting for 4.5% of the variance of burnout. They reported that the external coping style or external locus of control was more positively related to burnout, whereas the internal style was inversely related to burnout, and

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concluded that work-related stress and occupational burnout have serious repercussions for individuals and, ultimately, for organizational outcomes.

Condry and Chambers (1978) reported after a review of several studies addressing locus of control that individuals having an internal locus of control tended to learn and use control-relevant information more than individuals having an external locus of control, and they exerted more control, being more objective and confident that their actions would contribute to a positive outcome.

Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction has been extensively studied as a dependent as well as an independent variable. By 1996, Spector (1997) estimated the number of studies involving employee satisfaction to be over 12,000. Many researchers have hypothesized that job satisfaction is the main factor in employee turnover (Lambert et al., 2001). These authors conducted a study and also found that job satisfaction was the largest contributor to turnover intent. They related that a limitation of their study was their focus on turnover intent instead of using the actual turnover rate. The recommendation to look at actual turnover rate was also proposed by Tang, Kim, and Tang (2000), who suggested that future research needed to focus on employees' actual turnover behavior rather than presumed correlates of turnover behavior. In their study they found that intrinsic job satisfaction was a predictor of turnover.

Dennis (1998) examined the situation surrounding correctional officers leaving their employment in adult correctional agencies. He found that the employees that were more empowered in their positions were also more satisfied and, subsequently, were more inclined to

stay with the organization. He reported that employee turnover was a large problem in most correctional agencies, as it was in most institutional settings, resulting in major expenditure due to recruitment and training of new employees, overtime payments to cover the vacant positions, and losses of effectiveness and efficiency.

Stum (1998) reported that job satisfaction is one of the main contributing factors leading to organizational performance. He related that job satisfaction affects not only productivity but also quality and morale, and it is the cradle for commitment to the organization's goals. This finding was supported by Lambert et al. (2001), who found that job satisfaction is a key mediating variable between the work setting and the intention to leave. Data used in their study were derived from a cross-sectional survey of over 1,500 persons who were asked 887 questions concerning their work and home life, work attitudes, perceptions, intentions, behaviors, and demographic information. They concluded that job satisfaction is a mediating variable that moderates the effects of work environment and demographic variables on turnover intent.

Research Questions

The general purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between locus of control and employee satisfaction. The study was guided by the following four questions:

1. What is the relationship between locus of control of supervisors as measured by the Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988) and employee satisfaction as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994)?

2. What is the relationship between locus of control of supervisors and employee retention as measured by resignations and requests for transfers within the agency?

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3. What is the relationship between locus of control of employees as measured by the Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988) and their job satisfaction as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994)?

4. What is the relationship between employee job satisfaction and variables such as level of physical assistance they must provide to assist residents with mental retardation and level of behavioral interventions they must provide to ensure residents' safety.

Definitions

Employee turnover: The number of staff leaving employment voluntarily from Gulf Coast Center to seek employment elsewhere.

Employee transfers: The number of staff who had transferred during the year preceding the study, and those who had requested transfer to another residence within Gulf Coast Center, seeking the same position and shift. Staff who were transferred by an administration directive were not considered in this statistic.

Locus of control: The belief of one's control over one's actions. A locus of control score reflects a person's confidence in his or her capabilities in influencing an outcome. The more a person feels his or her actions will cause the outcome to occur, the more the locus of control is internal. Conversely, the more a person believes his or her actions will be influenced by factors he or she cannot control, the more the locus of control is external. This term will be further defined as either internal or external as determined by the *Work Locus of Control Scale (WLCS)*.

Level of care: The amount of physical assistance a staff must provide for the residents. Residents are assigned a level of care category that reflects their need for services. The higher the level of

care the higher the level of assistance required for the resident. This number is based on the level of services required for a resident. As medical needs increase, the level of physical assistance increases, and consequently the level of care assigned by Medicaid increases also.

Behavioral interventions: Specific procedures the staff must employ to diffuse potentially dangerous situations or to intervene to prevent injuries to occur. Residents at Gulf Coast Center display a variety of problematic behavioral responses such as, aggression or property destruction. Staff must intervene verbally and at times physically to prevent injuries to occur.

Assumptions

1. It is assumed that both employees and supervisors completed the instruments with thought, reflection, and honesty.

2. It is assumed that the information retrieved from both supervisors and employees to identify how many resignations have occurred for each supervisor for the year preceding the beginning of this study and how many requests for transfers were made within the agency were correct.

3. It is assumed that the caregivers and supervisors could read the instruments. They must complete a written test to become employees at Gulf Coast Center.

Study Limitations and Delimitations

1. Completion of the survey was voluntary. Staff who volunteered to participate may have had a different level of employee satisfaction from those who elected not to participate.

2. Generalization of the findings to other settings was delimited to similar settings and organizations.

3. Self-report formats have their own limitations. Responses could have been influenced by the respondents' most recent experiences. Additionally, some respondents may have had a tendency toward pleasing authority figures and may as a result give higher ratings than their true feelings. Lastly, since these instruments were typically taken alone, any misunderstanding of the questions may have led to unintended responses.

4. Variations in results due to the population selected, construction biases, administration of the measurement instruments, recording, and computational errors may have occurred.

Methodology

Population

The participants for this study consisted of supervisors and caregivers employed in a residential facility serving people with mental retardation. The supervisors oversee the caregivers assigned to first, second, and third shift. Supervisors and caregivers that have been in their position for at least a period of three months were offered the opportunity to participate. There are 13 residences in this facility, and one supervisor for each shift. If all positions were filled and all supervisors had been in their positions for at least three months, the total would be 39 supervisors. These supervisors were given a locus of control test. The employees of these supervisors who agreed to participate in the study were asked to complete both the locus of control measure and the job satisfaction survey.

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Employee turnover was calculated for each of the supervisors who volunteered for the study by reviewing their answers to a question that had been added to the *WLCS* given to supervisors. This question was designed to identify how many staff had left Gulf Coast Center to seek employment elsewhere during the year preceding this study. The following were not included as part of turnover: (a) staff who had left during orientation, (b) staff who were above the age of 65, (c) staff who had completed 30 years of service within the state of Florida retirement system, and (d) staff who were terminated.

Employee transfers were determined by reviewing a question added to the *WLCS* given to supervisors asking them to identify how many staff had requested transfers to other residences during the year preceding the study. Moreover, a question was added to the surveys, specifically asking the staff completing the surveys if they were on the transfer reassignment list. The combination of these two data sources was used to establish the transfer rate for each of the supervisors. Staff who were requesting a different shift were excluded from the data as they may have had different motivations to change shift, as well as those who had been transferred unwillingly. If all 39 supervisors were in their positions for a period of three months and volunteered, it is estimated that this would result in approximately 320 staff that would be asked to volunteer to complete the WLCS and JSS.

Instrumentation and Data Analysis

Locus of control was assessed using the *Work Locus of Control Scale WLCS* (Spector, 1988). The WLCS is designed to assess a person's belief in the control he or she has over situations at work. The WLCS has both adequate convergent and divergent validity. Furnham

and Steele (1993) conducted a comprehensive review of over 50 locus of control measures specifically examining reliability and validity issues. In reference to the WLCS, they reported the scale had acceptable levels of internal reliability and concurrent validity, though little evidence of predictive or construct validity. The 16-item scale was validated on students (N=1,151). United States norms were based on 3,969 people from 31 samples. Spector (1988) reported a mean of samples of 39.9 with a mean coefficient alpha of .83.

Employee satisfaction was assessed with the *Job Satisfaction Survey, JSS* (Spector, 1994). This survey is a 36-item, 9-facet scale that has been used extensively to assess employee attitudes about various aspects of their jobs. The nine assessed areas of satisfaction are: pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, performance-based rewards, rules and procedures, co-workers, nature of work, and communication. The JSS was originally developed for use in human service organizations. Various norm groups were available for comparison; the norm group consisting of medical and mental health workers was selected. Norms were established on 108 samples, resulting in a total sample size of 28,876.

Pearson Product-Moment correlation tests and two multiple regressions were conducted in this research study to identify relationships that were present between the locus of control of supervisors, employee satisfaction, turnover rate, and employee transfers and reassignments.

Data Collection

Supervisors who qualified to participate and agreed to volunteer were given the WLCS. All their current employees were given the WLCS and the JSS. Supervisors were explained the purpose of the dissertation study in person and were requested to discuss the study with their

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staff and ask for their participation. Supervisors were asked to take the WLCS and were instructed to return it to me either at Gulf Coast Center or by sending it back with the self-stamped addressed envelop. Employees were given an envelope containing both instruments and a self-addressed envelope to a post-office box address. Follow-up was conducted with the supervisors through e-mails and phone calls, and with staff through periodic reminders by those supervisors during in-services. Additionally, motivating signs were posted throughout the residence to remind the staff of the importance of the study and of their participation. Posting and reminders to both the supervisors and employees continued for a period of two months after the instruments were initially distributed.

Extra surveys and self-addressed envelopes were available at a designated location in the residence. Data collection began when the WLCS was given to the supervisors.

Significance of the Study

Increasingly, employee satisfaction and performance of employees has been the focus of many books, workshops, and theories. Determining that there is a relationship between a supervisor's locus of control and employee satisfaction could be a great benefit. Such a relationship could lead to changes in the skills that should be included in management training programs, possibly incorporating techniques designed to change a person's locus of control orientation. This could ultimately lead to increased employee satisfaction, decreased turnover, and increased profit or productivity.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 introduced the problem, significance, and purpose of this study. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature with a strong emphasis on locus of control and job satisfaction research studies. Chapter 3 describes the context for the study and the methodology used for data collection and analysis. Chapter 4 presents the data and analyses. Chapter 5 reports the findings of the study, with implications for management programs, and the recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review begins with some of the earlier developments and contributing

influences that have advanced knowledge in the field of human resources management, followed

by research studies that have contributed to a statistically significant degree to the development

of the locus of control construct. Following these topics are (a) healthcare employment status, (b)

locus of control and associated factors, (c) employee satisfaction and its components, (d)

turnover and associated factors, and (e) absenteeism and associated factors.

Contributing Influences in Human Resources Management

Although Maslow's motivation theory (1970) differs from Herzberg's hygiene

motivation theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Bloch-Snyderman, 1959/1993), both contributed to

identifying factors leading to employee satisfaction. When Herzberg et al. first published their

book about motivation and work, they reviewed 2,000 articles published from 1900 to 1955 and

identified 155 research studies reporting information regarding what workers wanted from their

jobs. They found that the results of the studies were contradictory, perhaps because the research

methods employed in the various studies differed, and even slight modifications in the phrasing

of the questions may have affected the responses. They also noticed that different results were

achieved when the measures were designed to identify what made people happy about their jobs,

as opposed to studies directed at identifying the factors leading to job dissatisfaction. This difference led these researchers to test the hypothesis that there were additional factors leading to job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction. Their approach, which led to the development of the motivation hygiene theory, was based on the critical incident method, which asked participants to describe situations that resulted in their feeling good or bad about their jobs. Herzberg et al. (1993) concluded from their results that some work environments contribute to job dissatisfaction without particularly contributing to job satisfaction. They called the factors affecting job dissatisfaction the *hygiene factors* and those affecting job satisfaction the *motivators*. Motivators were chiefly derived from achievement and growth in the quality of the work itself.

Maslow's motivation theory (1970) proposed that as individuals meet their most pressing needs they strive to achieve full expression of who they are. Typically, satisfaction of those needs that ensure survival must be achieved before an individual pursues needs that may lead to a more fulfilled life. In other words, physiological needs, such as having access to food and water, precede safety needs, such as security, stability, dependency, and protection. The needs for love and belonging precede the need for esteem, which, in turn, precedes the need for self-actualization.

Numerous theorists proposed theories addressing psychological needs and motives, as behavior increasingly was viewed as a function of the interaction of the person with the environment. Seyfarth (2002) asserted that performance is influenced by three factors: (a) employee knowledge and ability, (b) employee motivation, and (c) the environment of the workplace. According to Owens (2001), contemporary thinking about organizational change was

strongly influenced by the work of W. Edwards Deming, whose ideas transformed Japanese industrial management from 1950 to 1980 and United States management thereafter. Owens asserted that fundamental to the process of total quality management is a transformation of the organizational culture—the basic assumptions, beliefs, and values that give purpose to the behavior of everyone in the organization.

Examining work behaviors and the interaction between workers and the environment became increasingly more common. Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) reported that managers began examining the causes of absenteeism in the 1940s. Following that time, hundreds of books, papers, and articles were written in the United States, the United Kingdom, and elsewhere about the topic. As companies were prospering, more time was made available for managers to collect and analyze employee records, looking at factors associated with absenteeism and turnover rates. The relationship between the person and the environment increasingly became the subject of research.

<center>Developments Contributing to the Locus of Control Construct</center>

Attributions, the causes we regard as the basis for an action, affect our understanding as well as our reactions to our environment (Heider, 1958). When situations are ambiguous, a person's needs or wishes might determine the attribution that will be made. Individuals may make the attribution that they cannot accomplish something, whereas in actuality they do not want to engage in the action. Another situation may involve individuals' attributing to themselves a quality such as honesty, when in reality there is no opportunity to steal. In another situation, some individuals may want to relieve themselves of guilt for not having tried hard

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enough to produce the desired outcome by blaming the negative outcome on something they could not control. Heider further said that not only can personal actions be affected by egocentricity but also the attributions we make of others' actions.

Rotter (1966) believed that the expectancies we derive from experience are based on the attributions we have made. Those expectancies have clear implications for the acquisition and performance of skills. He believed that when individuals feel they are in control, they are more likely to be alert to the aspects of the environment that will provide them with additional data, and they will actively take steps to improve their condition. Moreover, they will place greater value on skills, analyzing the reasons for successes and for failures, and will be more resistant to others' attempts to alter their plan of actions.

Locus of control research evolved from social learning theory, which provided a theoretical framework for research on locus of control (Rotter, 1966; Stevik, Dixon, & Willingham, 1980). Social learning theory states that reinforcement increases the expectancy that a response will be reinforced in the future. Conversely, a lack of reinforcement following a response that was expected to induce reinforcement will decrease the expectancy that the response will be reinforced in the future. If individuals feel that the responses directly result from their behaviors, this expectancy will occur with greater intensity than if they do not feel they are in control and able to influence the response. A person's history contains a large number of such attributions made over time. These are derived from the results of specific events as well as generalizations made from similar events and situations.

Weiner (1974) contended that locus of control does not influence expectancy shifts as social learning theory postulates. According to Weiner et al. (1971), individuals attribute success

and failure to four factors: (a) ability, (b) effort, (c) task difficulty, and (d) luck. These can be subsumed into two dimensions: locus of control and stability. They defined locus of control as the impact of the self versus the impact of others or the environment as being responsible for an action. Causal stability refers to the stability of the presumed causes. Weiner (1974) suggested that although it is difficult to distinguish whether reinforcement is productive because a reward increased the connection between the previous stimulus and the response or because the individual anticipated the incentive of the goal, the two could be distinguished through experimentation. Weiner (1974) reviewed the experimental literature and concluded that locus of control influences only the affective responses to success and failure. He believed that a person's perception regarding the source of control over an outcome determines the subsequent affective reactions to success and failure. In other words, success or failure that could be attributed to ability or effort results in greater pride or shame than success or failure that could be attributed to task difficulty or luck.

Weiner (1974) believed that causal elements fall within two dimensions and not only locus of control as postulated by social learning theory. He believed that causal stability influences expectation of success, whereas locus of control influences affective response to success and failure. Although Rotter (1966) and Weiner (1974) disagreed about the origin of the exact causal factor leading to an internal or external locus of control, both agreed on the effects produced by having an internal or external locus of control.

Employment in Healthcare

In the late 1990s the US economic system experienced a period of unprecedented growth

and low unemployment. Bailey (2001) reported that the number of jobs grew during the 1990s

with an average unemployment rate of 5%. Recent years have not shown much of a change. The

US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004) listed a rate of 5.4% for the month of

December 2004. Staff shortages were projected in the healthcare industry, primarily in lower

paid occupations such as nursing aides, orderlies, attendants, psychiatric aides, and home health

aides. Workers in this job category provided care for physically or mentally ill, injured, disabled,

or infirm individuals living in hospitals, nursing care facilities, residential care facilities, and

mental health settings. Home health aides typically worked in patients' homes or residential care

facilities. These jobs tended to have modest entry requirements, low pay, high physical and

emotional demands, and often a lack of possibility for advancement. Numerous job openings

were expected to arise from a combination of fast employment growth, poor working conditions,

and high turnover rate (US Department of Labor, 2004).

The long-term care industry was facing a very serious challenge. The pool of entry-level

healthcare workers had diminished as women and other minority members had access to more

opportunities. The increase of employees resulting from the baby-boom generation was

diminishing. Long-term care organizations had assumed they would have permanent access to

labor, primarily from low-income women willing to work as home health aides or personal care

attendants. However, labor has become a scarce commodity in the field of long-term healthcare

(Dawson & Surpin, 2001). Although competition among organizations seeking that type of labor

is high, there continued to be reluctance from taxpayers and managers of state and federal funds

to increase the pay and benefits, to improve the working conditions by reducing workloads, and to provide training and promotional opportunities.

Dawson and Surpin (2001) reported that in spite of welfare reforms, in particular the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act, and other state-level initiatives that increased the pool of welfare recipients returning to work, the decline of direct care workers was expected to continue. This expectation led to relaxed immigration laws to compensate for the shrinking labor pool. However, many of these new workers did not have a full command of the language, and this lack created vast difficulties in service delivery to the elderly, developmentally disabled, and other populations served. Dawson and Surpin's prediction was that the general pool of direct care workers would continue to be very limited until these positions were improved in terms of pay, benefits, and working conditions. Government funding increases were essential, as direct care workers often work either directly as state employees or indirectly for agencies receiving state and federal funds.

The combination of a low unemployment rate, difficult working conditions for healthcare workers, a diminished pool of applicants, and an increased need for such occupations as the baby-boom generation retires, may increase the difficulties employers are facing finding applicants. These difficulties may contribute to a greater emphasis placed on reducing turnover.

Locus of Control and Associated Factors

Locus of Control in Non-Work Settings

Since Rotter's monograph (1966), over 2,000 studies have been published on locus of control. This section discusses studies on locus of control having contingencies and outcomes related to the topic of this dissertation. Locus of control research studies in work settings will follow this section.

Janssen and Carton (1999) reported that students with internal locus of control tended to begin working on assignments sooner than students with external locus of control. Moreover, they turned in their assignments sooner than students with external locus of control.

Individuals with an internal locus of control engaged in daydreams that were more achievement oriented and less expressive of fear of failure than individuals having an external locus of control (Brannigan & Hawk, 1991). Participants in Brannigan and Hawk's study were 200 introductory psychology students. Their results supported the notion that individuals with an external locus of control were more preoccupied with failure.

Mudrack (1990) used meta-analytic techniques to integrate 20 studies that had investigated the relationship between Machiavellianism and locus of control. These studies had been published during the 1970s and the 1980s, collectively resulting in a sample size of 3,046. He surmised that the use of manipulation and deception might become more predominant when the efficacy of personal effort is deemed ineffective.

There were no statistically significant relationships between locus of control scores and ability in a sample of Norwegian students (Manger & Eikeland, 2000). The researchers' purpose was to review published studies to examine the relationship among level of ability, internal and external locus of control, and gender. They found conflicting findings among the studies.

Hook (1989) investigated gender differences and children's attributions. Ninety-six children participated in the study, which presented five stories using an omniscient narrator representing the five Heider levels of attributions (1958). Results indicated no gender differences in the blame rating among the children.

The above studies indicate that individuals with an internal locus of control tend to experience less procrastination, less stress and anxiety, and less need to manipulate, and that they are more achievement oriented than individuals with an external locus of control. There were no consistent findings linking locus of control with gender or with ability.

Locus of Control in Work Settings

Since Rotter's development of the I–E scale (1966), many locus of control scales have been developed for more specific uses. Most of these uses were in the areas of mental health careers and economics, but recently locus of control scales have been developed for use in the organization domain. This section of the literature review focuses on studies that were conducted in organizations and studies that reported findings regarding work attitudes and behaviors associated with locus of control.

Rotter (1966) completed a comprehensive review of studies done prior to his time and found an unusually consistent set of findings. Studies provided strong support for his emerging

hypothesis that individuals who believe they can control their destinies are likely to (a) be more alert and aware of their environment, (b) take steps to improve their environmental conditions, (c) place greater value on skill or achievement, and (d) be more resistive to others' attempts to influence them. The combination of these observations led to the development of the I–E Scale and further support for the construct of locus of control.

Productivity, an essential element contributing to success of any organization, is reduced when employees engage in procrastination. Lonergan and Maher (2001) found a relationship between the degree of autonomy in a position and procrastination. For individuals having low autonomy, there were no statistically significant differences in procrastination between those having an internal versus an external locus of control. Increasing the amount of work autonomy was beneficial for all individuals. Lonergan and Maher reported that the combination of high autonomy and an internal locus of control was associated with the least amount of procrastination.

Personality variables, as defined by negative affectivity, locus of control, and components of type-A behavior, were statistically significant predictors of future job stress and job strains (Spector & O'Connell, 1994). These researchers implemented a longitudinal design study that assessed personality components of employees one year prior to the job stressors and strains, before they began employment. Students who had an external locus of control score were predicted to report higher levels of stressors and strains at a later time when they would become employed, compared with those who had obtained an internal locus of control score. Subjects for this study were 109 alumni of the University of South Florida. Locus of control was measured with the Work Locus of Control Scale (WLCS). Spector and O'Connell reported that locus of

control was most strongly related to the job stressor of autonomy. Locus of control correlated also with both role stressors and interpersonal conflict. Internal locus of control subjects experienced lower levels of job stressors. These individuals experienced more job satisfaction than external locus of control subjects and less work anxiety. In this sample, locus of control, rather than negative affectivity, was more related to satisfaction.

Cheng (1994) found that locus of control seemed to be a strong indicator of teachers' attitudes and organizational perceptions. He discovered that teachers with an internal locus of control were more committed to their organization's goals and generally were more positive about their lives. Furthermore, these teachers appeared to have a stronger sense of their roles and tended to be more positive and more knowledgeable of the organizational structure and culture.

Blau (1993) looked at two locus of control scales (Rotter, 1966; Spector, 1988) in his study to determine if a difference in work performance among bank tellers could be explained by a tendency toward initiative versus compliance. The Rotter and Spector scales showed partial overlap (r = .50). The Spector locus of control measure was positively related to productivity (r = .27) and negatively related to self-development (r = -.30). Both correlations were statistically significant ($p < .01$). Spector's measure resulted in a statistically significant relationship ($p < .05$) toward self-development in comparison with the Rotter measure.

Spector (1982) stated that individuals having an internal locus of control tend to take it upon themselves to take action and are more likely to take the initiative and perform independent action, whereas individuals having an external locus of control tend to depend on outside factors, such as policies, rules, and formal or informal practices, to guide their actions. He proposed that when the tasks involved more compliance and not as much initiative and independence,

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individuals having an external locus of control would perform better. Conversely if the tasks required more initiative and independence, individuals with an internal locus of control would perform better.

O'Connor and Morrison (2001) investigated the characteristics that would predispose employees to perceive their organization as political. They reported that work locus of control and Machiavellianism were statistically significant predictors, accounting for 52% of the variance in the participants' perceptions of organizational politics. Respondents' perceived control at work was measured using Spector's (1988) WLCS. Questionnaires were distributed to 2,000 staff members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Ottawa, Canada. O'Connor and Morrison concluded that the amount of variance accounted for by work locus of control (8% and 2% for the external and internal scales, respectively) underscores the importance of using specialized locus of control scales.

Gardner and Beatty (2001) reviewed empirical findings related to techniques used to change a person's locus of control. They reported evidence supporting the notion that having an internal locus of control was of benefit in a school setting as well as in the work domain. Their focus was in modifying disadvantaged and handicapped students' and workers' locus of control from external to internal. They derived suggestions for human resource personnel, vocational teachers, and employment counselors: (a) immediate reward for responsible behavior, (b) integration of goal-setting procedures with a fading schedule, and (c) discussions about the relationship between displayed behaviors and consequences.

Contradictory to other findings that indicated that individuals with external locus of control operate well in situations in which they have limited individual control, Perrewe's

research (1987) found that individuals with a high activity level and an external locus of control experienced less stress when they felt they had more control over their own work. This finding may indicate that although individuals with external locus of control prefer secondary control, psychological stress is reduced with primary control. Employees with an external locus of control benefit most from having control over the work environment as they have the strongest negative relationship between job stress and anxiety.

In summary, research studies done in organizational settings indicate that employees with an internal locus of control tend to be more responsive to their environment, proactive, determined, autonomous, productive, satisfied, relaxed, and generally more committed to organizational goals.

Employee Satisfaction and Its Components

Increasingly, morale, satisfaction, and performance of employees have become the main topics of many books, workshops, and theories. In past decades an avalanche of strategies was proposed to increase positive work attitudes and behaviors and decrease conditions leading to employee dissatisfaction and an associated decrease in performance.

Garland (2002) reported that turnover in institutional settings was often linked to burnout, which led to decreased quality of care as staff shortages interfered with comprehensive treatment. He pointed out that although some staff members may remain because of the organization's benefit package, they might slip into a habit of exerting minimal effort. Moreover, a perception of workplace danger found in many hospitals and residential settings exacerbated stress, exhaustion, and job dissatisfaction. Workplaces in correctional settings and other

institutions were typically unattractive, leading to a depressed ambiance and devitalized

employee commitment. Staff burnout also led to the ineffective implementation of procedures

and to decreased commitment. Garland reported that staff burnout was often overlooked as a

barrier to rehabilitation in correctional settings. He described burnout as a situation in which the

employee is emotionally exhausted, engages in a process of depersonalization, and has a sense of

reduced personal accomplishment. Garland concluded by specifying that staff burnout was one

of the most serious threats to effective treatment of clients. He reported that research conducted

in correction and non-correction settings indicated that organizational and managerial

deficiencies were the causes of worker distress that led to burnout and turnover.

Similarly, Bednar (2003) found that child welfare workers in charge of protecting abused

and neglected children experienced high stress. Turnover tended to be high with performance

impaired by burnout and job dissatisfaction. Battey (2000) reported that if employees were not

satisfied in their employment, they would leave. He recommended that employers foster a job

environment that is conducive to employees' being comfortable, enjoying adequate benefits, and

having flexible work schedules.

Although a strong consensus existed among studies citing the importance of increasing

job satisfaction and decreasing turnover, Todd (2002) presented a converse and atypical point of

view. He stated that trying to increase employee satisfaction to 100% might just be a waste of

time. In support of his belief he cited other articles suggesting that employee satisfaction was not

associated with higher performance or higher profits. Previously, Cavanagh (1989) had

suggested a positive side to turnover: it allows hospitals to bring in new employees more

frequently, thereby introducing new practices and standards of care.

Often, environmental ambiguity in an organization, a situation typically resulting from prior or anticipated procedural organizational changes, is negatively correlated with employee satisfaction (Korman, 1971). However, Korman hypothesized that environmental ambiguity is negatively correlated with satisfaction when employees have only minimal control over their situations. His research study consisted of administrating a Likert-type questionnaire to undergraduate students from three universities in the New York metropolitan area. Two of the universities were private and one was public, resulting in a total sample of 383 participants. His hypothesis was confirmed for one of the university samples. In the other two universities, ambiguity was not related to satisfaction for either those having high self-control and self-confidence or those having low self-control and self-confidence. These two universities had undergone numerous organizational changes, and the participants had accepted those changes as a part of life. Korman concluded that organizational changes are not dissatisfying to employees as long as the environment provides a sense of high self-confidence and self-esteem or as long as employees' belief systems change as the organizational changes take place. This process allows them to see the changes as part of an evolving process.

Measurement of Job Satisfaction

Employee absenteeism and turnover, often the result of employment dissatisfaction, are costly directly or indirectly, and organizations have attempted to identify their causes, as well as reduce their rate through the implementation of various procedures.

A variety of scales, surveys, and methods of interviews have been used to measure work attitudes, values, perceptions, satisfaction, and stress, in order to derive an index of satisfaction

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and to identify the areas of dissatisfaction in an effort to remedy the problems affecting overall employee satisfaction and performance.

Job satisfaction is "the degree to which people like their jobs" (Cook, Hepworth, Wall, & Warr, 1981, p. vii). Assessing employee satisfaction is not a recent topic or trend. Cook et al. drew on over 4,000 research reports specifically looking at the effectiveness of 250 scales measuring work attitudes, values, and perceptions that had been used and published in journals from 1974 to the mid-1980s. In 1997, Spector reported several reasons why employers needed to seek and achieve employee satisfaction. These included the humanitarian perspective that people should be treated with respect and the utilitarian perspective that job satisfaction leads to better organizational functioning and ultimately to higher profits.

The relationship between employee satisfaction, other work related attitudes, and organizational performance was investigated by Ostroff (1992). She collected data from 13,808 teachers assigned to 298 schools. Correlation and regression analysis supported the existence of a relationship between employee satisfaction and organizational performance.

Employee satisfaction was surveyed with direct-care workers in residential facilities serving adults with mental retardation (Bordieri & Peterson, 1988). Fourteen facilities in Minnesota were selected to be part of the study. A repeated measures of analysis of variance revealed that respondents to the survey reported that the factors of interpersonal relationships, the work itself, and the quality of the supervision contributed more to job satisfaction than job incentives. Bordieri and Peterson recommended future research to focus on identifying strategies to combat the disincentives of direct-care workers, such as the lack of opportunity for advancement, inadequate facility policies and administration, and low salaries. They concluded

that combating disincentives would ultimately result in improved services for individuals with mental retardation.

One method of data collection used by human resources managers is the use of in-house surveys to assess employee satisfaction and attitudes toward the organization. Smith (2003) reported on a study conducted by Sears with 212 management candidates that examined the relationship between attitude change and employees' subsequent decisions to stay or leave. Decline in commitment preceded the action of leaving. Thus, warning signs of turnover could be recognized and addressed, thereby reducing the turnover rate within the organization. In response to these findings, Sears incorporated changes in its training programs and supervisory procedures.

A meta analysis of 25 articles looking at the relationships between demographic variables, perceptions, organization conditions, and turnover rate or intent to leave was conducted by Mor Barak, Nissly, and Levin (2001). They concluded that burnout, job dissatisfaction, availability of employment alternatives, low organizational and professional commitment, stress, and lack of social support are the strongest predictors of turnover or intention to leave.

Lambert et al. (2001) reviewed data obtained from 1,515 respondents using the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey. Respondents were asked 887 questions concerning work and home life, including work attitudes, perceptions, intentions, and behaviors. The researchers concluded that job satisfaction was the key mediating variable between work environment and turnover intent.

Seven factors were identified as contributing to job satisfaction among special educators (Abelson, 1986). These factors were identified from responses made by special educators on a 73-item questionnaire. Factor analysis procedures identified the following seven items: (a) behavior management skills, (b) administrative relationships and feedback, (c) positive feelings, (d) working conditions, (e) leadership opportunities, (g) collegiality, and (f) authority and control. Post-hoc analysis identified two group differences. Teachers teaching students with learning disabilities were less satisfied with their behavior management skills, and teachers of the emotionally disturbed were the least satisfied with their working conditions.

Surveys, scales, and interviews are methods used by managers to acquire information from their employees. Review and comparison of the findings may reveal similarities and consistencies in what employees perceive as important for them to function productively and effectively. This information can be used to implement changes that will affect the employees in a positive manner.

Financial Impact of Employee Dissatisfaction

Cooper and Cartwright (1994) reported that the cost of occupational stress to business and organizations was exorbitant and primarily resulted from behaviors attributed to stress, such as absenteeism, lower productivity, and turnover. Since the early 1970s when the California Supreme Court upheld its first stress disability case, compensation claims for psychiatric injuries have grown. Although Cooper and Cartwright reported some positive findings for the use of counseling and stress management training programs, their recommendation was for organizations to focus their efforts toward reducing workplace stressors. Watson (2003) reported

that companies that increase their profits are companies that understand the link between employee satisfaction and customer loyalty and growth and act accordingly. People are the greatest asset in any organization (Corvey, 2003). Leading employers know that one of the best ways to keep good employees and to reduce turnover is to treat employees with respect (Wexler, 2001).

Koys (2001) focused on trying to determine if positive employee attitudes influenced positive business outcomes or whether positive business outcomes influenced positive employee attitudes and behaviors. He concluded that human resource outcomes, such as absenteeism, turnover rate, and procrastination influence business outcomes.

Employee satisfaction is now of prime concern to organizations, as managers are increasingly seeing the relationship between employee satisfaction and employee performance as it impacts on profits and delivery of services (Koys, 2001). Two of the largest contributors to decreased profit and performance are turnover and absenteeism. Although turnover and absenteeism differ in permanency, both are absences that affect the organization negatively (Goodman et al. 1984).

<div align="center">Turnover and Associated Factors</div>

Kaye and Jordan-Evans (2002), management consultants, collected data from exit interviews, focus groups, and Internet surveys of over 12,000 employees and 40,000 managers to identify the factors contributing to employee retention. They reported that front-line supervisors have the most potential impact in preventing turnover, as they control many of the factors that contribute to employee satisfaction. Interestingly, income was not the key issue in keeping good

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staff; instead, it was the supervisors' actions, reflecting the organization's commitment. The manager's relationship with employees is the key to the employees' satisfaction and their decision to stay or to leave. Beyond fair pay, people want to be treated with respect, want to engage in meaningful work, and want to be recognized and appreciated by their supervisor. Although organizational policies matter, the manager has more power than anyone else in the retention challenge, according to Kaye and Jordan-Evans. Branhan (2001) derived similar conclusions from his experience as a management consultant. The importance of having a proactive manager who cares for the well-being and performance of employees was a consistent finding in the literature.

A decrease in organizational performance is a major concern and a consequence of turnover (Cavanagh, 1989). This decrease is partly the result of decreased production as employees prepare themselves to leave and partly the result of the financial costs of seeking a replacement person. According to Kaye and Jordan-Evans (2000), once a company has attracted talented people, obtaining a favorable return on investment requires management to do all that is feasible in order to prevent their walking out. As finding, recruiting, and training represents a major investment, retaining key employees is an imperative concern.

A survey conducted in 1999 by the Hay group of more than 500,000 employees in 300 companies resulted in the identification of 50 retention factors. Contrary to popular belief, pay was identified as the least important retention factor. Instead, the factors that made the most difference were the ones that affected the workers' feelings: perceptions that work contributions were valued and appreciated and that work efforts were recognized, facilitated, and rewarded (Kaye & Jordan-Evans, 2000).

Larson and Lakin (1999) reported that annual turnover rates for direct support professionals averaged 18% in 135 large public institutions across the country. In comparison, annual turnover rates obtained from a national study of community residential settings averaged 34% in publicly operated homes and 71% in privately operated homes (Mitchell & Braddock, 1993). In these health settings, higher turnover typically has been attributed to staff members' having too many residents assigned to them, to the complexity and severity of the residents' needs, and to low pay at a time when unemployment is relatively low. Larson and Lakin identified essentially the same factors as making a difference in retention for group homes in community residential settings, but they also found that the length of time a home had been in operation was a contributing factor. Turnover decreases as work procedures get more refined and supervisors gain more experience.

Regardless of the performance of the economy, Smith (2001) suggested that organizations do not have enough quality people equipped with the necessary skills to fill all the available jobs. The growth rate of the workforce has been steadily declining since 1970. He reported that organizations must create a positive work environment to attract, keep, and motivate its workforce to higher levels of performance. He identified several causes of turnover: fewer workers, low unemployment rate, longer hours for many workers, more demanding work, family demands, changing work ethics, new expectations of college graduates, an aging workforce, and the need for a reasonable income.

Smith (2001) identified the following factors as contributing to high turnover: blind acceptance by managers that certain jobs have high turnover, failure on the part of managers to accept responsibility for retaining good employees, a belief that counteroffers can prevent losing

a good employee, an unawareness of the extent turnover reduces the bottom line, the perception that attempts at reducing turnover would be too time consuming, and the absence of a management accountability system.

Similarly, Jardine and Amig (2001) described the most common reasons employees leave as being dissatisfaction with the supervisor's management skills, perception that the work is unchallenging, failure to achieve recognition for their work, and the earning of salaries and benefits not commensurate with responsibility and effort.

As Miller (1996) pointed out, work conditions do not have a uniform effect on turnover. The individual's personality also determines how employees perceive and evaluate work conditions and how their perceptions will affect their decisions to stay and leave. According to Seyfarth (2002), all human beings strive to experience psychological success.

"In the twenty-first century, human thinking ability more than any other factor, even more than air, water, and food, will be at a premium," according to Nadler and Hibino (1998, p. 369). They believed that thinking ability will be the "invisible advantage" that will make the crucial difference in the performance of people in organizations, as it bridges the gap between technology, resources and employee values (Nadler & Hibino, p.369).

Buckingham and Coffman (1999), consultants for the Gallup Organization, contended that the front-line manager is the key to attracting and retaining talented employees. They delineated procedures used by effective managers to attract and retain talented employees. Better managers selected their employees for their talents rather than for their skills or experience, set up expectations defining the right outcomes rather than laying out steps to follow, and motivated by building on each person's unique strengths rather than by trying to fix weaknesses.

Buckingham and Coffman (1999) reviewed some of the data collected through surveys and interviews by the Gallup Organization. The database consisted mostly of employee surveys, supervisor surveys, and performance measures of supervisors in leadership positions, midlevel managers, and front line supervisors, such as: (a) sales, (b) profit, (c) customer satisfaction scores, (d) employee turnover, and (e) employee opinion data. They entered the performance data from over 2,500 business units and opinion data from over 105,000 employees. They found that those respondents who had higher levels of productivity, profit, retention, and customer satisfaction also had responded more positively to twelve of the questions that had been asked. Those questions, when answered positively, were associated with high performance and contentment. Five of these revealed a link with retention. These are delineated below:

a) Do I know what is expected of me at work?

b) Do I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work correctly?

c) Do I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day?

d) Does my supervisor or someone at work seem to care about me as a person?

e) At work, does my opinion seem to count?

These five questions were most influenced by the employee's immediate manager. If turnover is a concern, Buckingham and Coffman suggested that the organization should look foremost at the direct line manager's skills and practices.

The research studies discussed in this section were conducted to identify what workers wanted and needed to perform at their best. Although not all studies reported the exact same causes and factors, the majority reported similar findings, pointing to the factors that engender satisfaction and those that engender dissatisfaction.

Costs Associated with Turnover

In this section, several types of costs associated with employee turnover are described. Michaud (2000) reported that according the US Department of Labor, it costs a company one-third of a new hire's annual salary to replace an employee. He stated that this figure comprises both direct and indirect costs. Direct costs include advertising expenses (especially during times of low unemployment), sign-on bonuses, headhunter fees, and overtime expenses. Indirect costs include management time involved in recruitment, selection and training, and decreased productivity while current employees pick up the slack until new hires are in place.

In the healthcare setting, hidden costs and other negative consequences of employee turnover can disrupt services rendered to patients (Waters, 2003). Decrease in productivity represents a cost to an organization and leads to a consequent reduction in profit. Waters advocated analyzing why employees choose to leave as the key to effecting lower turnover rates.

Smith (2001) identified four costs of turnover: departure costs, replacement costs, training and development costs, and miscellaneous costs. Secretan (2001) examined an organization of over 10,000 employees. Staff turnover in this organization was averaging 22%, an annual loss of 2,200 employees. Secretan described the overall cost as staggering and debilitating for organizations. This loss caused a great burden and cost for recruitment and marketing and lowered the morale of the remaining employees—a miscellaneous cost. The cost of replacing a departing employee was cited as about one-and-a-half times the employee's annual salary. Assuming an annual average salary of $30,000, a replacement cost would be $45,000. With an annual departure rate of 2,200 employees, this turnover would aggregate to a bill of $99 million in addition to the negative impact it would have on the remaining employees.

The cost of replacing a worker is often underestimated because, in addition to visible costs, the costs of termination, advertising, recruitment, candidate travel, selection, hiring, assignment orientation, signing bonuses, and relocation are often hidden (Abbasi & Hollman, 2000). These authors indicated that one estimate revealed that the cost of employee turnover in American industry is about $11 billion a year. They believed that excessive turnover engenders far-reaching consequences and at the extreme may jeopardize the organization's objectives, negatively affecting innovation and causing major delays in the delivery of services and the introduction of new programs. Loss of key employees may negatively impact the quality and innovation of services delivered and, as a result, may adversely affect the satisfaction of both citizens and customers.

Jardine and Amig (2001) related that the unemployment rate in the United States makes competition for well-trained employees fierce. As mentioned in Chapter 1, they reported that according to the 2000/2001 Survey of Office Personnel Compensation, the healthcare field has the second highest industry turnover rate, 19%, second only to banking. The authors emphasized that turnover is expensive. Employee turnover is 25% of the employee's annual salary, plus 25% of the benefit package. For example, if an employee's annual salary is $35,000, the direct cost of turnover would be assessed at $11,375.

Turnover costs include administrative time, training costs, lower productivity, customer and client uncertainty, and lower returns on investment. High turnover rates adversely affect organization in other ways, such as loss of institutional memory, diversion of management focus, diversion of peers to train new hires, damage to the organization's image, and poor morale among remaining workers (Jardine & Amig, 2001).

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Times have changed. Although people still work for money, as it is a necessary resource, where they work is now the key issue. Unwanted turnover is a very expensive proposition. In its mild form, it erodes an organization, and in its more pronounced stage, it can destroy the organization in its entirety. Employees' willingness to stay with a particular employer will be affected by how they perceive they are respected and valued in their organization. Although many management programs have been created, and most have provided very sound and useful strategies, their effectiveness seems to be greatly affected by managers' basic beliefs about human nature. Managers can be taught good management practices, but if they do not truly believe that people have talents and are motivated to excel in their jobs given the right setting, resources, and expectations, they are not likely to implement these techniques consistently. Moreover, employees may perceive these techniques as manipulation ploys.

Organizations survive only when they make a profit above expenses. The direct and indirect costs of turnover are exorbitant, as described in the above research findings. Therefore retaining employees is an issue that is crucial and needs to be addressed aggressively by the organizations that want to survive and grow.

Organizational Attempts at Reducing Turnover

A great variety of strategies have been used by management in an effort to decrease turnover rate. Some have had a more positive impact than others. This section focuses on the studies that have reported some element of success in reducing turnover rate.

Guthrie (2000) suggested that the use of skill-based pay systems improved employee retention, whereas group incentive plans were often associated with greater turnover, an effect

that is magnified as the organization size increased. Similarly, Miller, Hom, and Gomez (2001) and Jardine and Amig (2001) found that profit sharing and saving plans lowered turnover while most other pay forms did not. Jardine and Amig additionally suggested that employers need to evaluate their turnover and retention problem and develop a plan based on employee feedback.

King Harris, CEO of the Honeywell unit that owns System Sensor, used an innovative approach to reduce his turnover rate by starting a home loan program to combat a steady loss of employees. McRoberts (2000) stated that Harris was experiencing a loss of more than a quarter of his workers each year due in part to the dearth of available housing. He resolved this by arranging for home loans for his employees to obtain housing. With this strategy in place, turnover dropped to 14%.

Coolidge (2000) suggested the use of free in-house advice to help reduce turnover. This author stated that Sun Microsystems opened a career center several years ago to help their employees secure the positions they would prefer within their company. This strategy was noted to be effective in reducing their turnover rate.

Elements That Improve Retention

According to Abbasi and Hollman (2000), managers should gain insight into the attitudes of their employees, invest in training, hire and train the right people, adapt their managerial style to today's worker, provide recognition and pay for superior performance, and create a non-toxic work environment.

Similarly, Michaud (2000) suggested that employers must build positive relationships with their employees through listening and by appreciating the employees' efforts. Moody

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(2000) provided comparable suggestions, emphasizing that managers must actively promote and reward qualified employees through monetary gains, promotional opportunities, or expressed appreciation.

Larson and Lakin (1999) suggested that managers in the healthcare system should provide adequate support to their staff, especially when they are expected to perform extra duties due to staff shortages. Moreover, managers should provide adequate training and recognition for employees' efforts and contributions.

Kaye and Jordan-Evans (2000) arrived at similar conclusions, emphasizing the crucial importance of the personal relationship between the direct supervisor and employees in terms of respect, awareness, appreciation, and recognition for higher work performance. These ideas were shared by Tulgan (2001), who additionally suggested that it is important to provide career opportunities within the organization and to expect managers to think of themselves as coaches, functioning in a leading and instructing capacity.

Nadler and Hibino (1998) delineated seven principles to impact organizational problems. These principles stress to managers the importance of first identifying the purpose for engaging in organizational activities and the potential gains from such activities. The principles also emphasize the importance of having managers examine each problem in its context. Finally, they recommend that managers implement procedures in a logical sequence, gathering only such data as necessary for modification to the initial plan of action. Implementation of these principles has been effective in organizational management, including in reducing turnover.

Absenteeism and Associated Factors

In this section, studies were reviewed indicating that absenteeism was a serious problem and concern for most managers. This topic was germane to this literature review since absenteeism was a form of temporary turnover. This section focused on the impact of employee absenteeism, its contributing factors, its costs, and the strategies that have been used by various industries and agencies to decrease its rate and impact

Absenteeism was defined in the American Heritage Dictionary (1983) as the habitual absence from work. Corporations and agencies typically defined it as the absence from work, excluding scheduled holidays and vacations. Although the majority of workers at one time or another displayed this behavior, its frequency can be problematic. It posed tremendous challenges for corporations and agencies, as it affected the quality of the services that are provided.

McGregor (1960) and Argyris (1971) perceived a conflict between human personality and the way organizations are structured and managed. Argyris felt that organizations often treated workers like children rather than adults, and as a result, workers often withdrew through chronic absenteeism or simply at times by quitting. According to Seyfarth (2002) all human beings strive to experience psychological success. One way in which they are able to do this is by performing competently on some personally valued task. The environments in which people work may increase the likelihood that they will experience psychological success, but when conditions in the environment prevent them from meeting their expectations, disappointment and frustration occur. Seyfarth added that self-esteem suffers and the individual withdraws emotionally and at times physically.

Sibbald (2002) maintained that healthcare workers are more likely to be absent due to illness or injury and are generally less satisfied with their health than are other workers. She listed the major causes of absenteeism for healthcare workers as musculo-skeletal injuries to the back, needle-stick injuries, and exposure to chemicals and other irritants. Larson and Lakin (1999) suggested that managers in healthcare systems should provide adequate support to their staffs, especially when they are expected to perform extra duties due to staff shortage. Moreover, he stated that it is critical that employees be provided adequate training and be awarded recognition for their efforts and their contributions. Kaye and Jordan-Evans (2000) maintained that managers must show they do care for their employees; provide them with a flexible benefit package; keep the doorways and pathways of communication opened between both parties; create a workplace that energizes, rewards, and recognizes; and help their employees change jobs if they so wish.

Morgenstern (1996) reported the findings of a survey of 574 companies by Illinois-based CCH Incorporated. He discovered that employees were taking more time off for family issues, stress, and other personal needs than they were from illness. He believed that this finding should lead to a re-evaluation of the usefulness of sick-day allocations, as employees increasingly perceive them to be theirs to use for personal needs as well as for family issues.

A low unemployment rate is a factor in the rate of absenteeism as it facilitates employees' obtaining other employment if necessary. Michaud (2000) asserted that a low unemployment rate might make finding qualified employees increasingly more difficult. Similarly, Moody (2000) contended that low unemployment rates created a workers' market.

Jardine and Amig (2001) noted that because unemployment is low in the United States, competition for well-trained employees is fierce. Buckingham and Coffman (1999) said that it is essential for the front-line managers to be fully equipped to address personnel issues. Better managers select better employees and know what to do when issues arise. They typically set up expectations defining specific outcomes rather than just steps to follow and are able to motivate by building on employees' strengths rather than focusing on their weaknesses.

Goodman et al. (1984) reviewed the literature, identifying 209 variables contributing to employee absence. They collapsed those variables into the eight factors they identified as the main contributors to employee absenteeism:

a) Work attitudes.

b) Economic and market factors.

c) Organizational factors.

d) Immediate work environment factors.

e) Job-content factors.

f) Personal factors.

g) External environmental factors.

h) Organizational change.

Harter (2001) was another researcher who found absenteeism to be a major problem in industries and agencies, costing billion of dollars per year. It disrupts the work environment and negatively impacts on employee morale, thereby affecting continuity and quality of services. Harter listed many causes for absenteeism: dissatisfaction, parenting responsibility, scheduling, sick-pay benefits, occupational injuries and illnesses, and employees' attitudes.

In summary, absenteeism created additional expenditures for organizations and negatively affected delivery of services and morale. Many proactive companies have implemented a variety of interventions and procedures to address this problem, at times successfully, at times not. Absenteeism affected the entire work force directly as well as indirectly, contributing to losses for corporations and organizations in terms of the quantity, quality, and efficiency of the services that were provided.

Costs Associated with Absenteeism

Goodman et al. (1984) estimated the total costs associated with absenteeism in the United States to be about $26.4 billion in 1977 and close to $30 billion in 1983. Since that time, the cost has continued to increase. Harter (2001) cited a report by the National Institute of Labor Studies that found the rate of absenteeism to be increasing among full-time employees. In 1998, the rate of absenteeism among full-time employees was 2.5% compared with 2.4% in 1996.

According to McKee (1992), the direct cost of absenteeism (including the payment of sick leave) averages approximately $411 per employee. But McKee added that indirect costs, such as overtime paid to other employees, decreased customer satisfaction, decreased morale and productivity of other workers, and time spent to accommodate for these absences, were much more costly than would be obvious at first glance.

Traditionally absenteeism is looked upon as a negative factor because of its costs to the unit of operation. Hackett and Bycio (1996) proposed a different view. In their study, they suggested that absenteeism might produce positive outcomes. They believed that the costs of absenteeism must be balanced against the benefits of employees' regaining control from

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abnormal levels of physical and or emotional fatigue. They reported that poor quality services were sometimes a result of having employees work when they were overwhelmed emotionally or physically.

<div align="center">Organizational Attempts at Reducing Absenteeism</div>

In the fall of 1993, a welfare childcare resource center and agency in Idaho began receiving reports that young children were being left unattended in cars in the parking lot of a 24-hour food processing plant. Workers at the plant were working odd hours and did not feel they had any other options (Alverson, 1999). As maintained by Alverson, many of today's families are faced with a lack of availability of childcare services, as well as an inability to pay for the services. Childcare costs have skyrocketed during the 1990 through 1999. Alverson stated that employers throughout the nation were becoming increasingly more aware of the complexities involved, and that in order to address absenteeism, they must address all factors that were impacting on it. Alverson reported that, according to the Women's Bureau of the US Department of Labor, 41% of the families in the United States had children under the age of 14. Of these 70.2 million families, 14.6 million married couples and 4.7 million female-headed households were likely to have work-related childcare requirements. The statistics cited did not include the male-headed households, as the Women's Bureau compiles statistics only on women. Therefore, this omission of male-headed households would suggest that the overall number would even be greater. Alverson related that companies are now looking at these statistics, and many are helping their employees meet their children's needs. Below is a list of various

interventions companies have recently implemented in an effort to assist their employees (Alverson):

a) Toyota Motor Manufacturing in Georgetown, Kentucky opened a 24-hour licensed childcare facility for 230 children.

b) Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority contracted with 32 licensed childcare centers and offered their employees tuition subsidies on a sliding scale.

c) Johnson and Johnson in New Brunswick, New Jersey, established four childcare centers on site and offered discounted rates for other nearby childcare centers.

d) Xerox Corporation in Ventura, California, provided up to $1,750 annually in childcare subsidies to workers earning less than $50,000.

Other alternatives that have been reported used by employers included the following: contributions to community resources; flexible spending accounts; on- and off-site childcare centers; consortium childcare centers where groups of employers share the operating costs for the centers; sick and emergency school age childcare programs; telecommuting, job sharing, and compressed work weeks; and implementation of flexible leaves policies (Alverson, 1999).

As indicated by Arthur and Jelf (1999), gain-sharing programs, sometimes called profit-sharing programs, engender a lower rate of absenteeism. Their study focused on examining the effect of a gain sharing intervention over a 7½-year period with two key indicators of workplace union-management relations: grievance rates and employee absenteeism. The authors reported that gain sharing was effective in reducing absenteeism; moreover, the decrease in rate was continuous. This intervention required full involvement from the employees to develop the gain-sharing formula and the distribution of the rewards. Arthur and Jelf noted that success had

depended critically on the employees' perceptions of fairness in the development of the bonus formulas and in the distribution of the rewards.

Differences in outcomes can be seen through a review of the case of New United Motors Manufacturing, Inc. (NUMMI), the General Motors–Toyota joint venture. Bolman and Deal (1997) reported that in 1985, NUMMI reopened a GM plant in Fremont, California. They hired workers who had been previously laid off when the GM plant had closed. Of specific interest was that the plant had closed because of management's inability to resolve serious personnel issues such as chronic absenteeism, drug abuse, fistfights among workers, and numerous other employee-related problems. Two years later under this new management, absenteeism had declined from 20% under GM to 2% under NUMMI, and the plant was producing cars of higher quality at a lower labor cost than any other GM plant.

Bolman and Deal (1997) concluded that this massive positive change was the result of implementing a comprehensive human resource philosophy that included symbolic egalitarianism with workers and executives wearing the same uniforms and using similar facilities, such as the same parking lot and cafeteria. Moreover, employees were taught how to self-manage in teams and had strong input regarding the job design as well as every process used in the plant.

Focusing on employees' strengths is essential, according to Buckingham and Coffman (1999). They specified that this does not imply that poor performance should be ignored, rather that it should be confronted head-on. These authors related that the largest cause for employee poor performance is typically the companies themselves for not having provided the workers with the proper tools, resources, and information or for not having addressed possible personal

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causes and needs behind their poor performance. Buckingham and Coffman suggested that if the reasons behind work deficits were personal, it is important for managers to help their employees understand the impact of their behaviors. For example, managers could explain to employees the effect of tardiness or absenteeism on their co-workers and on the operations of the work entity. Helping the employees reorganize their home schedule could also have a positive impact.

Chenoweth (1998) reported that since 1970 when the Occupational Safety and Health Act was established, the incidence of occupational injuries and illnesses decreased by nearly 25% while the number of lost workdays increased by nearly 60%. Employers were reporting over 6 million occupational injuries and illnesses annually, with an injury-to-illness ratio of 20 to 1. Chenoweth stated that this gap results from a major increase of cumulative trauma disorders, such as carpal-tunnel syndrome. Chenoweth related that many factors may have contributed to this condition, such as poorly designed equipment, fast-paced work, minimal break times, stress, poor posture, force and repetition, individual predisposition, and poor physical condition. He reported that some studies show a positive relationship between reduced injury and specific programs designed to increase physical fitness of employees.

Whigham-Desir (1993) reported that corporate psychologists employ the term workplace depression to describe symptoms including a general lack of enthusiasm, low productivity, and high absenteeism. Workplace depression also encompasses employees' refraining from leaving the organization in spite of wanting to do so. Furthermore, unresolved conflicts with co-workers or supervisors and feelings of powerlessness also lead to workplace depression. The author related that lay-offs and reorganization, no longer uncommon, create additional stress. Whigham-

Desir suggested that employees must take ownership of and control over both their personal and work lives, actively seeking solutions for the challenges they face at home and at work.

According to Maslach and Leiter (1999), burnout is a serious problem in today's workplace. The authors explained that companies' downsizing, outsourcing, and restructuring have caused workers to feel overly stressed, insecure, misunderstood, undervalued, and alienated. They emphasized that the cost to both management and workers of having unhappy workers was high; therefore, both parties needed to seek proactive solutions to problems that impacted performance.

Maslach and Leiter (1999) suggested that the process of one person's uniting with a group to resolve a common problem could initiate change. Support from the organization needs to be solicited, as its involvement is essential for success. They reported that many areas are interrelated and therefore taking action in one area affects the others. For instance, resolving issues around fairness may clarify values and promote a better sense of community.

Interventions that were selected by managers to affect absenteeism were largely influenced by the executives' perceptions of the severity and causes of the problem. For example, corporations that recognized that absenteeism was partially caused by organizational deficits addressed it by implementing changes in the work routine, methods, and delivery of rewards. Managers who believed absenteeism was due to personal challenges experienced by employees, such as unavailability of childcare services, transportation, and poor health and stamina, addressed the problem by implementing interventions in these areas.

Summary

It is apparent that turnover was costly for organizations, as it impacted negatively on profits, and most organizations attempted to reduce its rate. Unemployment was still relatively low, and attracting employees for caregiver positions was becoming increasingly more difficult. Variables such as the relationship between employees and their supervisors, work demands, and job satisfaction have consistently been associated with a higher turnover rate. It is therefore important to determine if those variables do in fact impact turnover rates for positions that are critical for the provision of healthcare services. The following chapter will focus on the methodology used in this research to identify relationships associated with turnover.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the procedures, instruments, and methodology employed while conducting this study. The chapter is organized in the following sections: (a) research questions; (b) the setting; (c) the population; (d) instrumentation; (e) reliability and validity of the instruments; (f) data collection; (g) data analysis; and (h) summary.

Review of the Research Questions

The study was guided by the following four questions:

1. What is the relationship between locus of control of supervisors as measured by the Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988) and employee satisfaction as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994)?

2. What is the relationship between locus of control of supervisors and employee retention as measured by resignations and requests for transfers within the agency?

3. What is the relationship between locus of control of employees as measured by the Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988) and their job satisfaction as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994)?

4. What is the relationship between employee job satisfaction and variables such as level of physical help they must provide to residents with mental retardation and level of behavioral interventions they must provide to ensure residents' safety.

The Setting

The study was conducted at Gulf Coast Center, a residential facility located in Fort Myers, Florida. The facility provided residential services and therapies to 320 individuals with developmental disabilities and employed approximately 600 staff. There were 13 homes at the center; some of those had both male and female developmentally disabled residents, whereas some had exclusively men or women. Each home accommodated 24 to 29 residents, depending upon the size of the home. Services were provided around the clock with the staff assigned to one of three shifts. The majority of the staff was employed in caregiver positions.

Population

The participants in this study were supervisors and caregivers employed at Gulf Coast Center. The supervisors oversaw the operations and the services provided by the caregivers for their respective shifts. First-shift hours were 6:30 a.m. till 3:00 p.m., second-shift hours were 2:30 p.m. till 11:00 p.m., and third-shift hours were 10:30 p.m. till 7:00 a.m. Approximately 70% of the caregivers and their supervisors were women. The largest ethnicity represented was Black. About 50% of Black caregivers were from the United States, and about 20% were from the Caribbean Islands. The others were Hispanics from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and from various countries in South America, and approximately 20% were Caucasian from the United States. The

ages fell mostly between 19 and 65 years of age, with a few beyond that age. The majority were between 40 and 49 years of age.

Each supervisor was assigned an average of 10 caregiver positions for the first and second shifts, whereas the third-shift supervisor typically supervised only 5 caregiver positions. These numbers were total positions assigned to supervisors; however, vacancies tended to be high in spite of recruitment efforts, and therefore it was atypical for all positions to be filled. The population for this study consisted of the supervisors of the 3 shifts for the 13 residences and the caregivers they supervised. This selection could have resulted in a maximum of 39 supervisors and 325 caregivers, if all positions were filled and all staff members were eligible to participate.

It was deemed that a period of less than three months would be insufficient to assess employee satisfaction or locus of control, as new employees would typically experience turmoil and uncertainty as they engaged in new tasks and faced new expectations. Supervisors and their caregivers were instructed not to complete the scales if they had not been in their current position for at least three months. These directions were written using larger print characters in red ink on the WLCS and on the JSS. Additionally, a paragraph was included on both the JSS and the WLCS notifying the caregivers that their participation was voluntary and anonymous. Supervisors were asked to complete the locus of control scale, and the employees of these supervisors were asked to complete both the locus of control measure and the job satisfaction survey.

Instrumentation

Locus of Control

Locus of control was assessed using the *Work Locus of Control Scale* (WLCS) developed by Spector, professor at the University of South Florida (1988). The WLCS is a domain-specific locus-of-control scale designed to assess control beliefs an employee holds at the workplace. Spector reported that the scale has been shown to be related to work variables such as job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.

The scale has six response choices: (a) *disagree very much*, (b) *disagree moderately*, (c) *disagree slightly*, (d) *agree slightly*, (e) *agree moderately*, and (f) *agree very much*, scored with a range from 1 to 6, respectively, resulting in a range of total scores from 16 to 96. Eight items were internally worded and must be reversed scored. Those were items: 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 11, 14, and 15. High scores on the scale represent externality; therefore, the scores on the internally worded items were reversed before summing. A score of 6, which represents the strongest agreement on an externally worded item, was equivalent to a score of 1, representing the strongest possible disagreement on an internally worded item. Reverse scoring was accomplished by subtracting the registered value from seven on the questions identified above. Therefore, on those questions 1 was equal to 6; 2 was equal to 5; 3 was equal to 4; 5 was equal to 2; and 6 was equal to 1.

The procedure recommended by Spector (1988) for missing items was to sum all answers to obtain a mean. That figure was then inserted for missing values. For those items that were internally scored and required reversal, the mean obtained was transposed according to the corresponding values.

Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction was assessed with the *Job Satisfaction Survey* (JSS) (Spector, 1994). The JSS was originally developed for use in human service organizations. This survey was a 36-item, 9-facet scale that had been used extensively to assess employee attitudes about various aspects of their jobs. The nine assessed areas of satisfaction are pay, promotion, supervision, fringe benefits, performance-based rewards, rules and procedures, co-workers, nature of work, and communication. The JSS had a range of total scores from 36 to 216 with each item scored from 1 to 6. Negatively worded items were: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 24, 26, 29, 31, 32, 34, and 36. A summated rating scale format was used within six choices per item, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. High scores on the scale represent job satisfaction; therefore, the scores on the negatively worded items were transposed following the same criterion used with the WLCS.

Reliability and Validity of Instruments

The WLCS was designed to assess a person's belief in the control that he or she has over situations at work. Spector (1988) reported that the scale correlates about .50 to .55 with general locus of control. Internal consistency as demonstrated with coefficient alpha generally ranges from .80 to .85. Test-retest reliability for a year was reported as .57 by Bond and Bunce (2003) and at .60 by Moyle (1995). Furnham and Steele (1993) conducted a comprehensive review of over 50 locus of control measures specifically examining reliability and validity issues. In reference to the WLCS, they reported the scale had adequate convergent and divergent validity and acceptable levels of internal reliability and concurrent validity, though little evidence of

predictive or construct validity. The 16-item scale was validated on students (N=1,151). United States norms were based on 3,969 people from 31 samples. Spector reported a mean of samples of 39.9 with a mean standard deviation across samples of 10.0 and a mean coefficient alpha of .83. Validation evidence is provided by the relationship between the WLCS and organizational variables from six samples. The WLCS correlated to a statistically significant degree with all variables except tenure in most samples (Spector, 1988).

The JSS was originally developed for use in human service organizations. It consists of nine subscales producing 36 items that are used to assess employee attitudes about their jobs. Coefficient alpha based on a sample of 2,870 ranged from .60 for the coworker facet to .82 for supervision, resulting in a total coefficient of .91 for all facets. The nine-facet scale obtained the following internal consistency reliabilities: (a) pay, .75; (b) promotion, .73; (c) supervision, .82; (d) fringe benefits, .73, (e) contingent rewards, .76; (f) operating procedures, .62; (g) coworkers, .60; (h) nature of work, .78; and (i) communication, .71. Norms were established on 108 samples, resulting in a total sample size of 28,876 (Spector, 1994).

<u>Variables</u>

Turnover Rate

Turnover rate was established for each of the supervisors by their answers to a question that had been added to the WLCS instrument: *How many of the staff that you supervise have voluntarily left Gulf Coast Center during the past 12 months?* Answers to that question were

used to determine how many staff had left Gulf Coast Center for each of the supervisors that had returned the WLCS.

Transfer rate was established through a combination of two data sources. The first and more important source was the caregivers' answers of one of the questions that had been added to the JSS: *Have you requested to be reassigned from your current position to another cottage for the same shift?* Participants were requested to circle either *yes* or *no*. Supervisors were also asked to report on transfers and were asked the following question on the WLCS: *How many of the staff that you supervise have requested to be reassigned to another cottage for the same shift during the past 12 months?* Transfer rate was established by summing how many staff assigned to each supervisor had reported that they had requested a reassignment. However, since many of the respondents had declined to answer that question, if the supervisor's answer reflected a greater number than the number of staff that responded yes, the number received from the supervisor was used for analysis.

The number of employees who had requested to be transferred within Gulf Coast Center was added to the number of employees who had transferred within the year, thereby establishing an overall transfer rate for each of the supervisors. The following were not included as part of turnover: (a) staff who had left during orientation, (b) staff who were above the age of 65, (c) staff who had completed 30 years of service with the state of Florida retirement system, and (d) staff who were terminated.

Level of Assistance

All residents at Gulf Coast Center had a level of care assigned to them by Medicaid, denoting the severity of their need for services. This number was based on the level of services that were required for that particular resident. As medical needs increased, the level of physical assistance increased, and consequently the level of care assigned by Medicaid increased also. Residents assigned a level of care of *eight* required greater physical assistance from staff than those assigned a level of care of *seven*. Gulf Coast Center was an Intermediate Care Facility serving residents that have a multitude of serious debilitating conditions, and as such, the majority of the residents had a level of care assigned at *seven*.

For the purpose of this dissertation, residential homes were classified into four categories: (a) minimal, (b) moderate, (c) severe, and (d) intense. Homes classified as minimal had all residents with a level of care of *seven*, with no single resident assigned a level of care of *eight*. The moderate category was assigned to those homes that had at least one resident assigned a level of care of *eight*. Homes classified in the severe category had two residents with a level of care of *eight*. Lastly, those homes that had three or more residents with a level of care of *eight* were classified as intense.

Homes classified in the minimal category had the majority of their residents able to complete most basic self-care and daily living skills of their own accord, whereas those classified as intense consisted of residents requiring complete physical assistance for all tasks. This information was used to attribute a level of physical intensity for each of the homes to determine if there was any relationship between levels of physical assistance staff must provide and their job satisfaction.

Level of Behavioral Interventions

Residents at Gulf Coast Center had many behavioral challenges. Some homes specialize in providing services to those who are having behavior problems more frequently. Problem behaviors exhibited by the residents were recorded daily within the following categories: (a) aggression, (b) property destruction, (c) self-injurious behaviors, (d) agitation, (e) unauthorized possessions, (f) unauthorized absences, and (g) pica (eating non-edible substances). Four categories were arbitrarily established based on the frequency of problem behaviors recorded per month: (a) minimal: fewer than 200 problem behaviors monthly, (b) moderate: 200–400 problem behaviors monthly, (c) severe: 400–600 problem behaviors monthly, and (d) intense: 600 and above.

All staff members recorded problem behaviors as they occurred for each resident at Gulf Coast Center. A monthly average was obtained for each of the homes by averaging all problem behaviors recorded for all the residents in each of the homes for a period of three months and dividing that sum by three. The greater the number of problem behaviors, the greater the number of behavioral interventions from staff assigned to the residence.

This information was used to attribute a level of behavioral intensity to each of the homes at Gulf Coast Center and was used to determine whether a relationship existed between employee satisfaction and the level of behavioral intensity of residents.

Data Collection

Supervisors who qualified to participate and agreed to volunteer were given the WLCS. All their current employees were given the WLCS and the JSS. Supervisors were asked to

discuss the study with their staff and request their participation. Supervisors were asked to take

the WLCS and were instructed to return it to the researcher either at Gulf Coast Center or to

return it using a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) provided by the researcher.

Employees were given envelopes containing both instruments and a SASE that was addressed to

a post-office box. Follow-up was accomplished with the supervisors through electronic mails and

phone calls and with staff through periodic reminders by their supervisors during in-service

activities. Additionally, motivating signs were posted throughout the residences to remind the

staff of the importance of the study and of their participation. Posting and reminders to both the

supervisors and employees continued for a period of two months after the instruments were

initially distributed. Extra surveys and self-addressed envelopes were available at a designated

location on premises. Data collection began with the WLCS being given to the supervisors.

Distribution of the Surveys

The *Work Locus of Control* scales were distributed to the supervisors during scheduled

unit meetings and other special times scheduled for that purpose. Each supervisor was given a

package containing WLCS and JSS inserted in self-addressed stamped envelopes to be

distributed to each of their caregivers. All supervisors were given a number of envelopes that

corresponded to the number of employees assigned under their supervision.

All surveys had a handwritten number on the top right-hand corner. This number matched

the number that had been arbitrarily assigned to the supervisor. This assignment was necessary to

match the employees' responses on the JSS and WLCS with those of the supervisors. The

envelopes containing both scales were distributed to the employees by the supervisors. They

explained the purpose of the research to employees and encouraged their participation.

Supervisors were also asked to stress that participation was voluntary. Information regarding the

research and its purpose was also written directly on the JSS and WLCS. Employees were

instructed to not write their names on the surveys and to return the surveys using the stamped

self-addressed envelopes. The employees were informed that the number written on the right

hand corner of the surveys was a number that had been assigned arbitrarily to their supervisor

and that its purpose was to correlate their responses with those of their supervisors. Pens were

included in all envelopes to facilitate completion of the surveys and as a gesture of appreciation

for their participation.

Follow-up with Supervisors

Follow-up began one unit at a time, two to three weeks after initial distribution of the

surveys. Each instrument had been numbered and was logged in as completed upon return.

Electronic mail was sent to those supervisors who had not returned their scales, explaining the

purpose of the dissertation and its importance and encouraging them to return the scale. The

second follow-up occurred two to three weeks later and consisted of a second electronic-mail

correspondence to those who had not responded. This message included the number of

caregivers that had returned the JSS and WLCS. The third follow-up consisted of a phone call

two to three weeks later reminding the supervisors of the importance of the project and of their

participation, offering to answer any of their concerns and to provide additional scales as needed.

Another electronic mail followed two to three weeks later, providing an update on their staff's

return. The last contact was through a short note sent with another WLCS, informing them that

the project was close to its end, yet their responses still could be used and would be greatly appreciated.

Follow-up with Staff

Follow-up to increase staff return consisted of intermittently updating the supervisors on their staff's participation. For those supervisors who had not returned their WLCS, follow-up was performed conjunctively, encouraging them to return the instrument and also asking them to encourage their staff to do the same. For those who had already returned the WLCS, the purpose of the electronic mail was to provide them with an update on staff participation and to encourage them to talk about the project during their regular staff meetings and in-services to increase the return rate. For those supervisors who had returned the WLCS and had minimal responses from their staff in spite of earlier follow-ups, additional JSS and WLCS surveys were sent by mail, encouraging supervisors to persuade their staff to participate. The accompanying note explained that some of their staff may have misplaced the surveys yet might still want to participate. Follow-up began in one unit on February 15, 2004, and ended September 3, 2004, in the third unit and consisted of periodically contacting those who had not responded.

Data were logged each time a survey was received from either a supervisor or a staff member. The log listed the name of the supervisor, the number that was arbitrarily assigned, and the total number of caregivers assigned to that supervisor. Supervisors were periodically informed of the number of staff that had returned the surveys and were asked to remind their staff of the purpose of the surveys, to thank those who had returned the surveys, and to try to encourage others to respond. Supervisors were also reminded that if they needed additional

surveys to please request them by cell phone, work phone, or through electronic mail. Signs were

posted in the residences' employee restrooms to remind the staff that their participation would be

greatly appreciated and to ask them to contact the researcher to obtain additional surveys or for

any concerns they might have.

Data Analysis

Twenty-eight (85%) supervisors returned the WLCS and were eligible to participate.

There were three vacant supervisor positions and three supervisors that had been there for a

period of less than three months. Five supervisors (13%) chose not to participate. One-hundred-

twenty-five caregivers of three hundred and eleven (40%) returned the WLCS and the JSS. There

were six caregivers that returned one and not the other (1.9%). There were 103 employees (33%)

who returned both scales and who also had had their supervisor return the WLCS.

Statistical analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

(SPSS-11.0). Descriptive data included the mean and standard deviations for each of the studied

variables. The research questions were answered using the Pearson's Product Moment

Correlation. This procedure was implemented twice for the second and fourth research questions

to differentiate the strength of the relationships between employee transfers and employee

resignations, as well as between the level of physical assistance and the level of behavioral

interventions.

Multiple regression analysis was performed with employee satisfaction as the dependent

variable and the hypothesized influencing factors for the independent variable. This statistical

procedure was implemented because it is possible that by including all the variables, some may

have increased in their predictive ability due to the suppressor effect. Suppressor variables may effectively mask the relationship between other variables. This effect occurs when there is an unbalanced mix of positive and negative correlations between the dependent variable and the independent variables. A multiple regression was also implemented to predict the value of the dependent variable, turnover. The independent variables included in this analysis excluded job satisfaction. This analysis was selected to identify if the variables such as employee locus of control, supervisor locus of control, level of physical assistance, and level of behavioral interventions would be predictors of turnover.

Summary

This chapter discussed the research design, procedures, and methodology used in this study to provide answers for the research questions. Although extensive follow-up efforts were conducted to increase the return rate of supervisors and their caregivers, some of them elected not to participate. Analyses were performed for each of the research questions to identify whether a relationship existed between the delineated variables, and two separate multiple regressions were performed, one with job satisfaction as the dependent variable, the other with turnover as the dependent variable. The next chapter will discuss in more details the data analysis for this dissertation study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

The general purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between locus of

control and employee satisfaction. This chapter is organized as follows: (a) description of the

research group, (b) descriptive statistics of the variables, (c) inter-correlation data results, (d)

findings for each of the dissertation questions, (e) other statistically significant findings, and (f) a

summary of the findings.

Research Group

The participants were supervisors and their caregivers employed at Gulf Coast Center, a

residential facility serving developmentally disabled individuals in the Southwest Florida area.

Staff assigned to one of three shifts from the 13 homes were surveyed. Supervisors were given

the WLCS, and their caregivers were given the WLCS and the JSS. Questions were added to the

WLCS for the supervisors and to the JSS for their employees to ascertain the transfer and

turnover rates. Twenty-eight supervisors (85%) returned the WLCS, out of the 33 eligible

responses. Three supervisory positions were vacant, and there were three supervisors with less

than three months of experience that were excluded from participation. Five supervisors (13%) were eligible to participate but chose not to return the WLCS.

A total of 311 WLCS and JSS instruments were distributed to the employees. Some did not respond because they had been in their positions for less than three months and some elected not to respond. Some employees returned only one of the two instruments, and some declined to answer too many of the questions. Some employees returned the complete package, but the data could not be analyzed, as their supervisors had not returned the WLCS needed to complete the correlation analyses. Lastly, many responses were filtered out of computation due to supervisors who were ineligible to participate. In all, 121 returns (39%) were usable for analysis.

Description of the Variables

A mean number of problem behaviors of the residents for each of the homes was obtained from the psychological specialists employed at Gulf Coast Center by averaging three months of data, as described in chapter 3. This mean was used to classify each of the homes within one of four established categories of behavior: (a) minimal 0-200, (b) moderate 201-400, (c) severe 401-600, and (d) intense 601-1600. Homes classified as intense required frequent behavioral interventions from staff, whereas homes classified as minimal required infrequent behavioral interventions.

Similarly, a mean of level of care assigned to the residents by Medicaid was obtained for each of the homes through a chart review. Most residents at Gulf Coast Center were assigned a level of care of *seven*. Approximately 10% had a level of care of *eight*. This number reflected the severity of the residents' needs, and, typically, these individuals required more extensive

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physical assistance from staff. This mean was used to classify each of the homes within one of four established categories: (a) minimal, a home having no resident with a level of care higher than *seven*, (b) moderate, a home having no more than one resident with a level of care of *eight*, (c) severe, a home having no more than two residents with a level of care of *eight*, and (d) intense, a home having three or more residents assigned a level of care of *eight*. Homes classified as intense required frequent lifting, bending, squatting, and other physical movements to assist the residents, whereas homes classified as minimal required infrequent bending, squatting, and other physical movements.

Table 1 displays the demographics of the population. Over half of the employees (58.7%) worked in units that required minimal or moderate levels of assistance. Sixty percent worked in units where the level of behavioral intervention was either minimal or moderate. For the 121 employees, 73.6% had no one in his work group who transferred or was waiting for transfer in the previous 12 months ($M = 0.35$; $SD = 0.63$), and 66.9% had no one in his work group resign in the previous 12 months ($M = 0.58$; $SD = 1.06$).

Table 1

Frequency Counts for Selected Variables (N = 121)

	N= 121	%
Level of assistance		
Minimal	45	37.2
Moderate	26	21.5
Severe	19	15.7
Intense	31	25.6
Level of behavioral intervention		
Minimal	11	9.1
Moderate	61	50.4
Severe	29	24.0
Intense	20	16.5
Requests for transfer in work group [a]		
None	89	73.6
One	22	18.2
Two	10	8.3
Resignations in work group [b]		
None	81	66.9
One	27	22.3
Two to four	13	10.8

[a] Transfers: $M = 0.35$, $SD = 0.63$
[b] Resignations: $M = 0.58$, $SD = 1.06$

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics for selected variables. The SPSS statistical package was used to conduct these analyses. These variables included the number of requests for transfer, work group resignations, employee job satisfaction, supervisor locus of control, and employee locus of control. Data were obtained from the following instruments: WLCS from supervisors and employees, JSS from employees, and reports of transfers and resignations provided by supervisors and their employees on the WLCS and JSS.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Selected Variables (N = 121)

	M	SD	Low	High
Requests for transfer in work group	0.35	0.63	0	2
Resignations in work group	0.58	1.06	0	4
Employee job satisfaction	125.55	23.33	75	211
Supervisor locus of control [a]	39.94	12.19	16	62
Employee locus of control [a]	48.01	13.10	17	76
Level of physical assistance	2.35	1.21	1	4
Level of behavioral intervention	2.47	.89	1	4

[a] Higher score reflects more external locus of control

Table 3 displays the Pearson product-moment intercorrelations among selected variables.

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Table 3

Intercorrelations Among Selected Variables (N = 121)

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Requests for transfer in work group	1.00					
2. Resignations in work group	.05	1.00				
3. Employee job satisfaction	.01	-.10	1.00			
4. Supervisor locus of control [a]	.03	.33*****	-.08	1.00		
5. Employee locus of control [a]	-.07	-.03	-.34*****	.09	1.00	
6. Level of assistance	.14	.18**	.10	.09	-.15	1.00
7. Level of behavioral intervention	-.21**	-.21**	.06	.09	.11	-.46****

* $p = .10$.   ** $p = .05$.   *** $p = .01$.   **** $p = .005$.   ***** $p = .001$.
[a] Higher score reflects more external locus of control

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Research Question One

Research Question One asked, "What is the relationship between locus of control of supervisors, as measured by the Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988), and employee satisfaction, as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994)?"

The correlation between supervisor locus of control and employee job satisfaction was not statistically significant, r (119) = -.08, p = .37.

Research Question Two

Research Question Two asked, "What is the relationship between locus of control of supervisors and employee retention, as measured by resignations and requests for transfers within the agency?" Locus of control of supervisors was not statistically significantly correlated with the number of requests for transfer (r = .03, p = .78). However, supervisor locus of control (a higher number reflecting a more external locus of control) was positively correlated with the number of resignations within the work group (r = .33, p = .001).

Research Question Three

Research Question Three asked, "What is the relationship between locus of control of employees, as measured by Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1998), and employee job satisfaction, as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994)?" For the 121 employees, the employee's locus of control was negatively correlated with their level of job satisfaction (r = -.34, p = .001). Employees that had an internal locus of control reported a higher job satisfaction.

Research Question Four

Research Question Four asked, "What is the relationship between employee job satisfaction and variables such as physical assistance employees must provide to assist residents who have mental retardation and level of behavioral interventions they must provide to ensure safety?" As indicated in Table 3, the level of job satisfaction was not statistically significantly correlated with either level of assistance ($r = .10$, $p = .27$) or level of behavioral intervention ($r = .06$, $p = .50$).

Other Findings

Table 3 displays other statistically significant correlations. Specifically, the level of assistance was positively correlated with the number of resignations ($r = .18$, $p = .05$). Also, the level of behavioral intervention was negatively correlated with requests for transfers ($r = -.21$, $p = .02$), number of resignations ($r = -.21$, $p = .02$), and level of assistance ($r = -.46$, $p = .001$).

Table 4 displays the prediction of job satisfaction, based on selected variables. The overall model was statistically significant ($p = .005$), accounting for 15.0% of the variance in job satisfaction. The multiple regression model partialled out the predicted scores for each of the variables. Inspection of Table 4 revealed that job satisfaction was to a statistically significant degree higher for employees who had a more internal locus of control ($sr = -.33$, $p = .001$). None of the other predictors was statistically significantly related to employee job satisfaction. Cronbach alpha for the JSS was determined at .8302.

Table 4

Prediction of Job Satisfaction Based on Selected Variables (N = 121)

	B	SE	β	p	sr
Requests for transfer in work group	-0.421	3.291	-.011	.898	-.011
Resignations in work group	-1.804	2.084	-.082	.389	-.075
Supervisor locus of control [a]	-0.100	0.180	-.052	.580	-.048
Employee locus of control [a]	-0.596	0.157	-.335	.001	-.329
Level of assistance	2.713	1.900	.141	.156	.123
Level of behavioral intervention	3.926	2.712	.147	.150	.125

$F(6, 114) = 3.35; \ p = .005; \ R^2 = .150$
sr = Semipartial correlations
[a] Higher score reflects more external locus of control

Table 5 displays the prediction of turnover, based on selected variables, excluding job satisfaction. The overall model was statistically significant ($p = .000$), accounting for 17.0% of turnover. The multiple regression model partialled out the predicted scores for each of the variables. Job satisfaction was the excluded variable. Inspection of Table 5 revealed that two variables were statistically significant, the supervisor locus of control ($sr = .345$, $p = .000$, and the level of behavioral intervention, ($sr = -.194$, $p = .000$). The transfer rate variable was not included in this analysis, because staff either transfer or resign. None of the other predictors was statistically significantly related to turnover rate.

Table 5

Prediction of Turnover Based on Selected Variables (N = 121)

	B	SE	β	p	sr
Supervisor locus of control [a]	3.068	.008	.352	.000	.345
Employee locus of control [a]	-2.67	.007	-.033	.703	-.032
Level of assistance	3.299	.085	.038	.697	.033
Level of behavioral intervention	-.267	.116	-.220	.023	-.194

F (4,116) = 6,003; p = .000; R^2 = .171
sr = Semipartial correlations
[a] Higher score reflects more external locus of control

Summary

There were no relationships established to a statistically significant degree between the locus of control of supervisors and their employees' job satisfaction. However, there was a statistical significant relationship established between the locus of control of employees and their own job satisfaction, and a statistical significant relationship was established between the locus of control of the supervisors and turnover. Employees who had an internal locus of control reported a higher level of job satisfaction than the employees who had an external locus of control. Supervisors who had an internal locus of control had fewer resignations than the supervisors who had an external locus of control. Other findings included a statistically significant relationship between the level of behavioral interventions and employees transferring within the agency, and also with those resigning from the agency. The staff that assisted

behaviorally challenged individuals transferred and resigned at a lesser rate than those who worked predominantly with the physically challenged. The level of assistance was positively correlated with the number of resignations.

Results of the multiple regressions with turnover as the dependent variable, employee locus of control, supervisor locus of control, level of physical assistance, and level of behavioral interventions as the independent variables, excluding job satisfaction, revealed that supervisor locus of control and level of behavioral interventions were both statistically significant predictors of turnover rate.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter is organized as follows: (a) statement of the problem, (b) research group, (c) conceptual framework, (d) significance of the study, (e) design, (f) hypotheses and discussions of the findings, (g) other findings, (h) recommendations for future studies and implications for practice. The conceptual framework section presents the theories that provided the support for the locus of control as a theoretical construct. The significance of the study section provides synopses of key points in the literature that guided the identification of the variables selected in this study.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this dissertation was to establish if relationships existed between locus of control of supervisors, and the following two variables: (a) employees' job satisfaction, and (b) employee retention as measured by inter-agency transfers and resignations. Additionally, the locus of control of employees and their own job satisfaction was assessed, and whether job satisfaction of employees was related to the level of physical and behavioral exertion involved in their daily work duties.

<u>Research Group</u>

This study was conducted in a state developmental institution in Southwest Florida. Participants of this study were caregivers and their supervisors, predominantly from minority groups. The majority were women of black ancestry from the United States and from the Caribbean Islands. Although language barrier was at times problematic, the staff's literacy was sufficient to complete the surveys. Staff must have passed a written test prior to being considered for employment with the agency. Caregivers were often promoted within the ranks. Those with exceptional written skills and organizational skills were more likely to become supervisors. The difference in skills required to become a supervisor was apparent, and therefore animosity toward a co-worker for becoming a supervisor was rarely exhibited.

Follow-up efforts were at times thwarted, as some supervisors explicitly stated that staff participation was voluntary and that some staff members had chosen not to participate. Moreover, once reminded to bring up the topic again with their staff, some supervisors were reluctant to do so, stating that they had already done it several times and that those who wanted to participate already had.

Several events contributed to the difficulties. During the study, closure of the organization was announced, a new administrator was appointed, and numerous organizational changes occurred. Staff's willingness to participate in the study decreased, as organizational changes became increasingly overwhelming. Moreover, staff tended to be extremely busy, with too many competing requests made of them. The tendency was typically to ignore those assignments they did not perceive as critical to their keeping their positions. This reticence was due to several factors that included a mistrust of revealing potentially damaging information,

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language difficulties for many, conflicting work pressures, and concurrent organizational changes.

Conceptual Framework

Attribution research focuses on the beliefs people hold to explain events and the implication of those beliefs (Gredler, 2001). Attribution theory began with the work of John Atkinson (1957) and Fritz Heider (1958) and was further developed by Bernard Weiner (1980). Locus of control is one of the three properties of attributions, along with stability and controllability.

The locus of control theory, developed by Rotter (1966), originated from the social-learning theory (Bandura 1969). Rotter described internal locus of control, as a person's perception that an event was contingent upon his or her behavior or permanent characteristics. Conversely, he defined external locus of control as a person's perception that an outcome was the result of luck, fate, or the actions and influences of others. He reported that individuals' perceptions of control appear to have strong implications for problems of acquisition and performance.

The integration of attribution theory within the organizational sciences is a relatively recent phenomenon (Martinko & Gardner, 1987). The leader's attribution of member behaviors is based on past experience. These experiences generate expectancy for future performance and biases that can impact the leader's ability to determine causality. Attributions made about subordinates' performance are critical, because they influence the subsequent behaviors of supervisors (Green & Liden, 1980).

In summary, the conceptual framework for this dissertation is based on the locus of control theory developed by Rotter (1966). This theory originated from social-learning theory and is one of three properties of attribution theory.

<u>Significance of the Study</u>

Locus of Control

Although a variety of management programs provide sound and useful strategies to increase their employees' job satisfaction and combat turnover, successful implementation of such strategies may be impacted by the personal characteristics of supervisors. Buckingham and Coffman (1999) contended that the front-line supervisor is an important element in attracting and retaining talented employees. While many supervisors believe they are doing all they can to achieve employee satisfaction, their effectiveness may be impacted by personal characteristics such as locus of control (Rotter, 1966). Locus of control may be an underlying construct either aiding or hindering their effectiveness as supervisors and affecting employee satisfaction. It may be a factor impacting learning and performance of individuals, with those having an internal locus of control being more inclined to use the information they receive to plan and make changes. Spector (1982) reported that individuals having an internal locus of control tended to exert greater effort and typically performed better in their positions. He stated that those with an internal locus of control were better at assigning, distributing, and planning. More specifically they assigned work more logistically, designed better workflow, had more effective operating procedures, and established a better rapport with both superiors and subordinates. Ashkanasy

(1991) concluded in his study that supervisors having an internal locus of control were more sensitive to subordinate performance than those having an external locus of control.

Condry and Chambers (1978) stated that individuals having an internal locus of control tended to learn and use control-relevant information more than individuals having an external locus of control, and they exerted more control, being more objective and confident that their actions would contribute to a positive outcome. Gardner and Beatty (2001) reported evidence supporting the notion that having an internal locus of control was of benefit in a school setting as well as in the work domain.

Establishing a relationship between locus of control and factors such as employee satisfaction and turnover may be of practical use to organizations, as locus of control can be altered. Changing someone's attributions is sometimes called attribution retraining and has been used as an intervention for a variety of purposes, although it was mostly used in the school setting, in the mental-health setting, and for career counseling (Luzzo & Funk, 1996).

Turnover

By the year 2008, there will be 161 million jobs in the United States but only 154 million people to fill these jobs (Branhan, 2001). Employee turnover is increasingly becoming a major concern for supervisors and researchers (Lambert et al., 2001) as the employment forecast has changed over the years for employers (Harkins, 1998). The US Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004) listed an unemployment rate of 5.4% for the month of December 2004. Staff shortages were projected in the healthcare industry, primarily in lower-paid occupations such as nursing aides, orderlies, attendants, psychiatric aides, and home health aides. Workers in this job category provided care for physically or mentally ill, injured, disabled, or infirm

individuals living in hospitals, nursing care facilities, residential care facilities, and mental-health settings. Garland (2002) reported that turnover in institutional settings was often linked to burnout, which led to decreased quality of care as staff shortage interfered with comprehensive treatment. Larson and Lakin (1999) reported that annual turnover rates for direct support professionals averaged 18% in 135 large public institutions across the country. In these health settings, higher turnover typically has been attributed to staff members' having too many residents assigned to them, to the complexity and severity of the residents' needs, and to low pay at a time when unemployment is relatively low. Cooper and Cartwright (1994) reported that the cost of occupational stress to business and organizations was exorbitant and primarily resulted from behaviors attributed to stress, such as absenteeism, lower productivity, and turnover.

Employee Satisfaction

Many researchers have hypothesized that job satisfaction is the main factor in employee turnover (Lambert et al., 2001). Dennis (1998) found that the employees who were more empowered in their positions were also more satisfied and, subsequently, were more inclined to stay with the organization. Stum (1998) reported that job satisfaction is one of the main contributing factors leading to organizational performance. This finding was supported by Lambert et al. (2001), who found that job satisfaction is a key mediating variable between the work setting and the intention to leave.

Bordieri and Peterson (1988) concluded that the factors of interpersonal relationships, the work itself, and the quality of the supervision contributed more to job satisfaction with direct-care workers than job incentives. Lambert et al. (2001) found that job satisfaction was the key mediating variable between work environment and turnover intent.

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Research Questions with Discussion of the Findings

Locus of Control of Supervisors and Employee Satisfaction

Question I: What is the relationship between locus of control of supervisors as measured by the Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988) and employee satisfaction as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994)?

Result: The Pearson Correlation was -.083, statistically non-significant at the 2-tailed level of 0.05. This result indicates no statistically significant relationship between the locus of control of supervisors and the job satisfaction reported by their staff.

Discussion: Descriptive analyses from each of the 36 questions on the JSS indicate that the lack of correlation between locus of control of supervisors and employee satisfaction may have been due to other factors. Cronbach alpha for the JSS was established at .8302, indicating a strong internal reliability. Questions 1, 10, 19 and 28 were about satisfaction with pay and opportunities for raises. On Question 1, 66.7% of the respondents responded with the highest negative rating, and 62.9% of the participants responded similarly for Question 10. On Question 19, 50% responded with the highest negative rating and 55.3 % for question 28. Other areas of dissatisfaction included feelings of being treated unfairly by their supervisors (53%) and not feeling they could get ahead as fast as they do in other places (45.5%). Dissatisfaction in terms of having too much *red tape* and poor communication in the organization was also expressed. In conclusion, these negative ratings may have contributed to the lack of correlation obtained

between locus of control of supervisors and job satisfaction of employees. These factors may have been more salient influencing employee responses on the job satisfaction survey.

Locus of Control of Supervisors and Turnover

Question II: What is the relationship between locus of control of supervisors and employee retention as measured by resignations and requests for transfers within the agency?

Result for Transfers: The locus of control of supervisors and how many of their staff had either requested a transfer or had transferred within Gulf Coast Center was examined. The Pearson Correlation indicated that there were no statistically significant findings. The Pearson Correlation was .026, a statistically non-significant finding at the 2-tailed level of 0.05.

Result for Resignations: A moderate relationship to a statistically significant degree was found at .334 at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) between the locus of control of supervisors and how many of their staff had resigned. Supervisors who had an internal locus of control had fewer resignations than those supervisors who had an external locus of control.

Discussion: The lack of correlation between the locus of control and supervisor and employee transfers within Gulf Coast Center may indicate that other specific factors pertinent to the home, such as staff shortage within the home, level of functioning of the residents in the home, or personality conflicts, may have led employees to transfer equally, regardless of the supervisors' locus of control. If something pertinent to that particular home was bothersome to an employee, transfer to another home may have been considered as a solution to remove that particular hindrance.

The statistically significant relationship between supervisors' locus of control and resignations indicated that some factors leading employees to leave an organization were

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affected by the behaviors of their supervisors. Supervisors who had an internal locus of control had fewer resignations than those supervisors who had an external locus of control. It is presumed that the proactive strategies typically displayed by individuals with internal locus of control impacted their employees' decisions to remain at Gulf Coast Center.

Locus of Control of Employees and their Job Satisfaction

Question III: What is the relationship between locus of control of employees as measured by the Work Locus of Control Scale (Spector, 1988) and their job satisfaction as measured by the Job Satisfaction Survey (Spector, 1994)?

Result: The locus of control of employees was assessed with the WLCS and their job satisfaction was assessed with the JSS. A statistically significant relationship was found between the locus of control of employees and their own job satisfaction, -.340 at the 0.01 level, with the staff having an external locus of control having lower job satisfaction. The multiple regression analysis revealed that job satisfaction was statistically significantly higher for employees who had a more internal control. No other predictors were statistically significantly related.

Discussion: Employees with internal locus of control reported more satisfaction. It may be that the ability to identify those actions under their control along with the ability to concentrate their efforts toward obtaining improvement and resolution contributed to a higher job satisfaction. Once these actions were reinforced with some element of success, the behaviors increased in strength, thus confirming that personal action made a difference.

Job Satisfaction and Physical and Behavioral Exertion

Question IV: What is the relationship between employee job satisfaction and variables such as level of physical assistance they must provide to assist residents with mental retardation and level of behavioral interventions they must provide to ensure residents' safety.

Result for Physical Exertion: No statistically significant relationships were found between the physical exertion required by staff and their job satisfaction. Pearson Correlation was listed at .102.

Result for Behavioral Exertion: No relationship was found between the level of behavioral exertion and job satisfaction. Pearson Correlation was achieved at .062.

Discussion: The lack of correlation between physical and behavioral exertion and employee satisfaction suggested that other factors might be more relevant predictors of employee satisfaction. These may include some of the factors previously identified as affecting job satisfaction, such as low pay, lack of opportunities for raises and promotions, unfair treatment and poor communication.

Other Findings

The multiple regressions with turnover as the dependent variable, and supervisor locus of control, employee locus of control, level of physical exertion, and level of behavioral exertion, as independent variables revealed that turnover was correlated to a statistically significant degree to the supervisor locus of control and to the level of behavioral exertion. This analysis bypassed employee job satisfaction and addressed more directly the link between employee locus of control and turnover.

Although there were no statistically significant relationships between exertion and employee satisfaction, there was a negative relationship to a statistically significant degree between this variable and the one representing how many employees had requested transfers, -.214 Pearson Correlation at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), and a statistical significant relationship of -.211 at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), with the variable representing how many employees had resigned from Gulf Coast Center. Employees who worked in behavioral homes transferred and resigned at a lesser rate. Additionally, there was a statistically significant relationship between the level of physical exertion and the number of staff leaving Gulf Coast Center, .18 at the .05 level. The more physical exertion was required from the staff, the more often they resigned.

It is hypothesized that staff developed better behavioral intervention strategies over time and subsequently became more adept, thus becoming less likely to request transfer or to resign. This learning process was not likely to occur in the physical-exertion domain. The amount of bending, lifting, reaching, squatting, and other physical movements required daily to assist the residents cannot diminish over time. It is hypothesized that this difference between the physical and behavioral variables accounted for the data results.

<u>Recommendations for Future Studies</u>

The results of this study suggest a need for further study in the following areas:

1. It is recommended that future research address the need to more precisely define job satisfaction within the framework of a theoretical construct.

2. It is recommended that the relationship between locus of control and behaviors clearly definable, such as turnover rate and absenteeism rate, be further explored in residential settings, such as Gulf Coast Center, or similar human services agency.

3. It is recommended that other presentation methods be considered to obtain employee

    satisfaction ratings. In this study, 53% of the participants agreed strongly that their

    supervisors were unfair to them, yet 56.8% agreed strongly that they liked their

    supervisors. It may be that employees felt their supervisors were unfair because of factors

    out of the supervisors' control and that they liked their supervisors. The fact that

    mathematically each response essentially nullifies the other is problematic, since the

    responses do not provide specific information that can be used to induce change.

<u>Implications for Practice</u>

Many factors may influence employee satisfaction. Locus of control is one and in this study was found to be related to a statistically significant degree to employee satisfaction and turnover. Some factors impacting on employee satisfaction and turnover may be easily changed, whereas others are more difficult to change. Locus of control is one of the factors that may be modified. This change can be accomplished with attribution training by consistently showing supervisors and their employees the relationship between their actions and the outcomes derived from those actions. Although many management programs do provide a full array of effective strategies and procedures, these are typically ineffective when individuals have attributed external control over the outcomes presented. Combining attribution training and effective management skills in practice may increase employee satisfaction, decrease turnover, and ultimately increase the profit margin or the quality of services provided by the organization.

APPENDIX A

JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY

Following is the informed consent paragraph that was included on the Job Satisfaction Survey for employees:

"I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, and that I will not provide my name. I understand that these surveys are done by Patricia Nowotniak for the purpose of her dissertation, and that my responses will not be released to Gulf Coast Center. I agree that completion of the survey and scale will be done on my own time, and that in compensation I will keep the pen given to me."

	JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY Paul E. Spector Department of Psychology University of South Florida Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.						
	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. PLEASE ONLY COMPLETE IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN YOUR CURRENT JOB FOR AT LEAST 3 MONTHS	1)Disagree very much	2)Disagree moderately	3)Disagree slightly	4) Agree slightly	5)Agree moderately	
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2	There is really too little chance for promotion on my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1	2	3	4	5	6
6	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	I like the people I work with.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10	Raises are too few and far between.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1	2	3	4	5	6

15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1 2 3 4 5 6
16	I find I have to work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1 2 3 4 5 6
17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
19	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1 2 3 4 5 6
21	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1 2 3 4 5 6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1 2 3 4 5 6
23	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1 2 3 4 5 6
24	I have too much to do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1 2 3 4 5 6
26	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1 2 3 4 5 6
29	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1 2 3 4 5 6
30	I like my supervisor.	1 2 3 4 5 6
31	I have too much paperwork.	1 2 3 4 5 6
32	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1 2 3 4 5 6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1 2 3 4 5 6
34	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1 2 3 4 5 6
36	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1 2 3 4 5 6

Additional Question:

1) Have you requested to be reassigned from your current position to another cottage for the same shift? Please circle   Yes   or   No

APPENDIX B

WORK LOCUS OF CONTROL SCALE

Following is the informed consent paragraph for *employees* that was included on the Work of Locus Scale:

"I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary, and that I will not provide my name. I understand that these surveys are done by Patricia Nowotniak for the purpose of her dissertation, and that my responses will not be released to Gulf Coast Center. I agree that completion of the survey and scale will be done on my own time, and that in exchange for my participation I will keep the pen given to me."

Following is the informed consent paragraph that was included with the Work of Locus Scale for the *supervisors:*

"I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary and that my name and my result of the locus of control scale will not be released by Patricia Nowotniak to any other party. I understand I will be assigned a number, and that my employees will receive a survey and scale with that number inscribed on the top right corner. I understand that I will explain the purpose of this study and offer the staff the opportunity to participate, however, I understand that their participation as well as mine is entirely voluntary."

Work Locus of Control Scale Copyright Paul E. Spector, All rights reserved, 1988						
The following questions concern your beliefs about jobs in general. They do not refer only to your present job. PLEASE ONLY COMPLETE IF YOU HAVE BEEN IN YOUR CURRENT JOB FOR AT LEAST 3 MONTHS	Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
1. A job is what you make of it.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. On most jobs, people can pretty much accomplish whatever they set out to accomplish	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. If you know what you want out of a job, you can find a job that gives it to you	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. If employees are unhappy with a decision made by their boss, they should do something about it	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Getting the job you want is mostly a matter of luck	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Making money is primarily a matter of good fortune	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Most people are capable of doing their jobs well if they make the effort	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. In order to get a really good job, you need to have family members or friends in high places	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Promotions are usually a matter of good fortune	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. When it comes to landing a really good job, who you know is more important than what you know	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Promotions are given to employees who perform well on the job	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. To make a lot of money you have to know the right people	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. It takes a lot of luck to be an outstanding employee on most jobs	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. People who perform their jobs well generally get rewarded	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Most employees have more influence on their supervisors than they think they do	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. The main difference between people who make a lot of money and people who make a little money is luck	1	2	3	4	5	6

Additional Question (for supervisors only):

How many of the staff that you supervise have requested to be reassigned to another cottage for the same shift during these past 12 months?

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