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OLD HEADS:  
HAZING AND THE ROLE OF FRATERNITY AND SORORITY ALUMNI

*Gregory S. Parks,\* Shayne E. Jones,\* & Sean E. Rogers\*\**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, commentators have tried to make sense of hazing's legal contours.<sup>1</sup> In addition, they have explored why this legal regime has been largely ineffective at addressing hazing behavior—looking to cultural,<sup>2</sup> organizational,<sup>3</sup> interpersonal,<sup>4</sup> and individual dynamics.<sup>5</sup> One aspect of hazing that has received limited treatment, at least from a scholarly perspective, is the role and influence of alumni members. Indirectly, “Greek” alumni undermine universities’ willingness to address hazing on their campuses via the philanthropic support that they provide to universities.

Greek life alumni donate generously to their universities, even at schools like Wesleyan where Greek life is not a prominent part of the school’s atmosphere.<sup>6</sup> Alumni affiliated with Greek life are more likely to donate to their alma maters because their experiences with Greek life create emotional connections that increase their loyalty to their universities.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, “students who belonged to a fraternity or sorority” tend to “have strong[] ties with each other and the college.”<sup>8</sup> Greek alum still donate to universities heavily even when their respective chapters are shut down.<sup>9</sup> That is because the Greek experience tends to magnify one’s “gratitude to [their] college, and this [sentiment] does not disappear even if the actual fraternity

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1. See, e.g., Gregory S. Parks & Elizabeth Grindell, *The Litigation Landscape of Fraternity and Sorority Hazing: Defenses, Evidence, and Damages*, WASH. & LEE (forthcoming 2021); Gregory S. Parks & Elizabeth Grindell, *The Litigation Landscape of Fraternity and Sorority Hazing: Criminal and Civil Liability*, 99 NEB. L. REV. 649 (2020).

2. See generally Gregory S. Parks & Sabrina Parisi, *White Boy Wasted: Race, Sex, and Alcohol Use in Fraternity Hazing*, 34 WIS. J. L., GENDER & SOC’Y 1 (2019); Gregory S. Parks & Wendy Marie Laybourn, *Asian American Fraternity Hazing: An Analysis of Community-Level Factors*, 21 UCLA ASIAN PAC. AM. L.J. 29 (2016).

3. See generally Gregory S. Parks & Matthew P. Hooker, *Organizational Ideology and Institutional Problem-Solving: Hazing Within Black Fraternities*, 44 L. & PSYCH. REV. 91 (2020); Gregory S. Parks & E. Bahati Mutisya, *Hazing, Black Sororities, and Organizational Dynamics*, 43 L. & PSYCH. REV. 25 (2019); Gregory S. Parks & Sarah J. Spangenburg, *Hazing in “White” Sororities: Explanations at the Organizational-Level*, 30 HASTINGS WOMEN’S L.J. 55 (2019).

4. See generally Gregory S. Parks & Katherine E. Wenner, *Making the Band: Hazing and an Analysis of Interpersonal Dynamics*, 18 VA. SPORTS & ENT. L.J. 35 (2018).

5. See generally Gregory S. Parks & Jasmine Burgess, *Hazing in the United States Military: A Psychology and Law Perspective*, 29 S. CAL. INTERDISC. L.J. 1 (2019); Gregory S. Parks & Nicolette DeLorenzo, *Hazing in High School Athletics: An Analysis of Victims*, 29 MARQ. SPORTS L. REV. 451 (2019).

6. Caitlin Flanagan, *The Dark Power of Fraternities*, THE ATLANTIC, Sept. 9, 2019, [www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/03/the-dark-power-of-fraternities/357580/](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/03/the-dark-power-of-fraternities/357580/).

7. *Id.*

8. Thomas H. Bruggink & Kamran Siddiqui, *An Econometric Model of Alumni Giving: A Case Study for a Liberal Arts College*, 39 THE AM. ECONOMIST 53, 56 (1995).

9. *Id.* at 57.

[or sorority they were a part of] does.”<sup>10</sup> No surprise, “students involved in co-curricular activities develop institutional loyalty and these alumni give at higher rates than peers not involved on campus.”<sup>11</sup> Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that students who actively participate in Greek organizations tend to have stronger attachment to their institutions, thus having higher possibility of contributing more to their alma mater after graduation.<sup>12</sup>

According to Bruggink and Siddiqui’s 1995 study, Greek alumni are a lot more likely to donate to their universities than non-Greek alumni regardless of whether their chapter is active.<sup>13</sup> In fact, “[w]hen it comes to donating to their alma maters, fraternity- and sorority-involved alumni give four times as much as their non-Greek counterparts. . . . [T]hey [even] account for 75% of all total college and university donations.”<sup>14</sup> Truly, “fraternities tie alumni to their colleges in a powerful and lucrative way.”<sup>15</sup> The monetary contributions of Greek life alum benefit the university at large. Because “[t]he cost of educating a student (which includes recreational and extracurricular opportunities) is far more than the cost of tuition, . . . much of the gap between tuition and actual cost is covered by alumni funding.”<sup>16</sup> Schools rely upon the financial support of Greek alumni to keep operating.

In John Hachinger’s book *True Gentlemen: The Broken Pledge of America’s Fraternities*, he discusses “how members of Greek life account for only 19 percent of the alumni database of the Indiana University Foundation, the fundraising arm of the university, but account for 60 percent of donations.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore, Greek life members tend to contribute more on the private support to their universities compared to non-Greek life members, even though their populations are usually smaller. In addition, Larry Leslie and colleagues claim that “[b]ecause private giving is critical to all postsecondary institutions, especially in the independent

10. *Id.*

11. Patricia Purish O’Neill, *The impact of undergraduate Greek membership on alumni giving at the College of William and Mary* (2005) (Ph.D. Dissertation, William & Mary – School of Education) (W&M Scholar Works) at 3, [https://scholarworks.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6718&context=etd\\_](https://scholarworks.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6718&context=etd_)

12. *Id.*

13. Bruggink & Siddiqui, *supra* note 8, at 57.

14. Ash Tyler, *15 Revealing Stats on The Current State of Greek Life*, ELITE DAILY (Oct. 24, 2012), <https://www.elitedaily.com/news/world/15-revealing-stats-current-state-greek-life>; see also Shaan Buttar, *How Greek Alumni Benefit The Entire College Community*, ROOM FOR DEBATE (May 3, 2017), [blogs.elon.edu/roomfordebate/shaan-buttar-how-can-greek-alumni-benefit-the-entire-collegiate-community/](https://blogs.elon.edu/roomfordebate/shaan-buttar-how-can-greek-alumni-benefit-the-entire-collegiate-community/).

15. Flanagan, *supra* note 6.

16. Buttar, *supra* note 14.

17. Lauren Camera, *Is Greek Life Worth Saving?*, U.S. NEWS, (Dec 4, 2017, 3:52 PM), [https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2017-12-04/is-greek-life-worth-saving\\_](https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2017-12-04/is-greek-life-worth-saving_)

sector, a clear understanding of the forces influencing voluntary support will be very important.”<sup>18</sup> Statistically, “[a]ccording to the Council for Aid to Education, private [donations] to higher education [institutions reached] \$23.9 billion” and “accounted for 7.8% of institutional expenditures.”<sup>19</sup> Given the fact that universities today depend heavily on private support for institutional expenses and that Greek life members tend to be more generous in giving, many universities have a hard time being harsh on the wrongdoings committed by fraternities and sororities.<sup>20</sup>

Keeping donors happy is a top priority for many schools. Fraternity and sorority alumni want traditions, including hazing, to continue.<sup>21</sup> As such, universities resist condemning hazing just to ensure alumni still financially support the chapter.<sup>22</sup> Accordingly, members of Greek organizations can get away with incredibly serious offenses. Although “numerous studies over time have shown that fraternity men are more likely to commit rape and sexual assault, with some estimating that between 70% and 90% of on-campus gang rapes being connected to them,”<sup>23</sup> universities benefit from fraternity alumni donations.<sup>24</sup> It would be no surprise that philanthropic giving to universities by Greek-letter organizations influences how universities address fraternities and sororities on their campus that go awry.

While Greek alumni philanthropy creates challenges for addressing hazing on college campuses, this article focuses on its more direct engagement with their collegiate chapters. In Section II, we frame the general parameters of the issues. In Section III, we offer several incidents where fraternity and sorority alumni played a role in hazing. In Sections IV, V, and VI, we offer research-based and data-driven “assumptions” about organizational commitment, retention and turnover, and service recover (i.e., reclamation), respectively, as potential remedies for dealing with Greek alumni influence over their college chapters when it comes to hazing. In Section VII, we provide the findings of one of the few studies to explore reclamation and retention within Greek-letter organizations. In section VIII, we analyze data from a study conducted on membership commitment, retention, and reclamation issues in a historically Black Greek-letter organization. There is no robust framework for understanding how membership-based organizations import

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18. Larry Leslie et al., *Factors Accounting for Variations Over Time in Voluntary Support For Colleges and Universities*, 9 J. OF EDUC. FIN. 213, 223 (1983).

19. O’Neill, *supra* note 11, at 1.

20. *Id.*

21. Alexandra Robbins, *Why Does Frat Hazing Still Happen? Because Alums Want It To*, GEN BY MEDIUM (Feb. 11, 2019), <https://gen.medium.com/why-does-frat-hazing-still-happen-because-alums-want-it-to-801491d6d36d>.

22. Skip Hollandsworth, *The Greek Way*, TEXAS MONTHLY (Mar. 1991), <https://www.texasmonthly.com/news-politics/the-greek-way>.

23. Tyler, *supra* note 14.

24. *See generally* Buttar, *supra* note 14.

organizational behavior research on how businesses commit, retain, and reclaim their constituents—i.e., employees and customers. As such, we do two things. First, we look to evidence-based management approaches in business. Second, we try to innovate by extrapolating these concepts to fraternities and sororities. In doing so, we grapple with the inherent tension in these groups—whether to solve problems like hazing using intuition and casual observation or to rely on data and research.<sup>25</sup>

## II. FRAMING THE OLD HEAD – HAZING DILEMMA

Noted scholar and hazing expert Walter Kimbrough described these individuals as those who still instigate hazing post-graduation, regarding their organizational membership as their most-notable achievement.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, they still partake in many collegiate chapter events and traditions.<sup>27</sup> The power they wield only strengthens their word and validates their actions with collegiate members.<sup>28</sup> In Kimbrough's words, they are "extended adolescents."<sup>29</sup> Adolescence is a "distinct period between childhood and adulthood" in which individuals transition through "a period of tension and conflict."<sup>30</sup> Research has shown adolescents to engage in more risky behaviors, act off of mere impulse, and have a heightened sensitivity toward reward or novelty seeking.<sup>31</sup> Pivotal biological changes such as physical growth, puberty, sexual and cognitive development also occur during the adolescent years; it allows young people to adopt new social roles and become more independent.<sup>32</sup> However, researchers find that the processes associated with becoming an adult have substantially shifted to older ages. Deemed "emerging adulthood," this delayed adoption of adulthood is characterized by "identity exploration, instability, self-focus, feeling in-between and . . . 'a sense of possibilities.'"<sup>33</sup>

Case in point, researchers Hayford and Furstenberg surmised that finishing school, entering the workforce, marrying and having children were life course

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25. Parks & Hooker, *supra* note 3.

26. Walter M. Kimbrough, *The Hazing Problem at Black Fraternities*, THE ATLANTIC (Mar. 17, 2014), <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/03/the-hazing-problem-at-black-fraternities/284452>.

27. *Id.*

28. *Id.*

29. *Id.*

30. Sarah R. Hayford & Frank F. Furstenberg Jr., *Delayed Adulthood, Delayed Desistance? Trends in the Age Distribution of Problem Behaviors*, 18 J. RSCH. ADOLESCENCE 285, 286 (2008).

31. See Anastasia Christakou et al., *Neural and Psychological Maturation of Decision-making in Adolescence and Young Adulthood*, 25 J. COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE 1807, 1807 (2013).

32. Hayford & Furstenberg, *supra* note 30, at 286.

33. Robin Marantz Henig, *What is it About 20-Somethings?*, N.Y. TIMES (Aug. 18, 2010), <https://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/22/magazine/22Adulthood-t.html>.

developmental markers that signal the transition from adolescence into adulthood.<sup>34</sup> Research evidence adduced a delay in these markers over the past thirty years, thus resulting in extended adolescence or “conflict period.”<sup>35</sup> Specifically, a typical 30-year-old in 2001 was found to have completed an equal number of developmental markers as a typical 25-year-old did in the 1970s.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, a large-scale national study that has been collecting data since the late 1970s found that each successive generation takes longer to “finish school, establish financial independence, marry and have children.”<sup>37</sup> Researchers illustrated that “the ability to make competent decisions evolves” essentially at the age of fifteen and during this period individuals begin developing the metacognitive abilities involved in evaluating and generating “decisions in ways similar to adults.”<sup>38</sup> As researchers tracked the development of brain maturity, though, they discovered that children’s brains were not fully matured until twenty-five years old.<sup>39</sup> To Kimbrough’s point, many fraternity and sorority alumni may be too engaged in their collegiate chapter activities because they have not taken on the traditional trappings of adulthood.

What the limited scholarship on the topic has highlighted is that alumni interact with collegiate members, sometimes even participating in hazing activities. Alumni continue to attend initiations or intake programs, which can undermine university administrators’ efforts to eliminate hazing.<sup>40</sup> As one study found, alumni are present for a quarter of undergraduates’ hazing experiences.<sup>41</sup> When looking at Black Greek-letter Organizations (“BGLOs”), their history of transitioning from pledging to the membership intake process underscores the influence of alumni members. In February 1990, the leadership of the then eight national BGLOs met.<sup>42</sup> These representatives agreed that the only way to prevent hazing was to end the pledging process.<sup>43</sup> According to Alpha Kappa Alpha’s Supreme Basileus, Mary Shy Scott, the significance of the meeting would be profound:

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34. Hayford & Furstenberg, *supra* note 30, at 286.

35. *Id.*

36. Henig, *supra* note 33.

37. Laurence Steinberg, *The Case for Delayed Adulthood*, N.Y. TIMES (Sept. 19, 2014), <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/21/opinion/sunday/the-case-for-delayed-adulthood.html>.

38. See Cheryl Ormond et al., *A Metacognitive Analysis of Decision Making in Adolescence*, 14 J. ADOLESCENCE 275, 277 (1991).

39. Henig, *supra* note 33.

40. Damon C. Richardson, *University Officials’ Perceptions About Felony Hazing Laws* (2014) (Ph.D. dissertation, Barry University) (on file with author), at 72.

41. ELIZABETH J. ALLAN & MARY MADDEN, *HAZING IN VIEW: COLLEGE STUDENTS AT RISK* 25 (2008).

42. *Groups Agree to Discourage Hazing*, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, Feb. 18, 1990, at 8D.

43. *Id.*

The decision will ultimately redefine how black Greek-lettered organizations will function and their members behave.... Eliminating pledging will give potential members more time to establish stronger relationships among themselves.... I think the organizations will be stronger.... We have so many of us today trying to help our race survive. We are trying to show the world that we are equipped and skilled.<sup>44</sup>

The outcome of the meeting was a resolution stating that each organization should create "its own initiation process limited to ceremonial rituals."<sup>45</sup> The suggested new process would require as little as two days.<sup>46</sup>

Member Intake Process ("MIP") involved three phases: (1) "a pre-induction/orientation period", (2) "a final induction ceremony", and (3) "an in-depth education program." Each affiliate organization then had the opportunity to implement the guidelines and details of its own MIP. In addition, traditional, non-violent activities forced upon pledges such as "marching in lines, dressing alike and catering to members' wishes" were also under consideration for termination. Leaders were afraid the organizations would lose potential members who do not want to be subjected to these types of demands.<sup>47</sup>

The new MIP failed for a variety of reasons. One study, twenty-two years after MIP was implemented, demonstrated that less than one-third of alumni and undergraduate BGLO members thought that "MIP [was] sufficient to build

44. Michael Mariott, *Education; Black Fraternities and Sororities End a Tradition*, N.Y. TIMES, Oct. 3, 1990. Presidents of other organizations remarked similarly. See David Mills, *The Wrongs of the Rites of Brotherhood*, WASHINGTON POST, June 18, 1990 ("Carter D. Womack, national president of Phi Beta Sigma. 'Unless we take some serious action to eliminate hazing, we could all be out of business, plain and simple, because of somebody acting a fool.' .... The members of AKA, at their national convention next month, will vote on whether to abolish pledging. As in the fraternities [Supreme Basileus Janet] Ballard says, there are sisters who argue, 'This is tradition. We don't want to change.'").

45. *Leaders of Black Fraternities, Sororities Call for End to Hazing*, ASSOCIATED PRESS, Feb. 18, 1990.

46. Barbara Bradley, *A Pledge of Change from Alpha to Omega Blacks Worry Greek Reforms May Go Too Far*, COM. APPEAL (Nov. 15, 1990), at C1.

47. Parks & Hooker, *supra* note 3, at 99-100; see generally Paul Ruffins, *Frat-ricide: Are African American Fraternities Beating Themselves to Death?*, DIVERSE (July 10, 2007), <https://www.diverseeducation.com/students/article/15084324/frat-ricide-are-african-american-fraternities-beating-themselves-to-death-includes-related-articles-on-the-national-pan-hellenic-council-its-statement-on-hazing-and-its-membership-development-efforts-cover-story>; Cynthia Mitchell, *College Hazing Fails Every Test: Black Greek-Letter Groups Meet, Vow End to Violence*, ATLANTA J.-CONST., July 14, 1990, at F1.

brotherhood/sisterhood among initiates” for their fraternities and sororities.<sup>48</sup> Similarly, even fewer members agreed that MIP was generally sufficient for the needs of their organizations.<sup>49</sup> Just over one-third of BGLO members were willing to agree that MIP sufficed to commit aspirants to their, respective, organizations.<sup>50</sup>

Among Black Greek-letter fraternities (“BGLF”), alumni play a critical role in influencing hazing. Alumni often provide conflicting positions on hazing, further confusing the issue for current BGLF members.

In formal settings, alumni denounce hazing. In backstage social settings, though, alumni members express that the current membership process is unacceptable because it departs from tradition, is too short in duration, and does not provide meaningful interaction among all involved in the process. Moreover, alumni members often tell stories about their pledge experiences and describe the current membership process as “easy” in comparison to their own initiation processes. Undergraduates interpret such statements from alumni as pressure to continue hazing.<sup>51</sup>

Of course, fraternities also feel pressure from alumni members who are opposed to hazing practices, but current members usually decide that hazing is a required rite of passage and something that must be done to be part of the fraternity.<sup>52</sup> “Surprisingly, some parents who are themselves alumni of BGLOs disagree with anti-hazing advocates, instead insisting that hazing is a necessary step in becoming a legitimate member of the organization.”<sup>53</sup>

In short, the role that fraternity and sorority alumni members play in hazing is consequential. Consider that on February 4, 2017, Timothy Piazza, a 19-year-old Pennsylvania State University sophomore, was pronounced dead after suffering

48. Gregory S. Parks, et al., *Belief, Truth, and Positive Organizational Deviance*, 56 *HOW. L. J.* 399, 441(2012).

49. *Id.*

50. *Id.*

51. *Id.* at 418–19; see generally Dwayne J. Scott, *Factors that Contribute to Hazing Practices by Black Greek-Letter Fraternities During Membership Intake Activities*, in *BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS 2.0: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES* 234, 239–46 (Matthew W. Hughey & Gregory S. Parks eds., 2011).

52. Tresa Mitchell Saxton, *The Hazing Practices of Black Fraternities Located on White Campuses: The Interplay of Racism, Masculinity, and Male Violence* 73–74 (2003) (Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Greensboro).

53. Valisa Thompson, *Examination of Students and Parents Associated with On-Campus Hazing in Black Greek Letter Organizations and Non-Greek Organizations* 41 (2019) (Ed.D. dissertation, Trevecca Nazarene University) (on file with author).

numerous injuries following a hazing ritual.<sup>54</sup> In response to the incident, Beta Theta Pi—the fraternity to which Piazza had sought membership—commissioned its alumni to oversee local chapters and report any hazing occurring there.<sup>55</sup> Whether it was known to Beta Theta Pi’s national organization—and other organizations that use similar approaches—youth can be positively influenced by “old heads” to steer clear of deviant behavior. According to criminologist, Elijah Anderson, old heads “teach, support, encourage, and in effect socialize young men to meet their responsibilities with regard to the work ethic, family life, the law, and decency.”<sup>56</sup> The old head is older than his mentee, and draws his authority from their difference in age and experience.<sup>57</sup>

As a general matter, this article grapples with the lengths and limits to which fraternities and sororities should have to go to corral and engage their alumni to reduce hazing. This is uncommon, but what is common in an industry may not be a sufficient metric for determining liability. Fraternities and sororities tend to argue that their hazing mitigation have employed the “state of the art”—i.e., anything from industry custom<sup>58</sup> to what is technologically feasible.<sup>59</sup> As such, the state of the art can be more than just compliance with industry custom, but “what feasibly could have been done.”<sup>60</sup> In fact, industry “custom may well lag behind technological developments.”<sup>61</sup> Courts are mindful that industry standards “may sometimes merely reflect an industry’s laxness, inefficiency, or inattention to

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54. Susan Snyder & Jeremy Roebuck, *Defense Lawyer for PSU Frat Member Disputes Charges*, PHILA. INQUIRER (May 16, 2017), <https://www.inquirer.com/philly/education/Defense-lawyer-in-PSU-frat-case-calls-charges-against-his-client-inappropriatesaid-his-client-.html>; see generally Lexi Shimkonis, *Full Grand Jury Presentment in Beta Theta Pi Case*, ONWARD STATE (May 5, 2017, 11:13 AM), <https://onwardstate.com/2017/05/05/document-full-grand-jury-presentment-in-beta-theta-pi-case/>.

55. S. Wayne Kay, *It’s Time: Beta Theta Pi Announces New Strategic Plan*, BETA THETA PI (Feb. 2, 2018) <https://beta.org/about/beta-strategic-plan/>.

56. ELIJAH ANDERSON, *STREETWISE: RACE, CLASS, AND CHANGE IN AN URBAN COMMUNITY* 69 (1990).

57. *Id.*

58. See Frank J. Vandall, *State-of-the-Art, Custom, and Reasonable Alternative Design*, 28 SUFFOLK U. L. REV. 1193, 1200–03 (1994) (noting varying definitions of state-of-the-art); Garey B. Spradley, *Defensive Use of State of the Art Evidence in Strict Products Liability*, 67 MINN. L. REV. 343, 344–47 (1982) (summarizing common usages of state-of-the-art); see generally Gregory S. Parks, *100 Days of Hazing: Day 12—What More do Fraternities (and Sororities) Owe?*, HUFFPOST (Nov. 25, 2017, 9:39 PM), [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/100-days-of-hazing-day-12-what-more-do-fraternities\\_us\\_5a1a28a3e4b0bf1467a8471d](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/100-days-of-hazing-day-12-what-more-do-fraternities_us_5a1a28a3e4b0bf1467a8471d).

59. Vandall, *supra* note 58, at 1200–03; Spradley, *supra* note 58, at 344–47.

60. *Hughes v. Massey-Ferguson, Inc.*, 522 N.W.2d 294, 295 (Iowa 1994).

61. *Id.*

innovation.”<sup>62</sup> In other words, to allow an organization to rely solely on industry practice would allow “the industry to set its own standard of care.”<sup>63</sup>

Courts have noted that customary practice and state of the art in an industry may be an artificially low bar when determining these cases.<sup>64</sup> As such, the focus with respect to the state of the art defense is “whether the evidence disclose[s] that anything more could reasonably and economically be done.”<sup>65</sup> In some jurisdictions, “evidence of industry custom or standard procedure is admissible proof in a negligence case.”<sup>66</sup> However, just because such “evidence is admissible does not terminate the inquiry, nor does evidence of conformance to such standards require a conclusion that a defendant did not breach its duty to the plaintiff.”<sup>67</sup> Rather, an individual or organization “charged with negligence cannot excuse his misconduct by proving the same misconduct in others—custom furnishes no excuse if the custom itself is negligent.”<sup>68</sup>

### III. ALUMNI AND THEIR HAZING INVOLVEMENT

In my experience as an expert witness in hazing cases, usually the role of alumni members is evident—indirectly or directly—in most incidents. While most court opinions or news accounts do not focus on the role of alumni, a handful of incidents elucidate this relationship.

In February of 1978, Charles “Chuck” Stenzel died from alcohol poisoning at Alfred University in New York state.<sup>69</sup> Stenzel chugged a pint of Jack Daniels and three quarters of a pint of Scotch before arriving for a party at Alfred University.<sup>70</sup> Forced to ride in the trunk of a freezing car with two other drunk pledges, Chuck arrived at the party with nearly two full bottles of whiskey in his digestive system yet was still perceivably coherent (according to statements later provided by his

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62. *Elliott v. Brunswick Corp.*, 903 F.2d 1505, 1508 (11th Cir. 1990).

63. *Witt v. Chrysler Corp.*, 167 N.W.2d 100, 104 (Mich. Ct. App. 1969).

64. *See, e.g., Townsend v. Kiracoff*, 545 F. Supp. 465, 468 (D. Colo. 1982) (holding that even if hospital acted in accordance with community standard of care, the plaintiff was still entitled to prove at trial that entire community standard is negligent); *Favalora v. Aetna Cas. & Sur. Co.*, 144 So.2d 544, 551–552 (La. Ct. App. 1962) (holding that medical practitioner may not avoid liability simply by adhering to the custom or procedure of similar practitioners when such practice is found to be negligent).

65. *Hughes*, 522 N.W.2d at 295.

66. *Rodrick v. Wal-Mart Stores E., LP*, No. 07-0768-CV-W-REL, 2010 WL 11509266, at \*1 (W.D. Mo., May 20, 2010).

67. *Id.* (quoting *Pierce v. Platte-Clay Elec. Coop.*, 769 S.W.2d 769, 772 (Mo. 1989) (en banc)).

68. *Id.*

69. HANK NUWER, *BROKEN PLEDGES: THE DEADLY RITE OF HAZING* 9 (1990).

70. *Id.* at 13.

fraternity brothers).<sup>71</sup> The short car ride preceded a few hours of drinking games or “Tapping Night”<sup>72</sup> at the Klan Alpine house; namely, a beer chugging race designed to get pledges to regurgitate enough vomit to fill a trash can.<sup>73</sup> At some point during the race, Chuck’s big brother and the Klan President, Scott Sullivan, noticed that Chuck was in rough shape and had soaked his clothing, so they ushered Chuck away to get him showered off then laid him down on a mattress in a side room of the Klan house.<sup>74</sup> Although the verdict of his time of death was not determined until hours later, the coroner’s office declared that Chuck died lying on this tick-infested mattress at around 11:30 pm.<sup>75</sup> One brother who checked up on Chuck around this time wanted to dispute the coroner’s claims, saying that he was not dead at this point but was “barely breathing.”<sup>76</sup> Regardless of the specific time, Chuck was confirmed dead on the scene by multiple sources before midnight. Klan Alpine alumnus, Joseph van Cura, was present at the Klan house on Tapping Night.<sup>77</sup> Although van Cura’s particular actions that night are unclear, the author insinuates that van Cura was visibly concerned about the public backlash that Klan Alpine would suffer in light of the loss of a pledge due to drinking.<sup>78</sup> However, during questioning, van Cura appeared unsympathetic towards Chuck or any of the other pledges who were nearly killed by their alcohol consumption that night, one of whom fell into a coma while another experienced cardiac arrest.<sup>79</sup>

In February of 1994, at the Southeast Missouri State chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi, Keith Allen and other fraternity members repeatedly subjected pledges to physical abuse. The young men were slapped on their necks and backs, caned on their buttocks and bare feet, and beaten with heavy books and cookie sheets. The pledges were also kicked, punched, and body slammed by the active members. After two of the five pledges had dropped out, the remaining three were put “through a seven-station circle of physical abuse.” At some point during this activity, Michael Davis passed out. His fellow fraternity brothers thought he was playing a joke, so they decided to carry him to his dorm. Once at his dorm, the fraternity brothers stripped Davis of his bloodied clothes and left him on his bed. He would never regain consciousness, dying the following day. The autopsy revealed that

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71. *Id.* at 13.

72. *Id.* at 11.

73. *Id.*

74. *Id.* at 14.

75. *Id.*

76. *Id.* at 15.

77. *Id.* at 13.

78. *Id.* at 18.

79. *Id.*

Davis had suffered broken ribs, a lacerated kidney, a lacerated liver, and multiple bruises. A pathologist stated that the cause of death was a subdural hematoma of the brain.<sup>80</sup>

Thirteen fraternity members were arrested; among them were three alumni: 21-year-old Terrence E. Rogers, 22-year-old Ronald Johnson, and 22-year-old Tyrone D. Davis.<sup>81</sup> Kappa Alpha Psi was banned from the University as a result.<sup>82</sup> Davis' death also resulted in Kappa Alpha Psi settling a civil suit for \$1.4 million.<sup>83</sup>

In 1996, Gabriel "Gabe" Higgins was an Ohio-born University of Texas (Austin) student who was in Kappa Sigma fraternity and was an aspiring member of the Texas Cowboys.<sup>84</sup> The Cowboys were an esteemed "spirit, service, and social club" whose ranks of alumni included people from local celebrities to state governors.<sup>85</sup> Gabe wanted to be a part of the group because of its notoriety and exclusivity, believing that membership would teach him valuable lessons in leadership and community—and admittedly hoped it would make him more popular with women.<sup>86</sup> A night before the Cowboy's pledges, or "Newmen," were supposed to be initiated, the group travelled to the banks of the Colorado river for a retreat.<sup>87</sup> The "blowout" event took place on a ranch alumnus James Morgan and kicked off with the "Oldmen," or experienced members, laying down the ground rules for the night.<sup>88</sup> According to sources who were there, the Oldmen's rules were pretty loose, but they warned the Newmen about going into the river.<sup>89</sup> Unfortunately for Gabe, he was off collecting firewood for this portion of the night and consequently missed the event orientation, but he was back just in time for the drinking competitions to

80. Parks & Hooker, *supra* note 3, at 91, 103–04.

81. *2 More Alumni of Fraternity are Charged in Hazing Death*, N.Y. TIMES, Feb. 24, 1994, at A18; Susan K. Brown, *6 More Arrested in Hazing: 13 Now Charged in Ritual at Southeast Missouri State*, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, Feb. 19, 1994, at 01B; Tim O'Neil & Marianna Riley, *Student Dies in Hazing*, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, Feb. 17, 1994, at 01A.

82. *2 Fraternity Members Sentenced in Death*, BOSTON GLOBE, Oct. 30, 1994, at 23; Jerry Berger, *'Oprah' Show to Focus on Semo Hazing Case*, ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, Apr. 9, 1997, at 01E; *25 Years Later, Missouri Hazing Death Consequences Remain*, AP NEWS (Feb. 18, 2019), <https://apnews.com/article/fc68d3604a4d431385ded7730bc090f5>.

83. Paul Ruffins, *Frat-ricide: Are African American Fraternities Beating Themselves to Death?*, DIVERSE (July 10, 2007), <https://www.diverseeducation.com/students/article/15084324/frat-ricide-are-african-american-fraternities-beating-themselves-to-death-includes-related-articles-on-the-national-pan-hellenic-council-its-statement-on-hazing-and-its-membership-development-efforts-cover-story>.

84. RUTH HARTEN, *THE COWBOYS' SECRET: A STORY ABOUT COLLEGE HAZING* 79 (2006).

85. *Id.*

86. *Id.*

87. *Id.*

88. *Id.*

89. *Id.*

commence.<sup>90</sup> It is unclear how much Gabe had to drink, but it is inferred that he had at least a couple of warm beers and chugged at least two bottles of MD 20/20.<sup>91</sup> Later in the night, when the Oldmen were unaware, Gabe and his buddy, Condrey, led a team of Newmen to the river for a swim.<sup>92</sup> The current was strong but not overwhelming for an experienced swimmer like Gabe.<sup>93</sup> However, time passed, and when the river-soaked Newmen headed back to camp, the Oldmen counted heads and realized that one person was missing. After seeing that Gabe was not among the group of Newmen at 2:30 AM, the Cowboys launched an all-out search and rescue mission.<sup>94</sup> Unsuccessful in their efforts, it took the Oldmen nine hours to call the ranch's owner for help.<sup>95</sup> In addition to being the landlord, Morgan was tied to the group through a son who was a Cowboy alumnus.<sup>96</sup> Even so, it was not until after Morgan conducted his own round of "hard" questioning that he decided to call the police.<sup>97</sup> Shortly thereafter, Gabe's body was fished out of the river by rescue crews.<sup>98</sup> In the aftermath of their son's death, Tim Higgins and Ruth Harten sued James Morgan, several Texas State officers, and the Texas Cowboys.<sup>99</sup> They reached a settlement of \$1.09 million.<sup>100</sup>

In March 1999, Eugene Sanders suffered serious internal injuries following a hazing ritual in a remote field as a part of the pledge process to join the Lincoln University chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha.<sup>101</sup> The university suspended seven students until the spring of 2001 in response to the incident, required that they apologize to Sanders, that they perform 100 hours of community service, and that they get counseling.<sup>102</sup> The vice-president for enrollment planning and student life at Lincoln University, Dr. Arnold Hence, himself an Alpha Phi Alpha alumnus, was accused of participating in the hazing.<sup>103</sup> Following an investigation by the university, interim university president James Donaldson announced that there was

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90. *Id.* at 82.

91. *Id.* at 83.

92. *Id.*

93. *Id.*

94. *Id.*

95. *Id.*

96. *Id.*

97. *Id.* at 85–86.

98. *Id.* at 87.

99. *Id.*

100. *Id.* at 88.

101. *University Clears Administrator Accused of Hazing*, DIVERSE (May 27, 1999), <https://www.diverseeducation.com/students/article/15076400/university-clears-administrator-accused-of-hazing>.

102. *Id.*

103. *Id.*

“insufficient evidence” to charge Hence with wrongdoing, despite claims by the lawyer representing the seven suspended students that Hence was directly involved in the hazing.<sup>104</sup>

In November 2003, Braylon Curry was admitted to the hospital as a result of a “water night” initiation to the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity at Southern Methodist University in which pledges were forced to consume hot sauce and salsa and to drink gallons of water as punishment for missing answers to fraternity trivia questions.<sup>105</sup> During the incident, Curry became incoherent, yet fraternity members urged him to continue to drink water or be beaten if he stopped.<sup>106</sup> Curry felt light-headed while drinking the water but continued drinking until he began vomiting—he nearly drowned in a pool of his own vomit.<sup>107</sup> Following his hospitalization, Curry was unable to return to school to complete his junior year.<sup>108</sup> He spent the remainder of the year recovering with his family before transferring to Howard University to complete his undergraduate degree in finance.<sup>109</sup> The eight fraternity members responsible for the “water night” initiation were prosecuted for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.<sup>110</sup> The alleged ringleader of the hazing was convicted and sentenced to 180 days in jail, 10 years’ probation, and a \$10,000 fine.<sup>111</sup> Alumni member, Raymond Lee was among those arrested for the assault on Curry.<sup>112</sup> Interestingly, while Lee was an Alpha Phi Alpha member at the University of Texas at Dallas chapter, he had been suspended during his collegiate years for participating in similar hazing rituals, forcing him to serve jail time.<sup>113</sup> Additionally, Southern Methodist University suspended Alpha Phi Alpha from campus.<sup>114</sup>

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104. *Id.*

105. Anthony Anamelechi, *Texas Hazing Victim Picks Up Life at Howard University*, NEW PITTSBURGH COURIER,

August 9, 2006, at B5; Michael Grabell, *3 Men are Arrested in Suspected Hazing: 5 Others also Charged in SMU Pledges’ Water-drinking Incident*, DALL. MORNING NEWS, Dec. 9, 2003, at 1B.

106. Sarah Childress, *Frat Hazing: A Dangerous New Drinking Game*, NEWSWEEK (Dec. 7, 2003), <https://www.newsweek.com/frat-hazing-dangerous-new-drinking-game-131865>.

107. Anamelechi, *supra* note 105; *see also* Michael Grabell, *Probation for SMU Hazing: Dallas: DeSoto Man, First of 8 to be Tried for Near-fatal Fraternity Initiation, Also Gets Jail Time, Fine*, DALL. MORNING NEWS, June 27, 2006.

108. Anamelechi, *supra* note 105.

109. *Id.*

110. *Id.*

111. *Id.*; Robert Tharp, *Frat Pledge Was Forced to Drink Water Until He Nearly Died*, DALLAS MORNING NEWS (June 24, 2006), available at: [http://www.sigepblog.org/2006\\_06\\_18\\_archive.html](http://www.sigepblog.org/2006_06_18_archive.html).

112. Anamelechi, *supra* note 105.

113. Grabell, *supra* note 107.

114. Anamelechi, *supra* note 105.

In October 2011, nine men, three current Francis Marion University students and six alumni, were arrested and charged for a hazing incident.<sup>115</sup> The student, pledging the Phi Beta Sigma fraternity, was paddled so badly his buttocks was bleeding, and he suffered kidney damage that sent him to the hospital for two days.<sup>116</sup> One of the six alumni charged with hazing was a high school teacher, and he was placed on administrative leave.<sup>117</sup> Another suspect was a unit director with a local Boys and Girls Club and was also suspended.<sup>118</sup> The three current students were suspended from the school for one year and banned from the FMU campus.<sup>119</sup> The school also suspended the fraternity, and the national organization suspended the Florence chapter.<sup>120</sup> A civil lawsuit was filed naming multiple defendants, including the national fraternity, the local chapter, and Francis Marion University.<sup>121</sup> All claims against the fraternity and its chapter were settled before trial.<sup>122</sup>

In March 2012, Braylon Stubbs and Resean Yancey were the victims of a hazing event conducted by Kappa Alpha Psi at Youngstown University.<sup>123</sup> Stubbs and Yancey were first told to attend multiple study sessions, which became nightly rituals and eventually turned into hazing.<sup>124</sup> The two pledges were beaten with fists, paddles, and wire clothes hangers until they required hospitalization.<sup>125</sup> Yancey required the use of a ventilator after one particularly violent incident.<sup>126</sup> Charges

115. Tucker Mitchell, *Florence Teacher Involved in Alleged Fraternity Hazing*, SCNow (Nov. 11, 2011), [https://scnow.com/news/local/florence-teacher-involved-in-alleged-fraternity-hazing/article\\_59076d0c-be3e-55ca-ac61-3e70cb555616.html](https://scnow.com/news/local/florence-teacher-involved-in-alleged-fraternity-hazing/article_59076d0c-be3e-55ca-ac61-3e70cb555616.html).

116. *Id.*

117. *Id.*

118. Patricia Burkett, *Nine Men Arrested, Charged in FMU Hazing Investigation*, SCNow (Nov. 10, 2011), [https://scnow.com/news/local/nine-men-arrested-charged-in-fmu-hazing-investigation/article\\_1b880a08-04aa-5265-978e-cd70adf3f515.html](https://scnow.com/news/local/nine-men-arrested-charged-in-fmu-hazing-investigation/article_1b880a08-04aa-5265-978e-cd70adf3f515.html).

119. Mitchell, *supra* note 115.

120. *Id.*

121. Staff Reports, *Lawsuit Filed in 2011 FMU Hazing Case, Names University*, SCNow (Jan. 15, 2013), [https://scnow.com/news/lawsuit-filed-in-2011-fmu-hazing-case-names-university/article\\_8462e474-5f45-11e2-b603-0019bb30f31a.html](https://scnow.com/news/lawsuit-filed-in-2011-fmu-hazing-case-names-university/article_8462e474-5f45-11e2-b603-0019bb30f31a.html).

122. David Donovan, *Insurer Won't Have to Pay for Hazing Settlement*, S.C. LAWS. WKLY. (Feb. 08, 2017), <https://sclawyersweekly.com/news/2017/02/08/insurer-wont-have-to-pay-for-hazing-settlement/>.

123. *Nine Indicted over Fraternity Beating at Youngstown State University*, AM. SCH. & UNIV. (Mar. 19, 2012), <https://www.asumag.com/dailynews/article/20847849/nine-indicted-over-fraternity-beating-at-youngstown-state-university>.

124. John W. Goodwin Jr., *9 Indicted in Hazing Incident at YSU's KAP Fraternity*, VINDICATOR (Mar. 16, 2012, 12:07 AM), <https://vindyardives.com/news/2012/mar/16/-indicted-in-hazing-incident-at-fraterni/>.

125. *Nine Indicted over Fraternity Beating at Youngstown State University*, *supra* note 123.

126. Goodwin, *supra* note 124.

were brought in 2012, and a grand jury indicted nine fraternity members.<sup>127</sup> Out of the nine men that were indicted for the event that transpired, the majority were alumni, ranging between the ages of twenty-two to twenty-eight.<sup>128</sup> The university suspended the fraternity for at least 15 years following the incident.<sup>129</sup>

At Calumet College of St. Joseph, Carmelo Gonzalez sued two men and the college claiming he sustained “severe head injuries” after being hit over the head with a paddle during a hazing ritual.<sup>130</sup> Gonzalez was later hospitalized for several days for a brain bleed.<sup>131</sup> The two men accused of beating Gonzalez were expelled from the fraternity considering the incident.<sup>132</sup> A third “alumni” of Kappa, who had never actually been a recognized member, was also “barred from KAPPA list.”<sup>133</sup>

In the fall of 2017, Tim Piazza consumed a large amount of alcohol in a short period of time, which was supported by the brothers of the fraternity, followed by a fall down a flight of stairs.<sup>134</sup> While the brothers acknowledged Piazza’s state, none sought medical help for twelve hours, which led Piazza to die from a brain injury.<sup>135</sup> Before the incident, the chapter was suspended and condemned by the institute’s administration on multiple occasions for hazing.<sup>136</sup> Once the chapter was finally disbanded and a new set of brothers joined, Beta Theta Phi was being nationally recognized for their excellence.<sup>137</sup> However, once alumni visited, they were disappointed and encouraged the new members to return to the prior hazing antics.<sup>138</sup> This directive of the alumni inspired the Penn State chapter to recommend the continuation of hazing practices to other chapters around the country.<sup>139</sup>

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127. *Id.*

128. *9 Men Indicted in Ohio in Fraternity Hazing Case*, AKRON BEACON J. (Mar. 17, 2012, 12:00 PM), <https://www.beaconjournal.com/article/20120317/NEWS/303179617>.

129. *Id.*

130. Chelsea Schneider Kirk, *Insurance Company Files Complaint over Alleged Fraternity Hazing*, TIMES N.W. IND. (June 12, 2013), [https://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/hammond/insurance-company-files-complaint-over-alleged-fraternity-hazing/article\\_16a7a1e8-b25b-5a72-9568-4ddc9a57d6dc.html](https://www.nwitimes.com/news/local/lake/hammond/insurance-company-files-complaint-over-alleged-fraternity-hazing/article_16a7a1e8-b25b-5a72-9568-4ddc9a57d6dc.html).

131. *Id.*

132. *Id.*

133. *Id.*

134. Caitlin Flanagan, *Death at a Penn State Fraternity*, THE ATLANTIC (Nov. 2017), <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/11/a-death-at-penn-state/540657/>.

135. *Id.*

136. *Id.*

137. *Id.*

138. *Id.*

139. *Id.*

These incidents only give a glimpse into the role of alumni in collegiate fraternity and sorority hazing. However, they also seem to be just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. The lingering question is what can be done to address this aspect of hazing.

#### IV. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Commitment resides within the individual, as an internal force that binds an individual to a social or nonsocial target and a course of action relevant to that target.<sup>140</sup> Commitment can be influenced by internal or external factors, but the force experienced as a conscious mindset of desire, obligation, perceived cost, or a combination, is what marks commitment as a construct.<sup>141</sup> While commitment is a conscious mindset, some unconscious factors may influence commitment, such as the want to justify previous decisions and to maintain a stable self-image.<sup>142</sup> Specifically, organizational commitment has become a frequently studied organizational construct largely because it is indicative of important work variables such as identification, involvement, engagement, and turnover.<sup>143</sup> Organizational commitment refers to employees' attachment to, identification with, and loyalty to their organizations as expressed by active organizational involvement.<sup>144</sup> Employees who share the goals and values of an organization are more likely to exert effort on the organization's behalf, and it predicts employees' lower turnover and higher performance.<sup>145</sup>

Organizational commitment can be divided into three categories that help clarify why an individual may be more or less committed—i.e., affective, continuance, and normative.<sup>146</sup> Affective commitment describes how an employee identifies with their company and feels involved and emotionally attached to their employing organization.<sup>147</sup> Continuance commitment articulates how an employee measures the costs they would incur by leaving the organization, whether work

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140. John P. Meyer, *Commitment in a Changing World of Work*, in COMMITMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS: ACCUMULATED WISDOM AND NEW DIRECTIONS 37, 39 (Howard J. Klein et al. eds., 2009).

141. *Id.*

142. *Id.* at 40.

143. *Id.*

144. Sang-Sook Han et al., *Effects of Role Stress on Nurses' Turnover Intentions: The Mediating Effects of Organizational Commitment and Burnout*, 12 JAPAN J. NURSING SCI. 287, 288 (2015).

145. Meyer, *supra* note 140, at 40.

146. Harrison J. Kell & Stephan J. Motowidlo, *Deconstructing Organizational Commitment: Associations Among Its Affective and Cognitive Components, Personality Antecedents, and Behavioral Outcomes*, 42 J. APPLIED PSYCH. 213 (2012).

147. *Id.*

related or not.<sup>148</sup> These perceived losses can be monetary, professional, or social, and the severity of these losses increases with the age and experience of the employee.<sup>149</sup> Finally, normative commitment refers to an employee's feelings of obligation to stay with the organization.<sup>150</sup> These three types of commitment are not mutually exclusive; an employee can experience one, two, or all three in varying degrees.<sup>151</sup> The study of these types of commitment suggests how and why someone remains committed, or alternatively, leaves their organization.<sup>152</sup> Employees can develop commitments to any and all of an organization's constituencies, including divisions, work units, teams, and supervisors.<sup>153</sup>

*A. Organizational Commitment's Relationship to  
Identification, Satisfaction, Embeddedness, and Involvement*

In this section, I explore organizational commitment's relationship to identification, satisfaction, embeddedness, and involvement as well as how organizations can foster organizational commitment. I close by translating these findings into practical steps for fraternities and sororities. Organizational commitment is a key factor in predicting behavior in an organization, as various studies have shown its correlations with work outcomes such as performance and turnover.<sup>154</sup> However, commitment also correlates and relates to other psychological constructs such as identification, satisfaction, embeddedness, and involvement.

*Identification*

Identification is the closest conceptual neighbor of commitment, especially affective commitment, and occurs when "the organizational member has linked his/her organizational membership to his/her self-concept, either cognitively, emotionally, or both."<sup>155</sup> Although identification and commitment are not interchangeable, there is evidence to suggest that identification may be a precursor to commitment.

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148. *Id.*

149. *Id.*

150. *Id.*

151. *Id.*

152. *Id.* at 213–14.

153. Meyer, *supra* note 140, at 40.

154. Kell & Motowidlo, *supra* note 146, at 213.

155. Michael Ricketta & Rolf Van Dick, *Commitment's Place in the Literature*, in COMMITMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS: ACCUMULATED WISDOM AND NEW DIRECTIONS 69, 71 (Howard J. Klein et al. eds., 2009).

Social identity can be used to study organizational identification by looking at two categories of social identity: social identity theory (“SIT”) and self-categorization theory (“SCT”).<sup>156</sup> Social identity theory posits that group membership defines a part of an individual member’s social identity and assumes that members want to increase their positive self-esteem, that a person’s social identity is based on their membership in groups, and that to maintain a positive social identity, people will try to make their in-group succeed, comparatively.<sup>157</sup> In contrast, SCT relates to processes within groups rather than between the group and the whole.<sup>158</sup> Self-categorization theory theorizes that individuals categorize themselves within three groups: the subordinate level (comparing themselves to other individuals), the intermediate level (comparing their group to relevant outgroups), or on the superordinate level.<sup>159</sup> Both SIT and SCT work in tandem to describe an individual’s relationship to a group and their ability to relate their membership in that group to groups as a whole.<sup>160</sup> By analyzing an employee’s place within each theory, an organization can perceive the overlap between the employee and the organization and that integration of the organization into the individual employee.<sup>161</sup> Further, team identification has been found to be stronger than organizational identification.<sup>162</sup> This information can help organizations satisfy employees’ needs of affiliation and belonging in order to engage levels of commitment.

### *Satisfaction*

Like identification, job satisfaction appears to be a precursor to higher levels of organizational commitment. Job satisfaction is the emotional state of mind that reflects the affective reaction to the job and work situation.<sup>163</sup> This contrasts with organizational commitment, which is more focused on a global reaction to the whole organization.<sup>164</sup> Specifically, studies have shown that job satisfaction correlates strongly with affective organizational commitment, less strongly with

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156. Rolf van Dick, *Organizational Identification*, in HANDBOOK OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT 106, 111 (John P. Meyer ed., 2016).

157. *Id.* at 106.

158. *Id.* at 107.

159. *Id.*

160. *Id.*

161. *Id.*

162. *Id.* at 111, 115.

163. Ian R. Gellatly & Leanne M. Hedberg, *Employee Turnover and Absenteeism*, in HANDBOOK OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT 195, 196 (John P. Meyer ed., 2016).

164. *Id.*

normative organizational commitment, and weakly with continuance organizational commitment.<sup>165</sup>

In response to low levels of job satisfaction, employees may exhibit absenteeism and an increased turnover intention.<sup>166</sup> However, an organization's structure can impact the employee's job satisfaction.<sup>167</sup> For example, task variety can increase job satisfaction while role ambiguity can lead to job dissatisfaction.<sup>168</sup> Also, having a climate of organizational support and a supportive relationship with supervisors can aid in the development of job satisfaction among employees.<sup>169</sup>

An employee's level of emotional intelligence can also have a tremendous impact on their job satisfaction and can be an important indicator of commitment. Trait emotional intelligence is a behavioral character trait that help an employee's ability to "recognize, process, and utilize emotion-laden information."<sup>170</sup> Employees with a high level of emotional intelligence are less likely to be victims of workplace incivility.<sup>171</sup> Workplace incivility occurs when employees are rude and display a lack of respect for others.<sup>172</sup> This negative environment can cause a decrease in job satisfaction and commitment as well as an increase in turnover.<sup>173</sup> However, emotionally intelligent employees with effective coping strategies are less likely to fall victim to peer mistreatment.<sup>174</sup>

### *Embeddedness and Involvement*

Embeddedness refers to the various influences that keep an employee from leaving a job, or the extent to which employees have links to other people and activities, the extent to which their job fits within their community and lifestyle, and the ease with which they can leave.<sup>175</sup> These three components are known as

165. Riketta & van Dick, *supra* note 155, at 82.

166. *Id.*

167. *Id.*

168. Margaret F. Reid et al., *Information Technology Employees in State Government: A Study of Affective Organizational Commitment, Job Involvement, and Job Satisfaction*, 38 AM. REV. PUB. ADMIN. 41, 54 (2008).

169. *Id.*

170. Jahanvash Karim et al., *Emotional Intelligence and Perceived Work-related Outcomes: Mediating Role of Workplace Incivility Victimization*, 30 PAK. J. PSYCH. RSCH. 21, 22 (2015).

171. *Id.* at 24.

172. *Id.* at 23.

173. *Id.* at 28–29.

174. *Id.* at 31.

175. Brooks C. Holtom, *Job Embeddedness, Employee Commitment, and Related Constructs*, in HANDBOOK OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT 90, 90 (John P. Meyer ed., 2016).

links, fit, and sacrifice, respectively.<sup>176</sup> The more links, the better the fit between the employee and the organization.<sup>177</sup> The more costly the sacrifice, the less likely an employee will be to leave a job.<sup>178</sup> Social networks within an organization are a key component of an employee's embeddedness. Social capital theory posits that the behaviors and attitudes of individuals are influenced by the social networks that they are embedded within.<sup>179</sup> The extent to which an individual is connected to others within a network has been linked to many commitment antecedents and outcomes, such as job performance and increased connection between individuals and their supervisors.<sup>180</sup> This is important because stronger connections between employees and their supervisors has been shown to increase the employee's commitment to the organization.<sup>181</sup> Involvement refers to an employee's psychological identification with his or her work and the degree to which the job situation is central to that person and his or her identity.<sup>182</sup> Job involvement is often measured by the importance and preoccupation one has with the job.

### *B. How Organizations Can Develop Organizational Commitment*

Employees can develop a connection with multiple targets in the workplace; commitment to the organization as a whole is distinct from commitment to its specific policies or values.<sup>183</sup> Within an organization, employees can be divided into "locals" (those likely to use an inner reference group orientation) or "cosmopolitans" (those low on loyalty to the organization, high on commitment to specialized role skills, and likely to use an outer reference group orientation).<sup>184</sup> In order to develop different types of commitment amongst employees, organizations can invest in specific types of structures, leadership styles, and cultural norms within the workplace.<sup>185</sup>

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176. *Id.*

177. *Id.* at 91.

178. *Id.*

179. Christian Vandenberghe, *Organizational Commitments*, in COMMITMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS: ACCUMULATED WISDOM AND NEW DIRECTIONS 99, 123 (Howard J. Klein et al. eds., 2009).

180. *Id.* at 124.

181. *Id.*

182. *Id.*

183. Thomas E. Becker, *Multiple Foci of Workplace Commitments*, in HANDBOOK OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT 43 (John P. Meyer ed., 2016).

184. *Id.*

185. *Id.*

*Role of Training and Leadership*

There is a strong association between organizational commitment and management-support as well as with organization-support.<sup>186</sup> Research supports a positive correlation between work experiences and affective commitment, specifically among employees who had positive work experiences early on.<sup>187</sup> One way that organizations can facilitate these positive work experiences is through an investment in training of new employees.<sup>188</sup> Specifically, organizations should focus on competence-related experiences early on for employees rather than comfort-related experiences as these have been rated as more important by new-hires.<sup>189</sup> Ensuring that new employees have a positive introduction into their role within the organization can have a lasting impact on their development of commitment; a study that examined the mediating effect of organizational commitment in the relationship between training and turnover intentions demonstrated that there was a significant negative correlation between training and turnover intentions and that there was a positive correlation between training and organizational commitment.<sup>190</sup>

Leaders within an organization play a key role in the development of positive work experiences and are an important ingredient in the development of organizational commitment. Research has demonstrated that better relationships with leaders lead to increased intentions to remain in an organization.<sup>191</sup> Further, organization-based self-esteem (“OBSE”) amongst leaders has been found to have a significant and positive correlation with job satisfaction and organizational commitment amongst employees.<sup>192</sup> Additionally, managerial communication has a significant effect on organization commitment, perceived organizational support, job satisfaction, and job performance.<sup>193</sup> In fact, one study found that the largest factor in determining how an employee perceived their organization’s support was

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186. Gavin P. M. Dick, *The Influence of Managerial and Job Variables on Organizational Commitment in the Police*, 89 PUB. ADMIN. 557, 564 (2010).

187. John P. Meyer et al., *Examination of the Combined Effects of Work Values and Early Work Experiences on Organizational Commitment*, 19 J. ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAV. 29, 45–46 (1998).

188. *Id.* at 42.

189. *Id.*

190. See Hussein Nabil Ismail, *Training and Turnover: The Mediating Role of Commitment*, 42 AUSTL. BULL. LAB. 62, 72 (2016).

191. Sandy J. Wayne et al., *Social Influences*, in COMMITMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS: ACCUMULATED WISDOM AND NEW DIRECTIONS 253, 255 (Howard J. Klein et al. eds., 2009).

192. Steven M. Norman et al., *Leader Roles, Organization-based Self-esteem, and Employee Outcomes*, 36 LEADERSHIP & ORG. DEV. J. 253, 262 (2015).

193. See Veena P. Prabhu & Ellen A. Drost, *Managerial Communication and Intent to Remain with the Organization: Examining an Empirical Model of Factors Affecting Retention of Israeli Employees*, 17 J. ORG. PSYCH. 156 (2017).

in the level of support provided by the leader.<sup>194</sup> This supports the claim that leaders have a great impact on organizational commitment.<sup>195</sup>

The type of leadership that an organization implements is an important factor in commitment development. Servant leadership is a style that focuses on the interests of the people being led rather than on the interests of the leader.<sup>196</sup> A study of salesperson retention rate and how servant leadership affects the salesperson's turnover intention showed that servant leadership indirectly affects organizational commitment.<sup>197</sup> The results of the study show that servant leadership will eventually lead to a lower turnover "through a moderated and mediated chain-of-effects that involves ethical level, person-organization fit, and organizational commitment."<sup>198</sup> This is because servant leaders create a positive work environment where salespeople feel like they share values with their organization and where they become deeply committed to the company and want to stay.<sup>199</sup> Servant leadership also helps a company to build an ethical climate, which can aid in the retention of the employees.<sup>200</sup> "An important finding of this study is the moderating effect of [an organization's] ethical level on the relationship between servant leadership and person-organization fit."<sup>201</sup> Servant leadership is more important when employees find that their company's ethical level is lower than what they desire because employees see their supervisor as someone who can protect them, help them, and advise them with problems in the company.<sup>202</sup> Servant leaders can also help with "negative publicity about the ethics" of the organization because they push a concern for ethics into conversation and create a culture where employees can feel more comfortable finding a solution to bad workplace situations.<sup>203</sup>

Other studies have pointed to the benefits of a self-managing work team. Self-managing work teams are small groups that are in charge of themselves and take full responsibility for their work.<sup>204</sup> They work without a manager and function as

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194. Wayne et al., *supra* note 191, at 256.

195. *Id.*

196. *Id.*

197. Fernando Jaramillo et al., *Examining the Impact of Servant Leadership on Salesperson's Turnover Intention*, 29 J. PERS. SELLING & SALES MGMT. 351, 357-58 (2009).

198. *Id.* at 357.

199. *Id.* at 358.

200. *Id.*

201. *Id.* at 359.

202. *Id.*

203. *Id.*

204. David F. Elloy, *The Influence of Superleader Behaviors on Organization Commitment, Job Satisfaction and Organization Self-Esteem in a Self-Managed Work Team*, 26 LEADERSHIP & ORG. DEV. J 120, 121 (2005).

a management team.<sup>205</sup> Past research shows that self-managing teams are successful and benefit both the performance and attitudes in the work environment.<sup>206</sup> Individuals who manage employees in self-managed teams require “a different set of skills” from those used by managers in traditional organizations; the traditional rules of leadership do not apply.<sup>207</sup> The goal is to create a “superleader” who can lead others to lead themselves.<sup>208</sup> The quality of leadership from the superleader is vital to the success of the self-managing work team as their style directly affects the attitudes held by team members towards their job, which then “contributes to higher levels of satisfaction, commitment, and organization self-esteem.”<sup>209</sup>

### *Corporate Responsibility and Ethical Culture*

Employees want to feel good about the organizations they work for. Employees with “a strong internalized desire” to serve the public are more likely to join, feel committed to, and remain in public service organizations that enable them to fulfill this desire.<sup>210</sup> Organizations can increase commitment by “emphasizing social responsibility” and associating their efforts for social responsibility with positive work attitudes.<sup>211</sup> In fact, research indicates that an employee’s “value-fit commitment” is related to their perception of corporate social responsibility.<sup>212</sup> This suggests that an organization’s actions resulting in increased perception of corporate social responsibility can potentially increase employees’ fit and commitment.<sup>213</sup>

It is essential that organizations put energy into developing ethics and standards training that help employees feel involved in these aspects. Ethical climate is the group members’ perception of ethical behavior and how each situation “should be dealt with in an organization.”<sup>214</sup> It includes “the organizational values, practices,

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205. *Id.*

206. *Id.*

207. *Id.*

208. *Id.* at 121–22.

209. *Id.* at 124–25.

210. Wisanupong Potipiroon & Michael T. Ford, *Does Public Service Motivation Always Lead to Organizational Commitment? Examining the Moderating Roles of Intrinsic Motivation and Ethical Leadership*, 46 PUB. PERS. MGMT. 211, 212 (2017).

211. Sean Valentine & Lynn Godkin, *Banking Employees’ Perceptions of Corporate Social Responsibility, Value-Fit Commitment, and Turnover Intentions: Ethics as Social Glue and Attachment*, 29 EMP. RESP. RTS. J. 51, 63 (2017).

212. *Id.*

213. *Id.*

214. Kum Lung Choe et al., *The Impact of Ethical Climate on Organizational Commitment: A Study of Malaysian Higher Learning Institutions*, 9 GLOB. BUS. & MGMT. RSCH. 208, 208 (2017).

and procedures that pertain to moral behaviors and attitudes.”<sup>215</sup> Ethics initiatives may enhance perceptions of corporate social responsibility, which can impact commitment. This could involve ethical leadership, which helps to foster an ethical climate in the workplace because employees will watch and mimic the behavior of their managers. Research has identified leadership as the most significant factor in implementing ethical policies in an organization, particularly because of the high level of responsibility associated with leadership.<sup>216</sup> Therefore, it is paramount to increasing corporate social responsibility and, thus, commitment, that leaders in the Greek offices demonstrate high ethical standards. Clear codes of ethics should also be established to increase commitment, as this can also increase corporate social responsibility.<sup>217</sup>

The attributes of ethical climate include “benevolence, egoism, and principle.”<sup>218</sup> Benevolence refers to the extent to which actions serve “the greatest good for the greatest number of people,” as well as the presence of a “caring environment” that encourages high organizational commitment.<sup>219</sup> Egoism describes behavior “concern[ed] primarily with self-interest” and is predicted to have a negative relationship with organizational commitment.<sup>220</sup> Finally, principle refers to the “desire to do the right thing regardless of the outcome,” which is accomplished by “mak[ing] decision[s] based on rules and codes when [presented] with an ethical dilemma.”<sup>221</sup> The enforcement of ethics yields an increase in organizational commitment, though it is important to examine how various factors of ethical climate are related to commitment.<sup>222</sup> If individuals perceive a self-interested culture, they will be more inclined to promote their own egoism, which could lead to behaviors that limit group cohesion and violate ethical boundaries.<sup>223</sup> When organizations seriously consider the interests of members and stakeholders, organizational commitment increases.<sup>224</sup> However, when members exhibit “self-interest behaviors,” groups are less cohesive.<sup>225</sup>

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215. John B. Cullen et al., *The Effects of Ethical Climates on Organizational Commitment: A Two-Study Analysis*, 46 J. BUS. ETHICS 127, 128 (2003).

216. Damini Saini, *Impact of Ethical Leadership on Organizational Commitment & Productivity in India*, 52 INDIAN J. INDUS. REL. 456, 457–58 (2017).

217. Valentine & Godkin, *supra* note 211, at 65.

218. Choe et al., *supra* note 214, at 209.

219. *Id.* at 209–10.

220. *Id.* at 210.

221. *Id.*

222. Cullen et al., *supra* note 215, at 128.

223. *Id.* at 138.

224. *Id.*

225. Choe et al., *supra* note 214, at 214.

Research has also examined the likelihood of individuals with higher organizational commitment “to engage in ethically questionable behavior,” based on whether this behavior would help or hinder the organization.<sup>226</sup> For example, individuals may make decisions that benefit the organization by harming others outside of it.<sup>227</sup> It is essential to differentiate between these “organizational-harm” issues and “organizational-gain” issues.<sup>228</sup> Ethically questionable decisions that cause harm to outsiders but benefit an individual member or the organization constitute organizational-gain situations.<sup>229</sup> If a group could benefit from unethical behavior, individuals may be more willing to engage in such activities due to their identification with the organization.<sup>230</sup> As expected, high organizational commitment correlates with deterrence from unethical behavior that would hurt the group, but it correlates positively with willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization.<sup>231</sup> Whether this effort is unethical depends on the potential for the decision to hurt the organization in the long-run.<sup>232</sup> The long-term interests of an organization may benefit from the individual refusing to engage in unethical behavior that would help it in the short-term.<sup>233</sup>

#### *Addressing Toxic Leaders and Toxic Employees*

Research has shown that the majority of people, leaders included, prefer conformity as opposed to controversy, thus putting pressure on rank-and-file decision-makers to conform to the will of the majority.<sup>234</sup> Called “cognitive misers,” humans prefer to follow the majority as opposed to examining the situation and forming their own opinion on the subject.<sup>235</sup> Unfortunately, this urgency to conform can lead workers to avoid addressing toxic leadership, or even engaging in toxic behaviors themselves.<sup>236</sup> The most common behaviors of a toxic worker include criticizing, gossiping, failing to follow through after agreeing on a project, hoarding information, undermining others, and caring about personal agendas over

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226. C. Cullinan et al., *Organization-Harm vs. Organization-Gain Ethical Issues: An Exploratory Examination of the Effects of Organizational Commitment*, 80 J. BUS. ETHICS 225, 225 (2008).

227. *Id.*

228. *Id.*

229. *Id.* at 226.

230. *Id.* at 228.

231. *Id.* at 232.

232. *Id.*

233. *Id.*

234. Lynn R. Offerman, *When Followers Become Toxic*, HARV. BUS. REV. (Jan. 2004), <https://hbr.org/2004/01/when-followers-become-toxic>.

235. *Id.*

236. *Id.*

team goals.<sup>237</sup> The relationships the toxic worker has with his or her colleagues negatively impacts the other relationships on the team, and one toxic worker has the potential “to destroy a [hard-working] team.”<sup>238</sup> There are several reasons why toxic coworkers are destructive, the first of which being they creates unnecessary distraction, thus sucking positivity and creativity out of the group as colleagues must prioritize “watching their [own] back[s]” over positively contributing to team efforts.<sup>239</sup>

The presence of toxic members creates a negative impression of the team to external stakeholders.<sup>240</sup> Toxic members also increase cynicism in the office environment when not all employees are not held to the same standards, thus degrading the values and leadership of the company.<sup>241</sup> Toxic team members also erode the team culture as the non-toxic members begin to reflect this destructive behavior by acting towards said members with disrespect, complaining, and working to keep toxic members out of the loop.<sup>242</sup> One act of rudeness can impact everyone, much like how the toxic behavior of one employee can influence everyone else in the office. The costs of toxic behavior are “de-energizing.”<sup>243</sup> In response to the negative presence in the office, colleagues of the toxic work feel less energized, less motivated, and less likely to thrive in their performance.<sup>244</sup>

When compared to their non-toxic coworkers, toxic workers are more calculating, vindictive, and manipulative.<sup>245</sup> They also enjoy the failure of others, carry little sympathy for gullible colleagues, and dislike perceived weakness of others, such as overt displays of emotion.<sup>246</sup> Further, many toxic workers lie about or exaggerate their work experience and purposefully waste time at work or steal from their employer.<sup>247</sup> One method of dealing with toxic coworkers is to have a direct and candid conversation with the toxic coworker.<sup>248</sup> Many people “lack self-

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237. Abby Curnow-Chavez, *4 Ways to Deal with a Toxic Coworker*, HARV. BUS. REV. (Apr. 10, 2018), <https://hbr.org/2018/04/4-ways-to-deal-with-a-toxic-coworker>.

238. *Id.*

239. *Id.*

240. *Id.*

241. *Id.*

242. *Id.*

243. Christine Porath, *Isolate Toxic Employees to Reduce Their Negative Effects*, HARV. BUS. REV. (Nov. 14, 2016), <https://hbr.org/2016/11/isolate-toxic-employees-to-reduce-their-negative-effects>.

244. *Id.*

245. *Office Pollution: New Study Looks into The Core Traits of Toxic Employees*, THE COURIER (Dec. 23, 2016), [https://wfcourier.com/office-pollution-new-study-looks-into-the-core-traits-of-toxic-employees/article\\_ab5f722f-7bef-5a75-816f-bd0031e1eb16.html](https://wfcourier.com/office-pollution-new-study-looks-into-the-core-traits-of-toxic-employees/article_ab5f722f-7bef-5a75-816f-bd0031e1eb16.html).

246. *Id.*

247. *Id.*

248. Curnow-Chavez, *supra* note 237.

awareness ... at work"; this member may not even be aware of how his or her behavior is impacting the team.<sup>249</sup>

*Person-Organization Fit*

An employee's perceived fit within their organization is an important driver of their commitment.<sup>250</sup> Under Schneider's attraction-selection-attrition theory, organizations will gradually assemble like-minded individuals in the workplace that shape the culture of the organization.<sup>251</sup> The employees with values that are more compatible with those of the organizational culture will "fit" better and "develop a stronger commitment."<sup>252</sup> However, any change to the core values of an organization could diminish fit and undermine commitment.<sup>253</sup>

It is also important that the organization's structure aligns with the needs of the employee. Most professionals want to be acknowledged and want their expertise to be valued in the workplace; this grants them "autonomy, independent decision-making, and involvement in decision-making."<sup>254</sup> However, these desires and expectations by professionals conflict with employees being members of mechanistic organizations.<sup>255</sup> Mechanic structuring includes authority centralization, work regulation, and formalization, but professionals and experts see this as conflicting with their own professional ethos.<sup>256</sup> Organizations can also supervise experts through organic structuring.<sup>257</sup> This ensures that "the work is done not mechanically, but by providing experts with resources such as feedback, responsibility, and influence."<sup>258</sup> This type of structuring may generate organizational commitment as well as the desire to work in an inter-professional team because many like to identify with the role of feedback.<sup>259</sup>

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249. *Id.*

250. Annelies E.M. van Vianen et al., *Person-Environment Fits as Drivers of Commitment*, in HANDBOOK OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT 275 (John P. Meyer ed., 2016).

251. Meyer, *supra* note 140, at 43.

252. *Id.*

253. *Id.*

254. Anat Freund & Anat Drach-Zahavy, *Organizational (Role Structuring) and Personal (Organizational Commitment and Job Involvement) Factors: Do They Predict Interprofessional Team Effectiveness?*, 21 J. INTERPRO. CARE 319, 322 (2007).

255. *Id.*

256. *Id.*

257. *Id.*

258. *Id.*

259. *Id.*

Personal factors, conversely to organization factors, tend to push individuals to produce more effective and professional work.<sup>260</sup> An employee “who has developed high organizational commitment will prefer to invest personal resources in the organization.”<sup>261</sup> “Some research has shown that job and organizational commitment might represent two conflicting positions,” in that “investing personal resources in professional development leads to investing fewer resources in the organization,” but “[j]ob commitment signifies workers who aim for professional autonomy.”<sup>262</sup> Employees “will invest many of their personal resources to further the sphere of their profession, which will occasionally diminish the focus on commitments they have to their organization.”<sup>263</sup>

### *Psychological Contract*

During an individual’s introduction to an organization (recruitment, selection, and socialization), new employees will develop beliefs on their obligations to the organization and the organization’s obligation to them.<sup>264</sup> This exchange can be described as a “psychological contract.”<sup>265</sup> The psychological contract guides the employee’s attitudes and behavior.<sup>266</sup> Further, fulfillment of the psychological contract is associated with positive employee attitudes and behavior.<sup>267</sup> There is evidence that an employee’s gender may have an impact on their perception of the psychological contract, especially regarding the level of sacrifice. For example, women may feel more tied to an organization than men due a stronger feeling of a need to stay, and women may perceive that they have fewer alternatives to their current employer than men.<sup>268</sup>

Feeling attached to the organization (affective commitment) and believing that leaving is not a worthwhile sacrifice (continuous commitment) are not behaviors; however, feeling an obligation to remain with the organization (normative commitment) can contribute to the psychological contract because of the associated behaviors.<sup>269</sup> Studies have also shown that a breach in this contract can lead

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260. *Id.* at 321.

261. *Id.* at 322.

262. *Id.* at 323.

263. *Id.*

264. Meyer, *supra* note 140, at 43.

265. *Id.*

266. Samantha D. Hansen & Yannick Griep, *Psychological Contracts*, in HANDBOOK OF EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT 119 (John P. Meyer ed., 2016).

267. *Id.*

268. Judy C. Wahn, *Sex Differences in the Continuance Component of Organizational Commitment*, 23 GROUP & ORG. MGMT. 256, 262–63 (1998).

269. Hansen & Griep, *supra* note 266, at 120.

employees to feel violated and ultimately harm the relationship between employer and employee.<sup>270</sup> While an individual's evaluation of how well his or her employer fulfills the psychological contract is important for the development of affective commitment, it is not the only measurement.<sup>271</sup> Factors such as long term mutual obligations or unequal employment relationships similarly can harm commitment.<sup>272</sup> In general, the norm of reciprocity seems to be the dominant explanation for the relationship between fulfillment of breach and commitment.<sup>273</sup> A second explanation, however, is also dependent on the magnitude of loss that workers feel upon a breach of contract.<sup>274</sup> This factor relates more to normative commitment, and the obligation that the worker feels to stay with an organization and if a breach justifies leaving.<sup>275</sup>

Additionally, the employee's perception of the organization's genuineness of support can impact the level of organization commitment. Organizational support theory has shown that individuals have increased commitment to an organization when they feel that the organization has their best interests at heart.<sup>276</sup> Even employees with a low level of commitment to their organization are less likely to leave if they receive high levels of support from the organization. A key feature of this perceived organizational support is that it represents the employee's perceptions of the benevolent intentions of the organization based on the organization's actions, while, in contrast, employees' commitment reflects their intentions toward the organizations.<sup>277</sup> Organizational support theory builds on the central premise that workers act in accord with the norm of reciprocity; they trade their effort and dedication for the organization with perceived organizational support and the promise of future benefits.<sup>278</sup> Perceived organizational support fosters affective commitment by meeting employees' socio-emotional needs and fulfilling them.<sup>279</sup> Findings from multiple studies suggest that employees generalize their experiences regarding supportive treatment from lower level organizational units all the way up to the highest units.<sup>280</sup>

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270. *Id.*

271. Wayne et al., *supra* note 191, at 268.

272. *Id.*

273. *Id.* at 269.

274. *Id.* at 268.

275. *Id.*

276. *Id.* at 259.

277. *Id.*

278. *Id.*

279. *Id.*

280. *Id.* at 262.

*Mentoring*

In the organizational context, good mentoring relationships are characterized by having two distinct functions: career and psychosocial.<sup>281</sup> Career functions are areas of the mentoring process that prepare the protégé for improvement and help them move forward in the workplace.<sup>282</sup> On the other hand, psychosocial mentoring aids the protégé's "sense of competence, clarity of identity, and effectiveness."<sup>283</sup> Mentoring that is comprised of both components has broader implications for the organizations—i.e., deeper organizational commitment on the part of mentored employees. Further, organizations with structured mentoring programs—consisting of organizational support; clarity of purpose, expectations, and roles; participant choice and involvement; careful selection and matching procedures; and continuous monitoring and evaluation—are likely to amplify organizational commitment.<sup>284</sup>

There are qualities and characteristics that both mentors and mentees bring to the table that facilitates the mentoring relationship and leads to mentee organizational commitment. Personality traits play a critical role in building effective mentoring relationships, such as "emotional stability, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness," and lead to organizational commitment.<sup>285</sup> A mentee's willingness to accept advice from their mentor is positively correlated with commitment, and commitment is created through quality relationships.<sup>286</sup> Looking specifically at leader-member exchange (LMX), the effectiveness of this relationship varies depending on the quality of exchanges between managers and their subordinates.<sup>287</sup> However, high-quality LMX relationships paired with nonsupervisory mentorships showed better success than using LMX by itself.<sup>288</sup> Individuals who were in both of the aforementioned relationships exhibited better socialization and experienced less role stress.<sup>289</sup> The

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281. Tammy D. Allen & Mark L. Poteet, *Enhancing Our Knowledge of Mentoring with a Person-Centric Approach*, 4 *INDUS. & ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCH.* 126 (2011).

282. *Id.*

283. *Id.*

284. *Id.* at 127.

285. Ridhi Arora & Santosh Rangnekar, *The Joint Effects of Personality and Supervisory Career Mentoring in Predicting Occupational Commitment*, 20 *CAREER DEV. INT'L* 63, 66 (2015).

286. SuJin Son & Do-Yeong Kim, *What Makes Protégés Take Mentors' Advice in Formal Mentoring Relationships?*, 40 *J. CAREER DEV.* 311, 322 (2012).

287. Christopher H. Thomas & Melenie J. Lankau, *Preventing Burnout: The Effects of LMX and Mentoring on Socialization, Role Stress and Burnout*, 48 *HUM. RES. MGMT.* 417, 420 (2009).

288. *Id.*

289. *Id.* at 420–21.

nonsupervisory mentorships provide mentees with access to resources beyond the assigned workgroup, thus, allowing them to better meet job demands.<sup>290</sup>

Mentoring that speaks to the psychosocial needs of mentees causes them to experience perceived organizational support, which facilitates organizational commitment.<sup>291</sup> Specifically, when a mentee views his or her mentor as an agent of the organization, the mentee's organizational commitment increases.<sup>292</sup> Thus, by socializing with their mentee, the mentor helps their mentee deal with first impressions and social acceptance, which are critical for job satisfaction and organizational commitment.<sup>293</sup> More specifically, a mentor's concern for a mentee's personal and emotional state increases affective organizational commitment, reduces turnover, and promotes retention.<sup>294</sup> As such, those with mentors show greater commitment on both an active and long-term, continual level.<sup>295</sup>

Ultimately, mentoring may redound to the benefit, and increase organizational commitment among, both mentors and mentees. Organization-based self-esteem (OBSE) and affective organizational commitment play a mediating role in transmitting the effect of perceived reciprocal support from mentors to mentees and their "intent to engage in organizational citizenship behavior."<sup>296</sup> Reciprocal mentorship support positively affects OBSE and reveals a positive correlation between support from mentors and willingness to offer help to coworkers with work-related issues.<sup>297</sup> In addition, mentors experience higher job satisfaction and organizational commitment themselves than those who were not in that role.<sup>298</sup>

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290. *Id.* at 421.

291. Lisa E. Baranik et al., *Why Does Mentoring Work? The Role of Perceived Organizational Support*, 76 J. VOCATIONAL BEHAV. 366, 371 (2010).

292. *Id.* at 367.

293. *Id.* at 371.

294. Christopher A. Craig et al., *The Impact of Career Mentoring and Psychosocial Mentoring on Affective Organizational Commitment, Job Involvement, and Turnover Intention*, 45 ADMIN. & SOC'Y 949, 952 (2012); Stephanie C. Payne & Ann H. Huffman, *A Longitudinal Examination of the Influence of Mentoring on Organizational Commitment and Turnover*, 48 ACAD. MGMT. J. 158, 165 (2005).

295. Payne & Huffman, *supra* note 294, at 165.

296. Rajashi Ghosh et al., *Mentoring and Organizational Citizenship Behavior: Estimating the Mediating Effects of Organization-Based Self-Esteem and Affective Commitment*, 23 HUM. RES DEV. Q. 41, 41 (2012).

297. *Id.* at 55.

298. Rajashi Ghosh & Thomas G. Reio Jr., *Career Benefits Associated with Mentoring for Mentors: A Meta-Analysis*, 83 J. VOCATIONAL BEHAV. 106, 110 (2013).

*C. Commentary*

For fraternities and sororities that want to deepen organizational commitment—and the associated benefits—among their members, there are a variety of things they should do. First, organizational culture is a critical sphere. Organizations should ensure that a high degree of ethics is maintained in how the organization conducts its internal affairs. This means that organizations must obey the law, their own organizational rules, and seek to be just and transparent to all stakeholders.<sup>299</sup> In addition, organizations should ensure that they are committed to a higher purpose—e.g., uplifting the community through advocacy, community service, philanthropy—and that their work in their sphere is robust.<sup>300</sup>

Second, leaders play a critical role in shaping the extent to which organizational commitment is realized.<sup>301</sup> Toxic leaders should not be able to ascend to power, and if they do and where possible, they should be removed from office. What organizations should be committed to developing and training are servant leaders, invested in the needs of those they lead. Leaders within these organizations, at every level, should be trained to effectively engage with and support members.

Third, much of these organizations' work must be focused on their members. When brought through whatever new member process an organization has, they should be clear with candidates about the organization's history, culture, and values.<sup>302</sup> This should not simply be in ideal terms but also with respect to how those elements are realized in practical terms. That will allow candidates to determine if the organization is even a good fit for them. In addition, as the organization articulates the benefits of membership in direct and indirect ways, it should be mindful that initiates may come to hold the organization accountable for such promises. In short, those promises may dictate the extent to which members may commit themselves to the organization. As such, the organization should be clear about the organization's pros and cons early in the candidates' new member process.

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299. See Gregory S. Parks, "Midnight within the Moral Order": *Organizational Culture, Unethical Leaders, and Members' Deviance*, 40 T. MARSHALL L. REV. 115 (2015) (exploring fraternity and sorority leadership organizational financial crimes).

300. See Jessica Harris & Vernon C. Mitchell, Jr., *A Narrative Critique of Black Greek-Letter Organizations and Social Action*, in BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: OUR FIGHT HAS JUST BEGUN 143, 168 (Gregory S. Parks ed., 2008).

301. Wayne et al., *supra* note 191, at 256.

302. See Kenneth I. Clarke, Sr. & Tamara L. Brown, *Faith and Fraternalism*, in BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS 2.0: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES 69, 90 (Matthew W. Hughey & Gregory S. Parks eds., 2011) (exploring the tension some Black Greek-letter organization members feel with respect to being a member and their faith).

Fourth, toxic and destructive members who drive members away should be addressed. More senior members, including but not exclusively leaders, should be trained on how to mentor new members, and formalized mentoring programs should be implemented. Early-on in their membership, new members should be helped to cultivate relationships and connections with a broad array of other members so that they feel connected to the organization in tangible ways. And members should be trained on how to be more emotionally intelligent and how to better navigate unbrotherly or unsisterly dynamics when they arise. Moreover, organizations should find ways to encourage and support individual members—e.g., recognizing life milestones or coming to aid in a time of need.

Fifth, beyond relationship dynamics, how to do the work of these organizations is critical to organizational commitment. Generally, members—especially new members—should be trained on how to operate and do the work of the organization. In fact, they should be engaged to do the institution building and community work of the organization and provided with clarity of purpose for that work and task variety. These organizations should clarify to members the centrality of their work to the organization. And members should be provided with support to do this work, especially from leadership at every level. Lastly, experts and highly skilled members should be recruited and provided with the support and autonomy to solve difficult, complex, and longstanding organizational problems.

Lastly, members—especially new members—should be provided with organizational mentors to help them assimilate within the organization. The mentor should also be there to aid the new member in grappling with the psychological challenges that come with navigating a new organization. Such an experience should be well-organized, goal-driven, and organizationally supported.

## V. RETENTION AND TURNOVER

Another central area of organizational behavior scholarship is employee retention (or turnover). Employee retention focuses on the factors that influence the likelihood that an employee will quit or remain an employee in an employment setting. In this section, I explore the general causes of turnover, job characteristics that impact retention, and how these factors may be harnessed by fraternities and sororities.

*A. General Causes of Turnover*

Due to the cost and time involved in the recruitment and training of new employees, improving retention rates is critical to the survival of any company.<sup>303</sup> However, there are many complex and, at times, interconnected factors that impact an employee's turnover intention.<sup>304</sup> There are varying types of turnover as well, and it is beneficial for employers to monitor voluntary (individual motivated choice behavior)<sup>305</sup> as avoidable turnover as opposed to turnover that is unavoidable (e.g., due to childcare, relocation).<sup>306</sup> Evidently, studying the latter may be of less interest, since it is out of an organization's control, and may confound study of the former. Regardless, turnover is complicated, and it is important for managers to collect and closely analyze data on turnover in order to develop an effective, context-specific, "evidence-based retention strategy."<sup>307</sup> Further, managers should be able to "interpret [the] data through the lens of ... organizational context, considering past, present, and future conditions and trends both internal and external to the organization,"<sup>308</sup> considering the fact that turnover rate on its own "can be very misleading without a careful consideration of context."<sup>309</sup>

It is important for managers to know that turnover starts before employment even begins.<sup>310</sup> Individuals who enter a job from outside sources as opposed to employee referrals are less likely to have realistic expectations about the workplace and job itself and other individual differences that cause them to leave an organization.<sup>311</sup> Historically, the literature has shown that recruitment practices are linked to retention, with the idea that individuals are more likely to be attracted to and selected by organizations that will be a good fit for them, and those who fit are less likely to quit.<sup>312</sup> Since the recruitment process is the first opportunity managers have to manage turnover, it is in the manager's best interest to further learn about and understand recruitment so that they can develop proper recruitment practices to

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303. See Angela R. Grotto et al., *Employee Turnover and Strategies for Retention*, in *THE WILEY BLACKWELL HANDBOOK OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION* 445 (Harold W. Goldstein et al. eds., 2017).

304. *Id.*

305. PETER W. HOM ET AL., *EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND TURNOVER: WHY EMPLOYEES STAY OR LEAVE* 2 (2020).

306. DAVID G. ALLEN & PHIL BRYANT, *MANAGING EMPLOYEE TURNOVER: DISPELLING MYTHS AND FOSTERING EVIDENCE-BASED RETENTION STRATEGIES* 4 (2012).

307. *Id.* at 28.

308. *Id.* at 33.

309. *Id.* at 32.

310. *Id.* at 42.

311. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 248.

312. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 50.

select those who are the best fit.<sup>313</sup> Ultimately, managers should present their organization in a realistic manner to applicants, disclosing both favorable and unfavorable job-related information, in addition to relying on employee referrals to manage and prevent turnover during the recruitment process.<sup>314</sup>

“Turnover is one coping behavior used in a larger process”: an event occurs that causes people to feel a threat.<sup>315</sup> That threat causes strain in their life, and they become more and more unsatisfied with their job.<sup>316</sup> They try to rid that strain from their life using different coping mechanisms like cutting down hours per week spent at work or switching managers.<sup>317</sup> Successful coping is strongly correlated with turnover, such that individuals who handle job requirements more efficiently are less likely to leave.<sup>318</sup> If those coping mechanisms are not successful in freeing that person from the threat, he or she will turn to the most extreme coping mechanism: quitting their job altogether.<sup>319</sup> Turnover can be thought of as a series of withdrawal behaviors, beginning with withdrawal from work (i.e., neglecting tasks, absences) and sometimes leading to more permanent withdrawal from job (i.e., quitting).<sup>320</sup> Mere thoughts about quitting, such as grappling with the decision to quit, weighing the costs and benefits of resignation, and wanting to search for another job, are shown to be the strongest predictors of turnover,<sup>321</sup> next to withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism and lateness.<sup>322</sup> However, the factors that lead an individual to the point of quitting are more complex than mere job dissatisfaction,<sup>323</sup> with satisfaction changing over time,<sup>324</sup> resulting from a variety of factors.

The “unfolding model” attempts to explain individuals’ reasons for leaving.<sup>325</sup> There are four paths within the unfolding model.<sup>326</sup> People that follow Path 1 leave their job following an event or shock, but already had a plan in place in case this

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313. *Id.* at 56.

314. *Id.* at 51–52.

315. Teresa J. Rothausen et al., *Should I Stay or Should I Go? Identity and Well-Being in Sensemaking About Retention and Turnover*, 43 J. MGMT. 2358, 2368 (2017).

316. *Id.*

317. *Id.* at 2370.

318. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 60.

319. Rothausen et al., *supra* note 315, at 2373.

320. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 8.

321. *Id.* at 63.

322. *Id.* at 65.

323. *See* Rothausen et al., *supra* note 315, at 2357.

324. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 157.

325. Terence R. Mitchell et al., *How to Keep Your Best Employees: Developing an Effective Retention Policy*, 15 ACAD. MGMT. EXEC. 96, 98–100 (2001).

326. *Id.* at 98.

shock occurred.<sup>327</sup> A common example of this phenomenon is if a professional woman finds out she is pregnant. The pregnancy is a planned event after which she leaves her job without searching for alternative jobs.<sup>328</sup> Path 2 also is triggered by a shock but unlike Path 1, there is no plan in place before the shock.<sup>329</sup> This shock is “often negative and involves a violation of expectations” and trust.<sup>330</sup> Path 3 is called “leaving for something better” and is initiated by a shock, often “an unsolicited job offer,” that triggers some (but usually minimal) job dissatisfaction, so the person considers the alternative and leaves.<sup>331</sup> Like Path 1, Path 3 is a thoughtful process.<sup>332</sup> Path 4, however, is not so thoughtful.<sup>333</sup> Path 4 occurs when a person is unsatisfied with their job and a shock triggers them to leave.<sup>334</sup> There are two subcategories of Path 4 that are based on whether or not a person searches for a new job before quitting their current one.<sup>335</sup>

“[J]ob dissatisfaction, levels of identity and well-being strain, and the length of time spent in cycles of coping with threat[s] and strain[s] will better predict turnover together than each will alone.”<sup>336</sup> Most importantly, though, organizations have a better chance of changing behavior if they can intervene before the intentions manifest themselves.<sup>337</sup> To counter some of these causes of turnover and retain talent, employees can engage with six critical factors of retention: job characteristics, training and development opportunities, supervisor support, career opportunities, compensation, and work-life balance.

### *B. Job Characteristics*

#### *Organizational Support*

Although many things can increase retention, the most important factor is that the employer fulfills the psychological needs of the employee.<sup>338</sup> According to a reciprocal relationship rule, employees will be loyal to the company as long as their

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327. *Id.* at 99.

328. *Id.*

329. *Id.*

330. *Id.*

331. *Id.* at 99–100.

332. *Id.*

333. *Id.* at 100.

334. *Id.*

335. *Id.*

336. Rothausen et al., *supra* note 315, at 2376.

337. *Id.* at 2360.

338. Prabhjot Kaur Mahal, *HR Practices as Determinants of Organizational Commitment and Employee Retention*, XI IUP J. MGMT. RSCH., no. 4, Oct. 2012, at 37, 39.

employer respects and values them as workers.<sup>339</sup> Even employees with a low level of commitment to their organization are less likely to leave if they receive high levels of support from the organization.<sup>340</sup> Specifically, establishing a culture of mutual trust and reciprocity between the employee and employer goes far in building this loyalty, as it encourages employees to feel tied to their organization.<sup>341</sup> Furthermore, higher emotional engagement also increases loyalty and retention.<sup>342</sup> Managers can further foster emotional engagement by clearly communicating with employees and providing proper rewards, recognition and guidance.<sup>343</sup> Overall, greater perceived organizational support leads to a better mood, higher commitment, and therefore lower turnover cognitions.<sup>344</sup> In essence, if an organization shows more commitment to an employee, that employee will feel stronger obligations towards the company and is less likely to leave.<sup>345</sup> Employees with weak or medium commitment, on the other hand, generally experience turnover by the fourth year.<sup>346</sup>

However, the perceived genuineness of the support is an important factor in building employee loyalty and lowering retention issues. Research has shown that perceptions of disinterested support decrease an employee turnover through enhancing perceptions of organizational support and commitment.<sup>347</sup> Disinterestedness in terms of social exchange relates to the notion that an exchange is worth more if it is done with apparent disinterestedness and modesty, meaning that it is not motivated by the potential benefits of the exchange.<sup>348</sup> When it comes to the employer-employee relationship, an employee who feels supported by the organization will give back and feel more committed to their organization if they perceive that this support is disinterested.<sup>349</sup> It is important that employees do not feel that they are being taken advantage of in their relationship with their employer.<sup>350</sup> Thus, so long as employees do not feel that they are being supported

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339. *Id.*

340. Chris Perryer et al., *Predicting Turnover Intentions: The Interactive Effects of Organizational Commitment and Perceived Organizational Support*, 33 *MGMT. RSCH. REV.* 911, 913 (2010).

341. Ans De Vos & Annelies Meganck, *What HR Managers Do Versus What Employees Value*, 38 *PERSONNEL REV.* 45, 51–52 (2009).

342. Mahal, *supra* note 338, at 39.

343. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 96–97.

344. Carl Maertz et al., *The Effects of Perceived Organizational Support and Perceived Supervisor Support on Employee Turnover*, 28 *J. ORG. BEHAV.* 1059, 1059 (2007).

345. *Id.*

346. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 154.

347. Karim Mignonac & Nathalie Richebe, *No Strings Attached? How Attribution of Disinterested Support Affects Employee Retention*, 23 *HUM. RES. MGMT. J.* 72, 72 (2013).

348. *Id.* at 75.

349. *Id.* at 76.

350. *Id.* at 78.

solely for the interests of the organization, and that the support is more genuine, they will be less likely to leave their organization, as they will feel more committed.<sup>351</sup>

### *Organizational Ethics*

“Employees . . . appear to fit in better with an organization that has an ethical climate and management that conducts itself in an ethical manner.”<sup>352</sup> Possible future employees also choose companies based on how much they agree with the values of the company.<sup>353</sup> In one study, “around half of the students said they would accept lower pay to work for a company they regarded as highly socially responsible, and significantly, 43% said they would not work for an employer that did not demonstrate ethically responsible conduct.”<sup>354</sup> Thus, fits between individual ethical orientations, corporate ethical reputations, and organizational ethical climates generate positive attitudes and behaviors among potential recruits while a clash between the three generates the opposite.<sup>355</sup>

### *Person-Job Fit*

An emotional connection to one’s job often increases retention rates among employees,<sup>356</sup> even among those who experience strain at work.<sup>357</sup> Person-Job (P-O) fit can be either supplementary or complementary.<sup>358</sup> “Supplementary P-O fit occurs when the person’s personality, values, goals, and attitudes are similar to the organization’s culture, values, goals, and norms,” whereas “complementary P-O fit can be either in the form of needs-supplies or demand-abilities fit.”<sup>359</sup> These two fits can be fairly determined during the selection process by collecting data on a prospective employee’s life and work experiences, opinions, values and attitudes.<sup>360</sup>

It is important to match employees’ individual self-concept with job tasks for work motivation.<sup>361</sup> An employee feels that his or her work is more meaningful if

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351. *Id.* at 78–79.

352. David A. Coldwell et al., *The Effects of Person–Organization Ethical Fit on Employee Attraction and Retention: Towards a Testable Explanatory Model*, 78 J. BUS. ETHICS 611, 617 (2008).

353. *Id.* at 616.

354. *Id.* at 618.

355. *Id.* at 620.

356. Wesley A. Scroggins, *The Relationship Between Employee Fit Perceptions, Job Performance, and Retention: Implications of Perceived Fit*, 20 EMP. RESP. RTS. J 57, 57 (2007).

357. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 127.

358. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 55–56.

359. *Id.* at 56.

360. *Id.*

361. Scroggins, *supra* note 356, at 59.

their self-concept, social self-concept, and the presentation of self are all acknowledged.<sup>362</sup> “Self-concept job fit” can be said to occur when the performance of job tasks provides the individual with perceptions and feelings that enhance individual self-esteem.<sup>363</sup> This “self-verification theory” states that people seek out environments, activities, and other people that confirm their preconceived self-image.<sup>364</sup> Thus, if people’s job tasks reinforce what they already think about themselves, they will find their work to be more meaningful and continue to do well.<sup>365</sup>

It is also important that an employee’s personality matches with the job to increase retention. A study that examined various factors in turnover retention showed that a good personality fit has a positive relationship to employee work engagement and a negative relationship to turnover intention when mediated by employee work engagement.<sup>366</sup> Personality fit with a job also has a positive relationship to leader-member exchange, which itself has a positive relationship to employee work engagement,<sup>367</sup> by fostering independence and feelings of importance among members.<sup>368</sup> More clearly, an employee that has a good personality fit for a job is more likely to have a good relationship and experience with a supervisor.<sup>369</sup> Furthermore, having a good personality fit as well as a good relationship with a supervisor decreases turnover intention.<sup>370</sup>

### *Supervisor Support*

The supervisor acts not simply as an extension or “personification” of the company, but independently affects retention rates as well.<sup>371</sup> In fact, research suggests that it is the responsibility of the direct managers to ensure retention.<sup>372</sup> The manager who an individual employee most interacts with on a regular basis is the person who most influences that employee’s decision to quit or stay as more positive feelings toward the supervisor will lead to more positive feelings toward

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362. *Id.* at 60.

363. *Id.*

364. *Id.* at 61.

365. *Id.*

366. Gary Covella et al., *Leadership’s Role in Employee Retention*, 7 J. BUS. MGMT. DYNAMICS 1, 1 (2017).

367. *Id.* at 3.

368. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 54.

369. Covella et al., *supra* note 366, at 8.

370. *Id.*

371. Maertz et al., *supra* note 344, at 1064.

372. Crystal Zhand & Jim Stewart, *Talent Management and Retention*, in THE WILEY BLACKWELL HANDBOOK OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION 473, 477 (Harold W. Goldstein et al. eds., 2017).

the organization as a whole.<sup>373</sup> In addition to interacting with employees, managers should make an effort to be “available and open” among employees and to provide encouraging feedback, mentoring, and appropriate recognition.<sup>374</sup> Managers who display humility, too, are attributed with having a realistic perspective of oneself, which increases member satisfaction and also has the potential to reduce turnover.<sup>375</sup> Organizations should train supervisors in employee management by rewarding them for such behavior and removing them when they cannot elicit a high level of supervisor support.<sup>376</sup>

However, the relationship between employee participation and employee turnover is a contingent one, and participation is most effective when implemented by competent managers.<sup>377</sup> For example, full-time public school teachers demonstrated that teachers employed in schools in which the rating of the principal effectiveness is high are less likely to turn over.<sup>378</sup> The study also demonstrated that the impact of employee participation is positive under effective managers but null or negative under ineffective managers.<sup>379</sup>

However, employees can distinguish relations with the immediate supervisor from relations with the organizational entity or its leaders.<sup>380</sup> Thus, the effects from perceived supervisor support are “only partially mediated” by perceived organizational support.<sup>381</sup> Despite this, the negative relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover is stronger for those experiencing low perceived supervisor support and weaker for those experiencing high perceived supervisor support.<sup>382</sup> Furthermore, perceived supervisor support levels “may fluctuate more [frequently overall] than [perceived organizational support levels]” will.<sup>383</sup> However, it is recognized that most employees still do want both support from their supervisor and their “organization as a whole.”<sup>384</sup>

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373. *Id.*; see also Maertz, *supra* note 344, at 1066.

374. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 90–91.

375. Hom et al., *supra* note 305, at 187.

376. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 94.

377. Jason A. Grissom, *Revisiting the Impact of Participative Decision Making on Public Employee Retention: The Moderating Influence of Effective Managers*, 42 AM. REV. PUB. ADMIN. 400, 411 (2012).

378. *Id.* at 410.

379. *Id.* at 411.

380. Maertz et al., *supra* note 344, at 1072.

381. *Id.* at 1063.

382. *Id.* at 1064.

383. *Id.* at 1063.

384. *Id.* at 1064.

### *Training and Development Opportunities*

Training is viewed as a skill or ability enhancement and is an influential actor that impacts employee turnover and retention.<sup>385</sup> Good training creates an environment of support, role clarity, and heightened self-esteem;<sup>386</sup> however, investments in training and development can be a double-edged sword, as investment in training tends to make employees more mobile and therefore more attractive to other employers.<sup>387</sup> If not handled correctly, investment in training and development is likely to be made towards a competitor's future force.<sup>388</sup> Therefore, it is important for managers to offer employees with both development opportunities and the advance opportunities that match their organizational goals,<sup>389</sup> and that are coupled with promises of advancement.<sup>390</sup> Overall, with regard to employee empowerment and its impact on retention, research conveys that empowered employees have increased motivation, and thus contribute to organizational competitiveness, profitability, and unity.<sup>391</sup> It is important that feedback is given "frequently and effectively" since the exchange can be perceived as more than just a performative measure.<sup>392</sup> Further, business coaching is likely to yield employee confidence and competence.<sup>393</sup>

Providing training and development opportunities also tend to reduce employees' desire to leave the organization as it increases one's perception that the organization is supportive of them, which in turn increases their overall job satisfaction.<sup>394</sup> Hence, managers ought to provide their employees with training and development opportunities, but they should ensure that their investments are provided in a supportive manner.<sup>395</sup>

### *Onboarding*

One strategy that has proven extremely successful in retaining employees is the process of onboarding: a practice in which senior employees integrate new

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385. Gerald R. Ferris & Thomas F. Urban, *Supervisory Training & Employee Turnover*, 9 GROUP ORG. STUD. 481, 482 (1984).

386. Lee-Anne C. Johennesse & Te-Kuang Chou, *Employee Perceptions of Talent Management Effectiveness on Retention*, 9 GLOB. BUS. MGMT. RSCH. INT'L J. 46, 49–50 (2017).

387. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 71.

388. *Id.*

389. *Id.* at 72.

390. *Id.* at 75.

391. Johennesse & Chou, *supra* note 386, at 49.

392. *Id.* at 50.

393. *Id.* at 51.

394. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 72.

395. *Id.* at 75.

employees into the culture of the firm.<sup>396</sup> The more in-depth the integration, the lower the turnover rates.<sup>397</sup> The completion of an employee's first day does not mark the end of the onboarding process; rather, onboarding is an "ongoing strategy" that, when developed effectively, fosters a new hire's company knowledge, rapport with co-workers, and long-term productivity.<sup>398</sup> While it may seem counterproductive to invest extensive time and energy to train a new employee, the onboarding experience is a critical period, as "employee turnover can be as much as 50% in the first 18 months of employment."<sup>399</sup> Onboarding serves to reduce newcomer anxiety and uncertainty by providing new hires with a consistent message, and introducing them to company culture, value, roles and goals.<sup>400</sup> Investing time and effort in new employees during the beginning phases of their career with a comprehensive onboarding program works to encourage employees to both remain and thrive in an organization.<sup>401</sup>

Studies have shown the positive effects of several specific onboarding strategies. An effective onboarding process begins before the new employee's arrival.<sup>402</sup> A 2009 Aberdeen survey found that 83% of the highest performing organizations began onboarding before the new hire's first day<sup>403</sup> by, for instance, enabling access to the company's online portal, providing the new hire with a handbook including explanations of company-specific jargon and a directory including employee contact information, sending an introduction with a personalized email, or setting up the new hire's workplace before they arrive to make them feel welcome.<sup>404</sup> Although indirect types of information distribution are less efficient with regards to integration compared to face-to-face methods,<sup>405</sup> they

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396. Zhand & Stewart, *supra* note 372, at 479–80.

397. *Id.* at 480–82.

398. *Id.*

399. Ed O'Boyle & Jim Harter, *Why the Onboarding Experience Is Key for Retention*, GALLUP BLOG (Jan. 27, 2019), <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/235121/why-onboarding-experience-key-retention.aspx>.

400. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 63–64.

401. O'Boyle & Harter, *supra* note 399.

402. Roy Maurer, *Onboarding Key to Retaining, Engaging Talent*, SOC'Y FOR HUM. RES. MGMT. (Apr. 16, 2015), <https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/talent-acquisition/pages/onboarding-key-retaining-engaging-talent.aspx>.

403. *Id.*

404. *Id.*; see also Heidi Lynne Kurter, *4 Onboarding Tactics to Increase Retention and Inspire Unwavering Loyalty*, FORBES (Oct. 25, 2018, 08:06 AM), <https://www.forbes.com/sites/heidilynnekurter/2018/10/25/4-onboarding-tactics-to-increase-retention-and-inspire-unwavering-loyalty/#6cdf21112e96>.

405. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 246.

can help a new hire mentally prepare for his or her first day and eventual transition.<sup>406</sup>

Upon the new hire's arrival, an effective strategy is pairing the employee with an experienced mentor in their department who can help them assimilate and keep them feeling engaged and supported.<sup>407</sup> According to a BambooHR study, 56% of respondents claimed that having a "mentor at work was very important when getting started."<sup>408</sup> An experienced mentor is also likely to provide new hires with realistic expectations.<sup>409</sup> Often, newly hired employees come in with unreasonably high expectations for their new position, and when those expectations are not met, they experience job dissatisfaction.<sup>410</sup> Having a mentor who can explain how things work, including the unsavory aspects of the workplace, can help the new hire deem the job as having met their expectations, therefore decreasing turnover.<sup>411</sup> Moreover, data displays that high-performing organizations are nearly two-and-a-half times more likely than lower-performing employers to assign a mentor to a new hire during the onboarding process.<sup>412</sup>

Another effective strategy is fostering a positive manager-employee relationship.<sup>413</sup> Data suggest that managers and company leaders should display their engagement and involvement in the onboarding process by scheduling time to get to know their new hire.<sup>414</sup> Managers should also ensure that they provide consistent feedback to the new hire as they assimilate into the company, specifically by scheduling progress meetings 30, 60, and 90 days from their start date to discuss the hire's progress and areas for growth and to offer general support.<sup>415</sup> A 2014 study that surveyed individuals who had quit their job within the first six months of employment, and found that 23% of respondents would have been more likely to keep their job if they had received clear guidelines relating to their job responsibilities.<sup>416</sup> Another 21% of respondents revealed that they sought more

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406. Maurer, *supra* note 402.

407. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 243.

408. *Id.*

409. *Id.*

410. *Id.*

411. *Id.*

412. *Id.*

413. *Id.*

414. *Id.*

415. Tara Carter, *Hire Right the First Time*, 80 J. PROP. MGMT., May–June 2015, at 26, 28 (2015).

416. Maurer, *supra* note 402.

effective training, and 9% of respondents wanted more attention from co-workers and managers during the early stages.<sup>417</sup>

A fourth method of effective onboarding is having managers assign short-term tasks that they are confident their new hires can accomplish while gradually increasing the level of responsibility with subsequent tasks.<sup>418</sup> The successful completion of these short-term tasks helps the new hire to build trust, provides an opportunity to discuss areas of improvement, and illustrates the significance of their contribution to the company.<sup>419</sup>

A final strategy of an effective onboarding program is known as “social onboarding.” Through this process, it is recommended that new hires identify seven to ten people—coworkers, superiors, customers—with whom they can collaborate with during their first year.<sup>420</sup> Another method of social onboarding involves “fixed socialization practices,” meaning the timing of progressing through socialization stages is predetermined and communicated to new hires.<sup>421</sup> Fixed practices can help clarify the new hire’s role in the organization as well as the time needed to become an insider, and together with sequential practices may elicit a greater sense of belongingness in the organizational community.<sup>422</sup> In practice, managers should clearly identify and communicate the timing of stages within the socialization process to new hires.<sup>423</sup> For example, celebrating promotions across various socialization stages can effectively improve retention as it provides new employees with a sense of accomplishment and belongingness.<sup>424</sup> The relationships provide the new hire with the opportunity to ask for guidance and feedback,<sup>425</sup> build social capital, and increase two-way accountability. The more peer connections an individual has, the less likely they are to leave their current position.<sup>426</sup>

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417. *Id.*

418. Ron Carucci, *To Retain New Hires, Spend More Time Onboarding Them*, Harv. Bus. Rev. (Dec. 3, 2018), <https://hbr.org/2018/12/to-retain-new-hires-spend-more-time-onboarding-them>.

419. *Id.*

420. *Id.*

421. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 66–67.

422. *Id.* at 67.

423. *Id.*

424. *Id.* at 65.

425. *Id.*

426. HOM ET AL., *supra* note 305, at 195.

*Work-Life Balance*

A company's interest in work-life balance shows employees that the company cares about them as individuals.<sup>427</sup> Work-life balance is defined as "an overall appraisal of the extent to which an individual's effectiveness and satisfaction in work and family roles is consistent with their life values at a given point in time."<sup>428</sup> Work-life conflict is considered a "psychosocial stressor" that can produce strained reactions like poor physical health, diminished affect, or withdrawal behaviors.<sup>429</sup>

The difference between an individual's national culture versus a collectivist national culture strongly influences whether an individual will quit based on work-life conflict.<sup>430</sup> Employees in collectivist cultures strongly consider whether the company will struggle in their absence, which usually persuades them to stay.<sup>431</sup> Leaders in organizations looking to reduce turnover should be ever mindful of the degree to which employees feel that they are adequately supported with regard to their responsibilities outside of work.<sup>432</sup> The ranking of life responsibilities makes a difference as those who prioritize work over family are less likely to quit in the face of work-life conflict than those who prioritize family over work.<sup>433</sup> This is a phenomenon called family centrality.<sup>434</sup>

Formal work-life support policies can be divided into flexibility-based policies and dependent care support policies.<sup>435</sup> Flexibility-based policies include policies like flextime, telecommuting, compressed work weeks, reduced hours, part-time work, and job sharing.<sup>436</sup> Dependent care support policies include "policies aimed specifically at assisting with the care of dependents, such as caregiving leave, childcare or eldercare referral services, dependent care assistant plans that help employees pay for childcare with before-tax money, and childcare vouchers or subsidies, on-site daycare, and emergency or sick care for children."<sup>437</sup> All of these policies are positively correlated with organizational commitment and are

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427. Zhand & Stewart, *supra* note 372, at 475.

428. Kristen M. Shockley et al., *The Impact of Work-Life Balance on Employee Retention*, in THE WILEY BLACKWELL HANDBOOK OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION 513, 514 (Harold W. Goldstein et al. eds., 2017).

429. *Id.* at 515.

430. *Id.* at 517.

431. *Id.*

432. *Id.*

433. *Id.*

434. *Id.* at 518.

435. *Id.*

436. *Id.*

437. *Id.* at 519.

negatively related to turnover intentions.<sup>438</sup> However, when managers do not encourage the use of these policies, the positive views towards these policies decrease.<sup>439</sup> This fact is why informal work-family support policies are much more successful at improving retention rates.<sup>440</sup>

### C. Commentary

For fraternities and sororities that want to increase alumni member retention and reduce alumni member turnover, one of the best things they can do is collect, maintain, and analyze data on retention and turnover trends. Without an effective data management and analysis system, organizations will fly in the dark. Also, their solutions are likely to remain guided by hunches and intuition and be less effective in the long run.

Second, retention cannot be an issue that these organizations think of as arising years into a member's fraternal or sororal experience. It starts even before they become members.<sup>441</sup> Recruitment and selection predict retention. More specifically, the things an organization does to attract and select members—particularly the extent to which they bring in individuals who are a good fit for the organization—can make retention more or less likely.<sup>442</sup> Accordingly, as previously noted, an organization should more effectively communicate with prospective members about the organization's history, culture, and values. In doing so, this gives prospective members the type of information needed to determine whether a particular organization is the one for them.

Third, from the beginning of the new member process for months and years after initiation, effective onboarding—organizational socialization—should take place. This includes, but is not limited to, mentoring new members, engaging with leaders in a meaningful way, assigning short-term projects and tasks, and creating automatic networks between new members and more seasoned members. This process should not be haphazard or random. Rather, it should be structured and well-organized. In short, it should be a well-constructed neophyte training program. Associated with it, but not isolated to new member onboarding, is ongoing training and development so that members—new and old—know how to do their organizational work, can feel competent in doing it, and be effective at executing it.

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438. *Id.* at 521.

439. *Id.* at 529.

440. *Id.* at 531.

441. ALLEN & BRYANT, *supra* note 306, at 50.

442. *Id.*

Fourth, speaking to the broader culture of these organizations, members need to feel supported by their organizational leaders and their organization. Leaders should engage in effective communication and provide proper rewards, recognition, and guidance. Organizations, as noted before, should be committed to high ethics and social responsibility. Organizations should be committed to organization-life balance (e.g., work and family). This may mean creating spaces where members can bring their spouses, partners, and children so as not to neglect those aspects of their lives.

## VI. SERVICE RECOVERY AS A RECLAMATION ANALOG

The last concept that provides guidance with respect to how fraternities and sororities should navigate their relationship with alumni is reclamation. There is no such term in the organizational behavior literature. Reclamation is a term frequently and historically used within BGLOs; it is the effort to get financially inactive alumni members to resume financial ties with their fraternity or sorority.<sup>443</sup> One of the first references to this concept came in the early 1930s in Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity's national magazine.<sup>444</sup> In business, the closest analogy to reclamation is service recovery. Service recovery is based on the idea that companies should view complaining customers not as a nuisance but rather as an opportunity to make things right again and woo the customer back.<sup>445</sup> In this section, I explore why organizations should view complaints as opportunities, what effective service recovery looks like, and the effects of service recovery.

### *A. Complaints as Opportunities*

In an ideal world, companies and organizations alike could prevent problems with customers from ever occurring. However, since issues are bound to pop up from time to time, service recovery appears to be the next best option.<sup>446</sup> Although it may be unlikely for a company to return to pre-failure levels of satisfaction and loyalty after a given service failure, especially if the failure is severe,<sup>447</sup> service recovery offers the potential for damage control and customer retention.<sup>448</sup>

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443. P. Bernard Young, Jr., *Two Years of The Sphinx*, 18 SPHINX 9, 10 (1932).

444. *Id.*

445. See SARAH COOK, COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE: CREATING CUSTOMER LOYALTY THROUGH SERVICE RECOVERY (2012).

446. Christopher W. Hart et al., *The Profitable Art of Service Recovery*, HARV. BUS. REV. (July–Aug. 1990), available at: <https://hbr.org/1990/07/the-profitable-art-of-service-recovery>.

447. Christopher W. Craighead et al., *The Effects of Severity of Failure and Customer Loyalty on Service Recovery Strategies*, 13 PROD. OPERATION MGMT. 307, 313–16 (2004).

448. Ok Chihyung et al., *Service Recovery Paradox: Implications from an Experimental Study in a Restaurant Setting*, 14 J. HOSP. LEISURE MKTG., no. 3, 2006, at 17, 29–30.

When faced with an unhappy customer, it is in a company's best interest to mitigate any issues as opposed to dismissing complaints, no matter how mundane the complaints may seem.<sup>449</sup> One reason for this is that it is more expensive and difficult to get new customers than it is to keep old ones.<sup>450</sup> Whether the company is fully responsible for the problem at hand is a separate matter.<sup>451</sup> Regardless of fault, all complaints should be taken seriously in order to bring back customers who might have left otherwise.<sup>452</sup>

Unfortunately, service recovery is not always as straightforward as listening to customer complaints because most customers will not speak up on their own.<sup>453</sup> Studies have shown that only a minority of dissatisfied customers send in complaints.<sup>454</sup> It is impossible to perform service recovery if a company cannot identify dissatisfied customers. One possible solution is to have companies look for problems as they arise and seek out customers who are likely to have specific complaints.<sup>455</sup> Looking for problems helps a company anticipate needs for recovery.<sup>456</sup> Companies can narrow the search for problems by simply monitoring certain areas of the organization.<sup>457</sup> A problem in one area can easily trigger future issues, so it may also be important for companies to not only target the problem at its source, but also trace its potential impacts.<sup>458</sup> In addition, companies should make the complaint process simple and easy, and they should publicly encourage feedback from customers.<sup>459</sup> Often, customers do not complain because they did not think anything good would come of it, they believed it to be too much of a hassle, the right department was hard to reach, or they did not have time.<sup>460</sup> If some of these misconceptions and uncertainties were resolved, customers would be more willing to complain.<sup>461</sup> Giving customers full acknowledgement that their complaints are valid and heard is an important first step in the process of service recovery.<sup>462</sup> Therefore, for stronger service recovery efforts, companies need to simplify the

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449. Hart et al., *supra* note 446.

450. *Id.*

451. *Id.*

452. Mjahed Hammami et al., *Service Recovery as an Organizational Capability*, 21 *QUALITATIVE MKT. RSCH. INT'L J.* 316, 317 (2018); *see also* COOK, *supra* note 445, at 9.

453. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 10.

454. *Id.*

455. Hart et al., *supra* note 446.

456. *Id.*

457. *Id.* at 155.

458. *Id.* at 152.

459. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 24–27.

460. *Id.* at 22.

461. *Id.* at 23.

462. Hart et al., *supra* note 446.

process and express their willingness to listen and take action. Some examples of this may include installing a hotline for customers to call at any time or sending follow-up emails asking specific questions about customers' experiences.<sup>463</sup> Social media platforms may be used as well to help identify customer concerns and create a more direct line of communication.<sup>464</sup> It is important to note, however, that using online spaces to suppress and control complaints often backfires.<sup>465</sup> Critically, companies should be aware that their handling of the situation will affect the intentions of a virtual audience.<sup>466</sup> They should not ignore service inquiries and complaints posted on social media, but rather use social media as a service channel to directly solve inquiries.<sup>467</sup>

### *B. Effective Service Recovery*

Effective service recovery is considered an organizational skill, depending on a variety of factors.<sup>468</sup> As mentioned, the first step is encouraging complaints from customers.<sup>469</sup> Evidently, a company cannot engage in service recovery if they are unaware of the problem. It is not sufficient, though, for companies to simply listen up when customers speak.<sup>470</sup> In fact, customer participation, while it may be the foundation of successful service recovery, has a significantly weaker effect on the final satisfaction outcome compared to the company's response.<sup>471</sup>

The service recovery process itself should be seamless and rewarding for the customer. First and foremost, effective service recovery will increase the probability of customer retention and satisfaction.<sup>472</sup> Customers expect a speedy resolution,<sup>473</sup> and they are more likely to remain loyal to companies who resolve complaints quickly and thoughtfully.<sup>474</sup> But, at the same time, the ability to handle complaints well has benefits for the company. Successfully addressing the

463. *Id.*

464. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 29–30.

465. *Id.* at 28–29.

466. Jens Hogreve et al., *Service Recovery on Stage: Effects of Social Media Recovery on Virtually Present Others*, 22 J. SERV. RSCH. 421, 433 (2019).

467. Tobias Schaefers & Julia Schamari, *Service Recovery Via Social Media*, 19 J. SERV. RSCH. 192, 203 (2016).

468. Hammami et al., *supra* note 452, at 320.

469. Hart et al., *supra* note 446.

470. Yves Van Vaerenbergh et al., *Customer Participation in Service Recovery: A Meta-Analysis*, 29 MKTG. LETTERS 465, 477 (2018).

471. *Id.*

472. Muhammad Hafiz Abd Rashid et al., *Does Service Recovery Affect Customer Satisfaction? A Study on Co-Created Retail Industry*, 130 PROCEDIA – SOC. AND BEHAV. SCI. 455, 456 (2013).

473. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 37–38.

474. *Id.* at 14–15, 41.

complaints of a customer is associated with fewer overall complaints and a better brand reputation.<sup>475</sup> It can also help identify emerging patterns of issues that the organization can address for the future.<sup>476</sup>

Service recovery often requires that the business takes responsibility and apologizes for their mistakes, and demonstrates their understanding of the situation.<sup>477</sup> Active listening is essential, as customers are shown to view complaints as an opportunity to be heard and acknowledged.<sup>478</sup> However, employees should not treat service recovery as a one size fits all solution.<sup>479</sup> Rather, every complaint should be viewed as a different circumstance.<sup>480</sup> It may even be beneficial to simply ask the customer what best works for them.<sup>481</sup> Often, an apology and the urgent resumption of service are effective means of eliciting consumer empathy and forgiveness,<sup>482</sup> but not always,<sup>483</sup> depending on the timing and the situation.<sup>484</sup> This may vary by industry—apology tactics are shown to be effective in the restaurant industry, but not the healthcare industry, for instance.<sup>485</sup> It should also be noted that high power consumers are more likely to forgive the firm than low power consumers regardless of the method of the recovery, suggesting that it may be important that firms avoid service failures to maintain low power customers.<sup>486</sup>

Gender is also shown to influence the service recovery process. Male customers tend to take a company's service failure less seriously compared to female customers, and men are generally more appreciative when a company responds,<sup>487</sup> and tend to be more outcome focused.<sup>488</sup> Females, on the other hand, pay greater

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475. *Id.* at 15.

476. *Id.* at 17.

477. *Id.* at 42.

478. *Id.* at 86.

479. *Id.* at 45.

480. *Id.*

481. *Id.*

482. Chuang Wei et al., *The Road to Consumer Forgiveness Is Paved with Money or Apology? The Roles of Empathy and Power in Service Recovery*, 118 J. BUS. RSCH. 321, 325–330 (2020).

483. Tom DeWitt & Michael K. Brady, *Rethinking Service Recovery Strategies*, 6 J. SERV. RES. 193, 193–94 (2003).

484. Ahasan Harun et al., *How to Influence Consumer Mindset: A Perspective from Service Recovery*, 42 J. RETAILING CONSUMER SERVS. 65, 74 (2018).

485. L. Jean. Harrison-Walker, *The Critical Role of Customer Forgiveness in Successful Service Recovery*, 95 J. BUS. RES. 376, 382–83, 385–87 (2019).

486. Wei et al., *supra* note 482, at 322, 327, 329–30.

487. May-Ching Ding et al., *What Men and Women Really Want: Differences in Gender-Based Evaluations of Service Recovery Efforts*, 17 J. ASIA-PAC. BUS. 59, 60 (2016).

488. Anna S. Mattila, *Do Women Like Options More Than Men? An Examination in the Context of Service Recovery*, 24 J. SERV. MKTG. 499, 500 (2010).

attention to the service delivery process,<sup>489</sup> value friendly emotions, empathy,<sup>490</sup> and their own participation in the process more than males do.<sup>491</sup> Other personality traits may play a role as well. A study found that the positive effect of perceived justice on satisfaction is stronger for consumers who are low in cynicism, whereas customers high in cynicism are less likely to perceive justice.<sup>492</sup> Cynical customers might believe the service-provider who failed is acting out of self-interest rather than a desire to help them.<sup>493</sup> To best recover a cynical customer, researchers claim that enhanced customer participation can lead highly cynical customers to perceive the service recovery as more transparent and collaborative, resulting in a lower negative inferred motive and greater satisfaction.<sup>494</sup> Ultimately, service providers should be aware of these types of differences and respond to customers accordingly, altering the process to best fit each individual customer.

Throughout the process, companies should also avoid negotiations and treat each customer as an individual but still as an equal.<sup>495</sup> Asking customers to provide receipts may imply a level of distrust, and it is a barrier for future complaints.<sup>496</sup> After listening and apologizing, employees should ask questions,<sup>497</sup> maintain a positive attitude,<sup>498</sup> make sure that the customer knows the action steps being taken to resolve the complaint,<sup>499</sup> and finally, actually follow through on promises to handle the complaint, taking any relevant actions.<sup>500</sup> Building rapport with the customer is important as well, although, it is important to note that sometimes, high rapport can make customers less likely to speak up about their issues, because they view the company as a friend or ally.<sup>501</sup> Greek organizations should be aware of these findings, as high rapport with former members could actually inhibit their ability to engage in critical and productive conversations.

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489. *Id.*

490. Ding et al, *supra* note 487, at 60, 73.

491. Mattila, *supra* note 488, at 500.

492. M.S. Balaji et al., *Are Cynical Customers Satisfied Differently? Role of Negative Inferred Motive and Customer Participation in Service Recovery*, 86 J. BUS. RES. 109, 109, 113, 115–16.

493. *Id.* at 109–10.

494. *Id.* at 109, 112.

495. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 46, 67–68.

496. *Id.* at 46.

497. *Id.* at 88–89.

498. *Id.* at 90.

499. *Id.* at 91.

500. *Id.* at 92.

501. DeWitt & Brady, *supra* note 483, at 193.

Critically, companies that want to implement service recovery need to provide training and clear guidance for employees regarding the process.<sup>502</sup> Effective service recovery requires a unified service system that emphasizes differences in customer expectations and perceptions.<sup>503</sup> Frequent feedback is essential to maintaining and improving performance of complaint handlers, too.<sup>504</sup> Managers should listen to feedback from their employees, have hard conversations, and be open to criticism.<sup>505</sup> Employees need to be well-trained in regulatory procedures, record-keeping, and response.<sup>506</sup> It is essential to record customer details, the timeline, the employee handling the issue, the root cause, communication details, progress updates, remedial actions and address, customer feedback, and compliance with regulatory requirements.<sup>507</sup> These systems serve to identify and prioritize areas for improvement and allow for analysis of data trends.<sup>508</sup> In order for any type of service recovery initiative to be successful, the organization must train the people who interact directly with the customers.<sup>509</sup> Training of employees has been shown to significantly improve service recovery systems across most settings.<sup>510</sup> It is important for employees to have the authority and incentives to recognize and respond to customer needs, namely, those lower-level employees who are closer to the customer, as they are typically the first to know about problems and they are in the best position to respond.<sup>511</sup> Greater autonomy will lead to greater job satisfaction and greater confidence, leading to even greater organizational success.<sup>512</sup> However, there may also be negative consequences when service providers are highly empowered. Employees may possess such high professional self-efficacy that they are inclined to reject blame for any service failures.<sup>513</sup> In these situations, organizations should consider rewarding employees and holding them accountable for engaging in effective service recovery techniques.<sup>514</sup> If employees fail to engage

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502. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 53–54.

503. Stefan Michel et al., *Why Service Recovery Fails: Tensions Among Customer, Employee, and Process Perspectives*, 20 J. SERV. MGMT. 253, 267 (2009).

504. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 146–47.

505. *Id.* at 147–48.

506. *Id.* at 58.

507. *Id.*

508. *Id.* at 60–61, 122.

509. Hart et al., *supra* note 446.

510. Jeffery S. Smith et al., *An Empirical Examination of the Structural Dimensions of the Service Recovery System*, 40 DECISION SCI. 165, 178 (2009).

511. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 65; *see also* Leroy Robinson Jr. et al., *Implementing Service Recovery Through Customer Relationship Management: Identifying the Antecedents*, 25 J. SERV. MKTG. 90, 91 (2011).

512. *See* Robinson Jr. et al., *supra* note 511, at 99.

513. Paula P. Carson & Kerry D. Carson, *Does Empowerment Translate into Action? An Examination of Service Recovery Initiatives*, 3 J. QUALITATIVE MGMT. 133, 143 (1998).

514. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 65

in these techniques, the organization will be blamed, and the consumer will be alienated.<sup>515</sup> This has implications for fraternities and sororities. Members should be empowered and have the tools to address service failures, but organizations should be aware and address the possibility that individuals with greater attachments to their organizations may be less inclined to use effective strategies when dealing with negative evaluations.

Employees' emotional intelligence should be taken into consideration when deciding how to handle a service failure as well. The best customer-service professionals are attuned with the sensitivities and needs of the customer,<sup>516</sup> and thus better influence customers' attitudes and behaviors.<sup>517</sup> Service providers who assist a customer above and beyond basic decency and exhibit high levels of emotional skills can leave a lasting impression and generate satisfaction despite any problems that may occur during service delivery.<sup>518</sup> This is particularly true in emotionally charged and aversive situations, such as service failure and recovery, with which customers are typically highly emotionally involved.<sup>519</sup> As a result of hiring employees with greater emotional intelligence, complaints can be handled more effectively.<sup>520</sup> These findings may support the idea that Greek organization leaders should be people with high emotional intelligence.

A company's ability to perform service recovery also depends on their culture, as well as their process and internal resources related to service recovery.<sup>521</sup> In other words, the attention paid by a company to complaints may be a product not only of the systems in place, but also their values, beliefs, and norms.<sup>522</sup> Businesses should aim to create a culture where excellent service is encouraged and celebrated.<sup>523</sup> On the other hand, a company culture that believes in perfection, for instance, can result in denial or dismissal of received complaints, whereas a company that believes in mitigating potential problems when they arise is more likely to have success with regards to service recovery.<sup>524</sup>

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515. *Id.*

516. *Id.* at 76.

517. Teresa Fernandes et al., *The Role of Employee Emotional Competence in Service Recovery Encounters*, 32 J. SERV. MKTG. 835, 835, 844 (2018).

518. *Id.* at 835, 842, 843–44.

519. *Id.* at 835, 843–44.

520. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 79.

521. Hammami et al., *supra* note 452, at 316.

522. *Id.* at 321.

523. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 161.

524. Hammami et al., *supra* note 452, at 321.

*C. Outcomes of Service Recovery*

The hallmark benefit of service recovery is forgiveness in response to a company's wrongdoing from customers,<sup>525</sup> but research has pointed to other benefits for companies that engage in service recovery such as better products,<sup>526</sup> higher employee morale,<sup>527</sup> and overall greater success and profits.<sup>528</sup> Service recovery is also shown to bolster customer loyalty.<sup>529</sup> Despite their initial negative experiences, customers who are impressed with a company's recovery efforts are shown to be more loyal compared to others.<sup>530</sup>

One specific strategy of service recovery referred to as "stealing thunder" is a strategy for people to report their own mistake to the public before it gets exposed by outside sources; it has specifically been found to positively affect customer loyalty.<sup>531</sup> The same positive effect on customer loyalty has been found for strategies such as simple apologies and compensation issued by an organization.<sup>532</sup> One study also found a significant two-way interaction between compensation and stealing thunder and compensation on loyalty: when compensation is presented alone, it will result in significantly higher customer loyalty than when it is not presented at all, but, when compensation is presented along with stealing thunder, the effect of compensation on loyalty diminishes.<sup>533</sup> The study also found that trust mediated the relationship between service recovery methods and customer loyalty.<sup>534</sup> In other words, while service recovery initiatives have been found time after time to result in greater customer loyalty, one potential reason for this effect is that service recovery leads to an increase in trust, which in turn is related to greater loyalty.<sup>535</sup>

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525. COOK, *supra* note 445, at 169–70.

526. *Id.* at xi.

527. *Id.*

528. Kristen B. DeTienne & Joan Westwood, *An Empirical Study of Service Recovery Quality and Customer Retention*, 19 J. MGMT. RSCH. 235, 246 (2019).

529. *Id.*

530. Celso A. De Matos et al., *Service Recovery Paradox: A Meta-Analysis*, 10 J. SERV. RES. 60, 60 (2007).

531. Priyanko Guchait et al., *Examining Stealing Thunder as a New Service Recovery Strategy: Impact on Customer Loyalty*, 31 INT'L J. CONTEMP. HOSP. MGMT. 931, 939 (2019).

532. *Id.* at 937.

533. *Id.*

534. *Id.* at 938.

535. *Id.*

Trust, on its own, is a major outcome of service recovery.<sup>536</sup> Service recovery has the tendency to increase customer trust, and one potential explanation for this is because of a construct called the zone of tolerance (ZOT). The ZOT refers to an area where customers are not necessarily satisfied with a company's service, but they are not necessarily dissatisfied either.<sup>537</sup> The effect of service recovery on customer trust is strongest in individuals with a broader ZOT.<sup>538</sup> Essentially, this suggests that individuals who are not so easily dissatisfied are more likely to increase trust in response to service recovery initiatives.

In addition to customer trust, another outcome of service recovery is customer satisfaction. Some studies show that the quality of the service recovery initiatives matter, however. Ineffective service recovery efforts have the potential to increase dissatisfaction, even beyond the level of dissatisfaction resulting from the failure itself.<sup>539</sup> But successful service recovery, on the other hand, has been shown to increase overall satisfaction, leading to more positive behavioral intentions such as spreading the word about a product or service<sup>540</sup> and intention to repurchase.<sup>541</sup>

The largest determinant of overall satisfaction in response to service recovery initiatives is "satisfaction with claims personnel."<sup>542</sup> In one study, the effect of satisfaction with claims personnel on overall satisfaction was even stronger than the original cause of the service failure itself.<sup>543</sup> This finding suggests that service recovery dominates overall satisfaction and positive intentions. It may be common to assume that failure holds the most power over customer satisfaction, but, in fact, it may be the organization's response. At the same time, these results are somewhat encouraging: all organizations are likely to make a mistake at one time or another, but recuperation is possible. This effect has been found several times in the literature. Another study focused specifically on airline service recoveries and found that quality of the recovery is more significant than the failure itself in

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536. Arup K. Baksi & Bivraj B. Parida, *Moderating Effect of Service Recovery on Consumer Trust, Repatronization and Advocacy with the Introduction of Recovery Zone-of-Tolerance (RZOT): Empirical Evidence from State Bank of India*, 6 GLOBSYN MGMT. J. 1, 3 (2012).

537. *Id.* at 13.

538. *Id.*

539. Richard A. Spreng et al., *Service Recovery: Impact on Satisfaction and Intentions*, 9 J. SERV. MKTG. 15, 16 (1995).

540. *Id.* at 18.

541. *Id.*; see also Chia-Chi Chang & Jung-Sung Hung, *The Effects of Service Recovery and Relational Selling Behavior on Trust, Satisfaction, and Loyalty*, 36 INT'L J. BANK MKTG. 1437, 1448 (2018).

542. Spreng et al., *supra* note 539, at 18.

543. *Id.*

predicting customer satisfaction.<sup>544</sup> The study also found that satisfaction had a positive impact on passenger loyalty, in addition to service recovery.<sup>545</sup>

Although, that is not to say that the severity of a failure does not play a role on outcomes of service recovery.<sup>546</sup> Successful service recovery, in many contexts, preserves the customer relationship.<sup>547</sup> However, at the highest levels of failure severity, service recovery initiatives start to lose some of their impact.<sup>548</sup> Even with a strong implementation of service recovery, if the failure is severe enough, customers will remain dissatisfied.<sup>549</sup> A company's track record of previous failures, however, may not be a significant determinant of customer satisfaction following service recovery.<sup>550</sup>

#### *D. Commentary*

In some ways, fraternities and sororities can reclaim a meaningful percentage of financially inactive alumni members. They could email, mail, or call inactive members. They could use digital marketing to target such members. They could invite alumni to meetings and social events. In doing these things, organizations could grow their ranks. But in not addressing the spoken and unspoken concerns of those inactive members beforehand, they run the risk of reclaiming those members in the short-run but potentially losing many of those same members in the long-run.

To make reclamation substantial and sustainable, first and foremost, organizations should not view the critiques and complaints of inactive members as the rumblings of those who are not invested. Rather, organizations should view these critiques and complaints as an opportunity to address real issues. In fact, organizations should be proactive and solicit the critiques and concerns of members—active and inactive, alike. They should use formal mechanisms—e.g., during meetings, conventions, or using virtual methods—to solicit feedback. Organizations should look to the research on fraternities and sororities to see what major issues that are likely drive members away.<sup>551</sup> Organizations giving members

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544. Reza Etemad-Sajadi & Laura Bohrer, *The Impact of Service Recovery Output/Process on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: The Case of the Airline Industry*, 19 *TOURISM HOSP. RSCH.* 259, 263–64 (2019).

545. *Id.* at 264.

546. Teresa K. Betts et al., *The Impact of Failure Severity, Prior Failure, and Company Control on Service Recovery Outcomes*, 18 *J. LEADERSHIP & ORGANIZATIONAL STUD.* 365, 372 (2011).

547. *Id.* at 371.

548. *Id.* at 372.

549. *Id.*

550. *Id.* at 372–73.

551. By way of example, among the issues faced by Black Greek-letter organizations include but are not limited to, hazing, anxieties about masculinity and nonheteronormative members, and

full acknowledgement that their complaints are valid and heard is an important first step in the process of reclamation. In some instances, an organization may have to engage in truth and reconciliation where members have been harmed by the policies and practices of the organization, whether nationally or locally. Leaders, especially those who directly engage with potentially reclaimed members should be trained and given guidance for how to be the organization's face to inactive members. And in some instances, members and leaders who have caused harm and driven members away should acknowledge and report their mistakes to make amends. As an organization does these things, it should communicate these steps with honesty and integrity to inactive members as it seeks to bring them back into the fold.

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questions about relevance. For an in-depth discussion of the issue of hazing, *see generally* Richard J. Reddick et al., *The Harms and Hazards of Hazing*, in *ALPHA PHI ALPHA: A LEGACY OF GREATNESS, THE DEMANDS OF TRANSCENDENCE* (Gregory S. Parks & Stefan M. Bradley eds., 2012); Oscar Holmes, *Hazing and Pledging in Alpha Phi Alpha: An Organizational Behavior Perspective*, in *ALPHA PHI ALPHA: A LEGACY OF GREATNESS, THE DEMANDS OF TRANSCENDENCE* (Gregory S. Parks & Stefan M. Bradley eds., 2012); Matthew W. Hughey, "'Cuz I'm Young and I'm Black and My Hat's Real Low?": A Critique of Black Greeks as "Educated Gangs," *BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: OUR FIGHT HAS JUST BEGUN* 385 (Gregory S. Parks ed., 2008); Gregory S. Parks & Tamara L. Brown, "*In the Fell Clutch of Circumstance*": *Pledging and the Black Greek Experience*, in *AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES: THE LEGACY AND THE VISION* 437 (Tamara L. Brown et al. eds., 2005); Dwayne J. Scott, *Factors That Contribute to Hazing Practices by Collegiate Black Greek-Letter Fraternities During Membership Intake Activities*, in *BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS 2.0: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES* 114 (Matthew W. Hughey & Gregory S. Parks eds., 2011); Dara Aquila Govan, *Old School Values and New School Methods*, in *BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS 2.0: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES* 253 (Matthew W. Hughey & Gregory S. Parks eds., 2011); Rashawn Ray et al., "*Bloody, but Unbowed*": *Making Meaning of "Invictus" and "If—" for the Shaping of a Collective Black Greek Identity*, in *AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES: THE LEGACY AND THE VISION* 437 (Tamara L. Brown et al. eds., 2d ed. 2012); Jeryl Briggs, *The Continuing Presence of Hazing During the Fraternity Membership Intake Process Post 1990*, in *AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES: THE LEGACY AND THE VISION* 437 (Tamara L. Brown et al. eds., 2d ed. 2012). For an in-depth discussion of anxieties about masculinity and non-heteronormative members, *see generally* Rashawn Ray & Kevin Walter Spragling, "*Am I Not a Man and a Brother?*" *Authenticating the Racial, Religious, and Masculine Dimensions of Brotherhood Within Alpha Phi Alpha*, in *ALPHA PHI ALPHA: A LEGACY OF GREATNESS, THE DEMANDS OF TRANSCENDENCE* (Gregory S. Parks & Stefan M. Bradley eds., 2012); Alan D. DeSantis & Marcus Coleman, *Not on My Line: Attitudes About Homosexuality in Black Fraternities*, in *BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: OUR FIGHT HAS JUST BEGUN* 291 (Gregory S. Parks ed., 2008); T. Elon Dancy II, *Becoming Men in Burning Sands*, in *BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS 2.0: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES* 95 (Matthew W. Hughey & Gregory S. Parks eds., 2011); Reynaldo Anderson et al., *Black Greek-Letter Fraternities and Masculinities*, in *BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS 2.0: NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF AFRICAN AMERICAN FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES* 114 (Matthew W. Hughey & Gregory S. Parks eds., 2011)). For an in-depth discussion of the issue of questions about relevance, *see generally* Jessica Harris & Vernon C. Mitchell Jr., *A Narrative Critique of Black Greek-Letter Organizations and Social Action*, in *BLACK GREEK-LETTER ORGANIZATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY: OUR FIGHT HAS JUST BEGUN* 143 (Gregory S. Parks ed., 2008).

## VII. THIGPEN STUDY

In this section, we discuss one of the few studies of reclamation and retention within Greek-letter organizations.

*A. Methods*

In his study, Rickey Thigpen sent invitation flyers to the four Metro-area Jackson, Mississippi National Pan-Hellenic Council fraternity member alumni chapters. The active membership rosters identified over 440 members. From these members, Thigpen gathered nine volunteer participants to be interviewed.<sup>552</sup> To begin, Thigpen conducted a pilot study to replicate the research procedure.<sup>553</sup> The pilot study's goal was to test the study to see if the results and data "would realize a significant study."<sup>554</sup> The pilot study was successful, as it was deemed that the interview process that Thigpen applied, effectively gathered enough data to produce meaningful findings.<sup>555</sup>

Thigpen went on to conduct semi-structured interviews of nine alumni chapter members. The interviews were conducted over Zoom, and Thigpen asked open-ended questions to elicit broad responses.<sup>556</sup> Thigpen followed a script of questions that he asked all of the interviewees, and he estimated the interviews lasted for approximately forty to forty-five minutes.<sup>557</sup> To analyze the data, Thigpen used inductive and deductive content analysis.<sup>558</sup> Inductive content analysis consists of three steps: "open coding, creating categories, and abstraction."<sup>559</sup> perspectives on "fraternity involvement (college and alumni)," "leadership experience obtained within the fraternity at the college level," "overall viewpoint of the fraternity experience as an undergraduate and/or alumni member," and "the perception of the fraternity membership relevance post college."<sup>560</sup>

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552. Rickey Thigpen, *Fraternity Members' Affiliation with a National Pan-Hellenic Council Alumni Chapter After Leaving College* (July 30, 2021) (Ph.D. dissertation, The Chicago School of Professional Psychology) (on file with author).

553. *Id.* at 66.

554. *Id.*

555. *Id.*

556. *Id.* at 67.

557. *Id.* at 67–68.

558. *Id.* at 73.

559. *Id.* at 74.

560. *Id.* at 80.

*B. Results*

Thigpen collected demographic information of the interviewees. All nine interviewees identified that their ethnicity/race was Black. One interviewee was in the age group of over fifty-six, two interviewees were in the age group of thirty-six to forty-eight, and the remaining six interviewees were in the age group of forty-nine to fifty-five.<sup>561</sup> Of these nine, four attained a professional or advanced degree above their master's level; two attained a master's degree; three attained a bachelor's degree.<sup>562</sup> All of the interviewees attended colleges or universities in the South.<sup>563</sup> Two of the nine were inactive members of their fraternity organization, while the remaining seven were currently members of alumni chapters.<sup>564</sup>

The central research question Thigpen was asking was: “[w]hat are the social, cultural, and professional factors that determine continued fraternity affiliation of alumni members of the NPHC’s four oldest fraternities?”<sup>565</sup> Thigpen identified five themes that consistently came up during the interviews: social relationships, perceptions of doing valuable work, support and guidance, acquiring leadership skills, and acquiring business-related skills.<sup>566</sup> Thigpen noted how frequently each theme came up during the interviews, and he found that every study participant discussed social relationships.<sup>567</sup> Most of the participants (88.9%) discussed the theme of “perceptions of doing valuable work.”<sup>568</sup> The participants brought up the themes of “support and guidance” and “acquiring leadership skills” more or less equally, as they were each brought up by 77.8% of the participants.<sup>569</sup> “Acquiring business-related skills” was the least frequently mentioned, as only 55.6% of the participants mentioned this theme.<sup>570</sup>

The first theme that was identified and brought up by all nine participants of the study was that of social relationships. For this study, social relationships refer to “the bonds established, and the friendships participants had developed with fellow fraternity members over time in college and with alumni.”<sup>571</sup> This could also include feeling valued and appreciated within their organizations or

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561. *Id.* at 90.

562. *Id.* at 91.

563. *Id.* at 93.

564. *Id.*

565. *Id.* at 94.

566. *Id.*

567. *Id.* at 95.

568. *Id.*

569. *Id.*

570. *Id.*

571. *Id.* at 95.

communities.<sup>572</sup> Most, if not all, of the active alumni chapter participants stated that they had strong relationships with many people in their organization. These relationships pulled in members and encouraged them to continue to attend meetings and events. One of the participants of the study even said that it is crucial that every member is “being made to feel welcome.”<sup>573</sup> These attachments and relationships become motivation for the alumni chapter members to stay with their organization, strengthen ties, and enjoy their time with the chapter.<sup>574</sup> Furthermore, it is important that the alumni chapters have fun.<sup>575</sup> According to another participant, “not having a reputation for having fun, just being strictly business doing programs” could lessen the chance that a potential new recruit joins the organization after college.<sup>576</sup> Every participant stated that they had formed meaningful social connections with their undergraduate chapter brothers, but not everyone could say the same for their alumni chapters.<sup>577</sup>

The two participants of the study who were inactive members both stated that their social relationships within their post-graduate organizations were “lacking.”<sup>578</sup> One potential explanation for this problem was the age differences between college students and their alumni chapter brothers.<sup>579</sup> During his interview, one of the inactive members said, “When I went to X [organization name redacted], there were very few young guys. Everybody that was in that chapter was an older guy.”<sup>580</sup> Joining an organization full of older men right after graduating college can pose a myriad of anxieties during an already stressful part of life.

The participants had some suggestions on how to better social relations within alumni chapters. One suggestion was that alumni chapters should form stronger relationships with undergraduate chapters. This would allow younger members to form relationships at an earlier age.<sup>581</sup> Similarly, another participant thought that bridging the gap between undergrad and alumni members would be beneficial, as “the reality is... ‘don’t want to hang around older brothers.’”<sup>582</sup> Another popular idea was for younger members to join organizations “comprised of members that

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572. *Id.* at 96.

573. *Id.*

574. *Id.*

575. *Id.* at 97.

576. *Id.* at 97–98.

577. *Id.* at 98.

578. *Id.* at 96.

579. *Id.*

580. *Id.*

581. *Id.*

582. *Id.*

may be closer in their age groups.”<sup>583</sup> The idea of creating more social events was brought up by multiple participants as well. Retreats, workshops, and informal activities in general were all mentioned by study participants as ways that would strengthen social relationships between members.<sup>584</sup>

The second theme among participants was the perception that their organization was doing valuable community work. All but one study participant stated that working to support their communities is crucial, and it could make the difference between a member staying with the organization or leaving.<sup>585</sup> The alumni chapter members know that their fraternities set the example for their communities, and they are extremely important in the development of education, social justice, and community relations.<sup>586</sup> The two study participants that were inactive members of their fraternities each said that they felt their fraternity was either not doing enough community work or that their organization did not have a clear understanding of their goals and plan.<sup>587</sup> On the other hand, one participant said, “our organization is extremely active in doing community service. And so, that’s one reason that I think folks tend to come back.”<sup>588</sup> So not only is it important for organizations to actively participate in community work, but it is also important for their members to be aware of their organization’s plans and goals moving forward.

The third theme was support and guidance, specifically from older members of the organizations to undergraduate or newly graduated members. Support and guidance from any member was considered helpful, but the most common individual that the study participants relied on was their undergraduate chapter advisor.<sup>589</sup> In fact, many of the participants still keep in touch with their advisor and attribute some of their development as men to their advisor, “Our undergraduate chapter advisor, I give him a lot of credit for how we turned out as men today.”<sup>590</sup> Other fraternity alumni members were also extremely important to these men, as they served as mentors, father figures, and friends.<sup>591</sup> These initial strong connections and guidance helped many of the participants through the transition from college to the real world, as well.<sup>592</sup> Conversely, one study participant said, “a lack of perceived support from older members might contribute to members

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583. *Id.* at 97.

584. *Id.*

585. *Id.* at 101.

586. *Id.* at 101.

587. *Id.* at 102–104.

588. *Id.* at 101.

589. *Id.* at 104.

590. *Id.*

591. *Id.* at 105.

592. *Id.*

deciding to no longer affiliate with a chapter after leaving college.”<sup>593</sup> Having a poor connection or relationship with a chapter advisor can negatively impact how a member feels about their chapter as a whole, as it did with one participant, “this somewhat negative relationship with his supervisor made him feel slightly less connected to his chapter.”<sup>594</sup> While a good chapter advisor can positively impact a fraternity member in multiple ways, a less active chapter advisor can negatively impact younger members’ views of the organization as a whole.

The fourth theme identified during the interviews was the acquisition of leadership skills. For this study, leadership skills include practical communication tactics, conflict resolution, crisis management, listening, evaluation, and feedback skillsets.<sup>595</sup> Alongside learning and acquiring leadership skills, it is also important for fraternities to be able to expose their members to situations in which they can utilize their skillset.<sup>596</sup> The term “visible leader” came up during the interviews consistently.<sup>597</sup> A visible leader, in one participant’s words, “[should] be out front and lead from the front and not the rear,” and another participant added, “by being a member of the fraternity itself (...), you believe that you should be at the forefront.”<sup>598</sup> Overall, the general consensus was that the leadership skills the members learned through their fraternity has helped them in their lives.<sup>599</sup> One interesting distinction that two participants made was that some alumni members “spend too much time holding on to status quo in the organization; too much time holding on to positions.”<sup>600</sup> One participant explained further that some older alumni members hold fraternity positions “that young people need and deserve to have” in order to develop and grow into strong leaders.<sup>601</sup>

The fifth theme that five of the nine study participants brought up was the acquisition of business-related skills. These skills could include budget management, public relations strategies, event planning, and execution.<sup>602</sup> Multiple participants believed that their time with their fraternity helped to teach them skills that they could use in the business world and beyond. For example, one participant said, “a lot of leadership positions, being a vice president, being the dean of pledges (...) it helped formulate processes of dealing with people, even in the business

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593. *Id.* at 104.

594. *Id.*

595. *Id.* at 106.

596. *Id.*

597. *Id.*

598. *Id.* at 106–107.

599. *Id.* at 108.

600. *Id.* at 108.

601. *Id.*

602. *Id.*

world.”<sup>603</sup> Multiple participants learned to better network, speak publicly, empathize with others, and prepare for challenges through their time with their fraternities.<sup>604</sup>

### C. Implications

This section focuses on the interpretations of the five themes discovered during the participant interviews. The first theme discussed was social relationships. In looking to at the work of higher education expert, J. Patrick Biddix, Thigpen noted that alumni chapters “tended to be less social, more philanthropic, and reflective of a business environment” than undergraduate chapters.<sup>605</sup> However, this could be potentially damaging to the alumni chapters, as the lack of opportunities for undergraduate and newly graduated fraternity members to establish social connections was seen as a potential reason for those individuals to choose to not affiliate with alumni chapters.<sup>606</sup> Another potential problem alumni chapters face in regards to social relationships are the age variations between undergraduate and alumni members.<sup>607</sup> In order to work against these problems, many study participants suggested that alumni chapters should place more emphasis on the social aspects of their organizations.<sup>608</sup> Furthermore, participants also suggested that alumni chapters could conduct brainstorming workshops where active and inactive members can discuss the importance of the social aspects of their organizations.<sup>609</sup> Overall, creating more social events and emphasizing the importance of social relationships and activities could potentially increase the number of new members and decrease the rate at which current alumni members become inactive within their chapters.

Study participants said that doing valuable work “was crucial and could make the difference between a member joining, staying, or leaving an alumni chapter.”<sup>610</sup> Interestingly, the results of this study suggested that “many NPHC organizations had lost their historical position of relevance related to social engagement, purpose, and responsibility.”<sup>611</sup> Some of the study participants believe that is due to their organizations failing to properly utilize members with specific skillsets.<sup>612</sup>

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603. *Id.* at 109.

604. *Id.*

605. *Id.* at 116.

606. *Id.* at 114.

607. *Id.* at 115.

608. *Id.* at 114.

609. *Id.*

610. *Id.* at 116.

611. *Id.* at 117.

612. *Id.* at 117.

Regardless, NPHC organizations are still extremely important and their members want to help their communities. When members feel as though their chapters are failing to meet their expectations of clear guidance and concise planning, they can lose interest in the chapter or feel as though they are wasting their time.<sup>613</sup> However, when their chapter is involved in doing valuable work, there is a belief that their members are “much more likely to remain affiliated with the organization.”<sup>614</sup>

Another way young members are encouraged to join and stay with alumni chapters is through proper support and guidance by older alumni members. The study participants agreed that “young individuals who are new to the fraternity should receive such support and guidance.”<sup>615</sup> Without proper support and guidance, young members can become frustrated and start to feel powerless, which can lead to leaving the organization.<sup>616</sup> The study identified undergraduate chapter advisors as being among the most important source of support and guidance for younger members. The study participants supported the notion that advisors are essential to younger members, as they can act as a mentor, family member, or friend.<sup>617</sup>

According to Eric Flowers and Sherry Gunn, continued affiliation with alumni chapters is more likely when members are engaged, valued, and given leadership responsibilities.<sup>618</sup> This is true for younger members also, as some expect immediate voice and value after becoming a chapter member.<sup>619</sup> However, this is not always the case, some alumni chapters do not involve younger members enough, while other chapters allow older members to hold onto leadership positions for a long time, which can upset or frustrate younger members.<sup>620</sup> Acquiring leadership skills can be very important to fraternity members, but the lack of opportunity for growth and development within an organization can turn people away.

The final theme that was discussed, acquiring business-related skills, is important to chapter members as they can learn how to deal with real world problems. It has been reported that acquiring practical skills as a college student “enhanced young professionals’ professional, leadership, and workplace

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613. *Id.* at 118–119.

614. *Id.* at 116.

615. *Id.* at 119.

616. *Id.*

617. *Id.* at 120.

618. *Id.* at 121.

619. *Id.*

620. *Id.* at 120–121.

development.”<sup>621</sup> Ultimately, utilizing the skillsets and understanding the perspectives of younger members can “enhance the propensity of continued affiliation” with alumni chapters.<sup>622</sup>

### VIII. PARKS, JONES, & ROGERS EMPIRICAL STUDY

In this section, we discuss the authors’ study on reclamation and retention within a Greek-letter organization.

#### *A. Methods*

##### 1. Participants

In 2015, the authors shared the Qualtrics survey through an email list of members of a historically Black Greek-letter fraternity (“BGLF”). The survey was also distributed to members by regional heads of the fraternity. There were 4,592 individuals who provided some data. However, many participants did not complete the survey or had missing data that precluded them being in all analyses. The sample sizes across analyses ranged from 4,070 to 4,592. Participants were initiated as early as 1945 up to 2015 (the year the survey was distributed).

##### 2. Measures

#### *Dependent Variables – Participation*

Participation was assessed in several ways. A participant was considered financially active at the national level if they were either a Lifetime Member or indicated that they had paid national dues in the current year. A participant was considered financially active at the local level if they indicated they paid local dues in the current year. Participants indicated the number of times (ranging from 0 to 5 or more times) they had participated in the national convention. Lastly, participants ranked their voting behavior (on a scale from 1 to 5) of how regularly they voted in the fraternity’s national president elections.

#### *Independent Variables*

Costs of membership are too high. This was assessed by the mean of four items (scored 1–5) asking participants the extent to which cost of membership at the national level was too high, the cost of membership at the local level was too high,

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621. *Id.* at 122.

622. *Id.*

whether they were annoyed by all the costs, and whether they could afford to be financially active.

Have other responsibilities. This was assessed with the mean of two items (scored 1–5) asking the extent to which (1) family and (2) work obligations kept them from participating in the organization.

Concerns about leadership and direction or organization. This was assessed by the mean of six items (scored 1–5) asking participants the extent to which they liked the direction of the organization, and whether the organization addressed civil rights issues, was too focused on the business (at the expense of Brotherhood), not transparent enough at both the national and local levels, and whether Alpha leaders were too self-interested.

Religious conflicts. This was measured by the mean of two items (scored 1–5) asking participants whether they felt concerned prior to joining the fraternity that their religious beliefs were compatible with the organization and whether they perceived any conflict between their religious views and being a member of BGLF.

Regular interaction with other members. This was measured by the mean of two items (scored 1–5) asking participants the extent to which they regularly interacted with other members in person and maintained regular communication (e.g., via social media, phone, etc.)

Issues with gay members. This was measured by the mean of two items (scored 1–5) asking participants the extent to which being gay or straight was irrelevant for anything involving the organization and if participants thought there were too many gay members in the organization.

Positive attachment to organization. This was measured by the mean of five items (scored 1–5) asking participants whether they felt attached and emotionally connected to the organization (3 items), the extent to which the organization has personal meaning to them, and whether they were satisfied with their personal experience of being an Alpha.

Local chapter is important. This was measured by the mean of three items (scored 1–5) asking participants whether they feel bad if they cannot attend local meetings, believe attendance at local meeting is important, and if it is acceptable to not join a local chapter after graduation.

Hazing. This was assessed with one item (answered yes or no) as to whether their initiation involved them being subjected to being paddled, sleep deprived, and/or exposed to prolonged and intense physical and/or psychological stress.

Initiation process. This was assessed with one item asking participants to indicate whether they were initiated into a college chapter or an alumni chapter.

Household income. Participants self-reported their household income. Options ranged from less than \$50,000/year (1) to \$200,000/year (5).

Educational attainment. Participants self-reported their highest level of education completed. Options ranged from did not complete bachelor's degree (1) to doctorate or professional degree (4).

## B. Results

### 1. Financially Active versus Non-Active, National Organization

The first set of analyses focused on the bivariate relationships between the predictor variables and whether a member was financially active at the national level. Those who were financially active were much more likely to perceive the local chapters as important ( $t_{(4402)} = 24.23, p < .001, d = .77, 95\% \text{ CI } [.70, .83]$ ). Those who were financially active were moderately less likely to believe the cost of membership was too high ( $t_{(4402)} = -20.93, p < .001, d = -.66, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.59, -.72]$ ) and less concerned about the leadership and direction of the organization ( $t_{(3059.16)} = -10.44, p < .001, d = -.34, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.27, -.40]$ ) compared to those who were not financially active. Financially active participants were slightly less likely to indicate they had other (family and work) obligations that prevented them from participating ( $t_{(3325.40)} = -10.94, p < .001, d = -.34, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.28, -.40]$ ), fewer religious conflicts with the organization ( $t_{(2788.02)} = -4.95, p < .001, d = -.15, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.09, -.22]$ ), and were less likely to have experienced hazing in their initiation ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 16.84, p < .001, \phi = .06$ ). This group also reported modestly higher household income ( $r_{(4070)} = .11, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [.08, .14]$ ) and educational attainment ( $r_{(4070)} = .10, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [.07, .13]$ ) than those who were not financially active, and were somewhat more likely to have been initiated into an alumni (versus college) chapter ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 206.01, p < .001, \phi = .21$ ), interacted with other members of the organization ( $t_{(2713.83)} = 8.30, p < .001, d = .26, 95\% \text{ CI } [.20, .33]$ ), and expressed positive attachment to the organization ( $t_{(2524.06)} = 7.90, p < .001, d = .27, 95\% \text{ CI } [.20, .33]$ ). There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on concerns about gay members in the organization ( $t_{(4268)} = 1.12, p = .26, d = .03, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.03, .10]$ ).

The next series of analyses explored the same relationships, but within a multivariate model; specifically, a logistic regression. Financially active members had more interaction with other members ( $b = .13, se = .05, Wald = 7.59, p < .01$ ), perceived the local chapter to be important ( $b = .67, se = .05, Wald = 187.82, p < .001$ ), were initiated into an alumni (versus college) chapter ( $b = .76, se = .09, Wald$

= 66.26,  $p < .001$ ), had higher incomes ( $b = .13$ ,  $se = .03$ ,  $Wald = 15.54$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and educational attainment ( $b = .20$ ,  $se = .05$ ,  $Wald = 15.47$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and expressed more concerns about gay members within the organization ( $b = .09$ ,  $se = .03$ ,  $Wald = 7.93$ ,  $p < .01$ ), compared to those not financially active. Financially active members were less likely to perceive the costs associated with membership to be too high ( $b = -.54$ ,  $se = .05$ ,  $Wald = 105.23$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and had fewer outside (work and family) responsibilities that prevented them from participating ( $b = -.22$ ,  $se = .04$ ,  $Wald = 29.69$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Concerns about the leadership and direction of the organization ( $b = -.05$ ,  $se = .05$ ,  $Wald = 1.05$ ,  $p = .31$ ), organizational attachment ( $b = -.22$ ,  $se = .04$ ,  $Wald = 29.69$ ,  $p < .001$ ), having been hazed as part of their initiation ( $b = .05$ ,  $se = .06$ ,  $Wald = .69$ ,  $p = .41$ ), and perceived religious conflicts ( $b = -.07$ ,  $se = .05$ ,  $Wald = 2.63$ ,  $p = .11$ ) were not statistically significant correlates of being a financially active member.

Predicted probabilities provide a clearer example of the likelihood of being financially active within the organization. For instance, as shown in Table 1, we would predict that a person scoring low on interaction with other members has a 28% chance of being financially active. In contrast, we would predict that a person scoring high on interaction with other members has a 39% of being financially active. Only variables that were statistically significant were included in Table 1.

	Odds Ratio	Predicted Percentages		
		Low	High	Change
Interaction with other members	1.14	28%	39%	11%
Local chapter important	1.95	39%	90%	51%
Initiated in alumni chapter	2.15	25%	42%	17%
Household income	1.13	28%	39%	11%
Educational attainment	1.22	29%	43%	14%
Concerns about gay members	1.10	26%	34%	8%
Membership costs too high	.58	16%	2%	-14%
Other obligations (family and work)	.80	21%	10%	-11%

Table 1. Predicted percentages of being financially active at the national level for those scoring low and high on the predictor variables.

### Summary

The bivariate analyses examined the relationships between each predictor variable individually and whether they were related to being financially active at the national level. These analyses revealed that members who perceive local chapters as important, interact with other members on a regular basis, have higher

incomes and educational attainment, were initiated into an alumni chapter, and were positively attached to the organization were more likely to be financially active. For members who believed the costs of membership as too high, were concerned about the leadership and direction of the organization, had other (family/work) obligations, religious conflicts, and were involved in hazing during their initiation were less likely to be financially active. A member's views on gay members in the organization essentially played no role in whether a member was financially active.

The multivariate analyses, which statistically control for the influence of the other variables in the model, largely confirmed these relationships, with a few exceptions. First, positive attachment to the organization was no longer statistically significant in the multivariate model. A series of exploratory analyses were undertaken to find out why this occurred. It appeared that the inclusion of whether the participant viewed local chapters as important eliminated the effect of attachment. It is unclear why this was the case, as they variables were only moderately correlated ( $r = .32$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Second, concern about gay members was not statistically significant in the bivariate model but was in the multivariate model. That being stated, it exerted a rather weak effect. Third, the statistically significant bivariate effect of hazing was rendered not significant in the multivariate analyses. This appears to have occurred because of the inclusion of the mechanism of initiation. Of those initiated into an alumni chapter, 35.9% were subjected to hazing, while 74.8% of those initiated into a college chapter had this experience.

Finally, Table 1 provides evidence of which variables can make the largest difference in understanding why some members are financially active and others not. Perceiving the local chapter as important seems to be the most influential single correlate. However, there were several others that mattered as well, and collectively, that can make a large difference. For instance, in the actual data, predicted probabilities based on all the variables ranged from .06 to .99. Stated differently, the model predicts some members have approximately a 6% chance of being financially active, while others have 99% (when considering all the variables in the model).

## 2. Financially Active versus Non-Active, Local Chapter

The first set of analyses focused on the bivariate relationships between the predictor variables and whether a member was financially active at the local level. Those who were financially active were much more likely to perceive the local chapters as important ( $t_{(4341.92)} = 34.20$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.02$ , 95% CI [.96, 1.08]). Those who were financially active were moderately less likely to believe the cost of membership was too high ( $t_{(4507)} = -22.35$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = -.66$ , 95% CI [-.60, -.72]), less concerned about the leadership and direction of the organization ( $t_{(4180.43)} = -10.58$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = -.32$ , 95% CI [-.26, -.39]), and less likely to indicate they

had other (family and work) obligations that prevented them from participating ( $t_{(4455.36)} = -12.79, p < .001, d = -.39, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.33, -.45]$ ), compared to those who were not financially active. Financially active members were moderately more likely to have interacted with other members of the organization ( $t_{(3897.33)} = 13.79, p < .001, d = .42, 95\% \text{ CI } [.36, .48]$ ). Financially active participants were slightly less likely to have experienced hazing in their initiation ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 55.16, p < .001, \phi = .12$ ). This group also reported marginally higher household income ( $r_{(4156)} = .05, p < .001, 95\% \text{ CI } [.02, .08]$ ) than those who were not financially active, were somewhat more likely to have been initiated into an alumni (versus college) chapter ( $\chi^2_{(1)} = 158.86, p < .001, \phi = .19$ ), and expressed positive attachment to the organization ( $t_{(3858.67)} = 10.09, p < .001, d = .32, 95\% \text{ CI } [.26, .38]$ ). There were no statistically significant differences between the two groups on concerns about gay members in the organization ( $t_{(4230.47)} = .78, p = .44, d = .02, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.04, .08]$ ), religious conflicts with the organization ( $t_{(4420)} = -1.90, p = .06, d = .05, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.11, .01]$ ), nor educational attainment ( $r_{(4156)} = .01, p = .47, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.02, .04]$ ).

The next series of analyses explored the same relationships, but within a multivariate model using logistic regression. Financially active members had more interaction with other members ( $b = .33, se = .05, Wald = 45.92, p < .001$ ), perceived the local chapter to be important ( $b = .105, se = .05, Wald = 410.84, p < .001$ ), were initiated into an alumni (versus college) chapter ( $b = .44, se = .09, Wald = 24.15, p < .001$ ), perceived more religious conflicts ( $b = .12, se = .05, Wald = 6.63, p = .01$ ), and had higher incomes ( $b = .10, se = .03, Wald = 9.52, p < .01$ ), compared to those not financially active. Financially active members were less likely to perceive the costs associated with membership to be too high ( $b = -.63, se = .05, Wald = 141.17, p < .001$ ) and had fewer outside (work and family) responsibilities that prevented them from participating ( $b = -.20, se = .04, Wald = 25.52, p < .001$ ). Concerns about the leadership and direction of the organization ( $b = .03, se = .05, Wald = .36, p = .55$ ), organizational attachment ( $b = -.09, se = .06, Wald = 2.27, p = .13$ ), having been hazed as part of their initiation ( $b = -.13, se = .08, Wald = .69, p = .13$ ), educational attainment ( $b = -.04, se = .05, Wald = .78, p = .38$ ), and concerns about gay members within the organization ( $b = .06, se = .03, Wald = 2.81, p = .09$ ) were not statistically significant correlates of being a financially active member.

Predicted probabilities of the likelihood of being financially active within the local chapter are shown in Table 2. The most notable change was with perceptions of the local chapter being important. We would predict that a person who does not value the local chapter has a 17% chance of being financially active. In contrast, we would predict that a person who believes the local chapter is important to have a 93% chance of being financially active. Only variables that were statistically significant were included in Table 2.

	Odds Ratio	Predicted Percentages		
		Low	High	Change
Interaction with other members	1.39	9%	27%	18%
Local chapter important	2.85	17%	93%	76%
Initiated in alumni chapter	1.55	7%	10%	3%
Household income	1.10	7%	11%	4%
Membership costs too high	.53	4%	0%	-14%
Other obligations (family and work)	.82	6%	3%	-3%
Religious conflicts	1.13	7%	12%	5%

Table 2. Predicted percentages of being financially active at the local level for those scoring low and high on the predictor variables.

### *Summary*

The bivariate analyses examined the relationships between each predictor variable individually and whether they were related to being financially active at the local level. These analyses revealed that members who perceive local chapters as important, interact with other members on a regular basis, have higher incomes and educational attainment, were initiated into an alumni chapter, and were positively attached to the organization were more likely to be financially active. For members who believed the costs of membership as too high, were concerned about the leadership and direction of the organization, had other (family/work) obligations, and were involved in hazing during their initiation were less likely to be financially active. These results largely mirror findings from being financially active at the national level (although there were several other variables that were not statistically significant in predicting being financially active at the local level compared to being financially active at the national level).

The multivariate analyses, which statistically control for the influence of the other variables in the model, largely confirmed these relationships. Concerns about gay members in the organization and one's level of educational attainment remained non-significant in the multivariate model. Concerns about the leadership and direction of the organization, attachment to the organization, and hazing during initiation were no longer statistically significant in the multivariate model. In general, these patterns too largely mirrored those noted when examining being financially active at the national level.

Table 2 provides evidence of which variables can make the largest difference in understanding why some members are financially active and others not. Perceiving the local chapter as important once again seems to be the most influential single correlate. This is unsurprising, as the dependent variable was being financially active in the local chapter. When considering the model as a whole (i.e., including all variables), some members have approximately a 6% chance of being financially active, while others have 98% chance.

### 3. Participation in the National Convention

Bivariate analyses indicated that household income ( $r_{(4156)} = .20, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [.17, .23]), regular interaction with other members ( $r_{(4422)} = .16, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [.13, .19]), higher levels of organizational attachment ( $r_{(4272)} = .16, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [.13, .19]), perceiving the local chapter as important ( $r_{(4509)} = .14, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [.13, .19]), educational attainment ( $r_{(4156)} = .14, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [.13, .19]), being hazed during initiation ( $r_{(4189)} = .14, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [.13, .19]), and concerns about gay members in the organization ( $r_{(4369)} = .04, p < .01, 95\%$  CI [-0.01, .07]) were positively, but weakly related to participation in the national convention. Perceiving the costs of membership as too high ( $r_{(4509)} = -.24, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [-.21, -.27]), having other (work/family) obligations ( $r_{(4509)} = -.14, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [-.11, -.17]), having religious conflicts ( $r_{(4422)} = -.12, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [-.09, -.15]), being initiated in an alumni chapter ( $r_{(4592)} = -.07, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [-.04, -.10]), and concerns about the leadership and direction of the organization ( $r_{(4222)} = -.06, p < .001, 95\%$  CI [-.03, -.09]) were all weakly and negatively related to participation in the national convention.

Each of the predictors was entered into a (ordinary least squares) multivariate model to assess their unique contributions, statistically controlling for the other variables in the model. The model fit the data well ( $F_{(12, 4143)} = 63.22, p < .001$ ), and accounted for 15.2% of the variance in participation in the national convention (Adj.  $R^2$ ). Each of the variables in the model exerted relatively weak effects. Concerns about leadership ( $b = .09, 95\%$  CI [.02, .16],  $seb = .03, p < .001, \beta = .04$ ), regular interaction with other members ( $b = .19, 95\%$  CI [.13, .25],  $seb = .03, p = .04, \beta = .001$ ), positive attachment to the organization ( $b = .10, 95\%$  CI [.02, .18],  $seb = .04, p = .02, \beta = .10$ ), perceiving the local chapter as important ( $b = .21, 95\%$  CI [.15, .28],  $seb = .03, p < .001, \beta = .11$ ), being subjected to hazing during initiation ( $b = .38, 95\%$  CI [.27, .49],  $seb = .06, p < .001, \beta = .11$ ), having a higher income ( $b = .18, 95\%$  CI [.13, .22],  $seb = .02, p < .001, \beta = .13$ ), and educational attainment ( $b = .23, 95\%$  CI [.16, .30],  $seb = .03, p < .001, \beta = .10$ ) were all positively related to participation in the national convention. Perceiving the costs of membership as being too high ( $b = -.29, 95\%$  CI [-.22, -.35],  $seb = .04, p < .001, \beta = -.14$ ), having other (work/family) responsibilities ( $b = -.21, 95\%$  CI [-.16, -.26],  $seb = .03, p =$

.04,  $\beta = -.04$ ), concerns about religious conflicts ( $b = -.08$ , 95% CI [-.11, -.05],  $seb = .03$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\beta = -.12$ ), and being initiated in an alumni chapter ( $b = -.29$ , 95% CI [-.17, -.41],  $seb = .06$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $\beta = -.08$ ) were all negatively related to participation in the in the national convention. Concerns about gay members in the organization was unrelated to participation in the national convention ( $b = .04$ , 95% CI [-.01, .08],  $seb = .02$ ,  $p = .12$ ,  $\beta = .02$ ).

### Summary

Several predictor variables demonstrated associations with participation in the national convention, most of which were similar across the bivariate and multivariate analyses. Members who have higher household income, an educational attainment, regular interaction with other members, higher levels of organizational attachment, perceived the local chapter as important, were hazed during initiation, and expressed concerns about gay members in the organization were more likely to attend the national convention. Those who thought the costs of membership were too high, were initiated in an alumni chapter had other (work/family) obligations, and who had religious conflicts were less likely to participate in the national convention. Interestingly, concern about the leadership and direction of the organization was weakly and negatively related to participation in the national convention, but weakly and positively in the multivariate model.

#### 4. Votes Regularly in Fraternity's National President Elections

Bivariate analyses indicated that perceiving the local chapter as important ( $r_{(4222)} = .42$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.40, .44]) and regular interaction with other members ( $r_{(4222)} = .24$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.21, .27]) were moderately and positively related to regular voting in the Fraternity's National president elections, while higher levels of organizational attachment ( $r_{(4222)} = .21$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.18, .24]) and being initiated in an alumni chapter ( $r_{(4222)} = .21$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.18, .24]) were more modestly and positively related to voting. Household income ( $r_{(4156)} = .03$ ,  $p = .03$ , 95% CI [.00, .06]) and educational attainment ( $r_{(4156)} = .08$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [.05, .11]) were positively, but weakly related to voting. Perceiving the costs of membership as too high was moderately and negatively related to voting ( $r_{(4222)} = -.21$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-.02, .04]). Having other (work/family) obligations ( $r_{(4222)} = -.21$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-.18, -.24]), concerns about the leadership and direction of the organization ( $r_{(4222)} = -.18$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-.15, -.21]), religious conflicts ( $r_{(4222)} = -.11$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-.08, -.14]), as well as being hazed during initiation ( $r_{(4189)} = -.08$ ,  $p < .001$ , 95% CI [-.05, -.11]) were all weakly and negatively related to voting in the National president elections. Concerns about gay members in the organization was not related to voting ( $r_{(4222)} = .01$ ,  $p = .51$ , 95% CI [-.02, .04]).

Each of the predictors was entered into a (ordinary least squares) multivariate model to assess their unique contributions, statistically controlling for the other variables in the model. The model fit the data well ( $F_{(12, 4143)} = 119.74, p < .001$ ), and accounted for 25.5% of the variance in participation in the national convention (Adj.  $R^2$ ). Each of the variables in the model exerted relatively weak effects. Regular interaction with other members ( $b = .21, 95\% \text{ CI } [.16, .25], \text{ seb} = .03, p < .001, \beta = .13$ ), positive attachment to the organization ( $b = .09, 95\% \text{ CI } [.02, .15], \text{ seb} = .04, p = .02, \beta = .04$ ), perceiving the local chapter as important ( $b = .43, 95\% \text{ CI } [.39, .48], \text{ seb} = .02, p < .001, \beta = .28$ ), educational attainment ( $b = .12, 95\% \text{ CI } [.07, .17], \text{ seb} = .03, p < .001, \beta = .07$ ), being initiated in an alumni chapter ( $b = .40, 95\% \text{ CI } [.32, .49], \text{ seb} = .05, p < .001, \beta = .14$ ), and concerns about gay members in the organization ( $b = .05, 95\% \text{ CI } [.02, .08], \text{ seb} = .02, p < .01, \beta = .04$ ) were all positively related to regularly voting in the Fraternity's National president elections. Perceiving the costs of membership as being too high ( $b = -.23, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.18, -.28], \text{ seb} = .03, p < .001, \beta = -.14$ ), having other (work/family) responsibilities ( $b = -.14, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.11, -.18], \text{ seb} = .02, p < .001, \beta = -.10$ ), and concerns about religious conflicts ( $b = -.06, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.02, -.11], \text{ seb} = .02, p < .01, \beta = -.04$ ) were all negatively related to voting. Concerns about leadership ( $b = -.02, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.08, .03], \text{ seb} = .03, p = .37, \beta = -.01$ ), having a higher income ( $b = -.01, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.04, .03], \text{ seb} = .02, p = .70, \beta = -.01$ ), and being subjected to hazing during initiation ( $b = .08, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.01, .16], \text{ seb} = .04, p = .07, \beta = .03$ ) were statistically unrelated to voting in the National president elections.

### *Summary*

Many predictor variables demonstrated statistically significant relationships with voting in the National president elections, with very similar patterns emerging across the bivariate and multivariate models. The members most likely to vote in these elections perceived the local chapter as important, were initiated in an alumni chapter, and had regular interaction with other members, positive attachment to the organization, higher educational attainment, and concerns about gay members in the organization. Those who perceived the costs of membership as being too high, had other (work/family) responsibilities, and concerns about religious conflicts were less likely to vote. Although statistically significant at the bivariate level, concerns about leadership, having a higher income, and being subjected to hazing during initiation were unrelated to voting in the National president elections in the multivariate model.

### 5. General Summary

Regardless of how one conceives of organizational participation – being financially active, voting, or attending national conventions—there were numerous

similarities in what is associated with the various outcomes. Some factors that are most likely to increase participation are practical in nature. That is, those who have resources—time and money—are more participatory. Not surprising, more education is important, probably in part due to how this is linked to having resources like time and money. Participation in one area also seems to be an important correlate of participation in other areas. Thus, remaining in contact with other members and being concerned with one's local chapter influences whether one is financially active, votes frequently, and attends conferences. In most analyses, being initiated in an alumni chapter led to greater participation. Socio-political issues, such as potential religious conflicts and gay members in the organization, generally played a lesser role. Finally, being hazed during one's initiation, in part designed to integrate a person into the organization, played virtually no part in understanding participation.

#### IX. CONCLUSION

Many organizational decisions are based on “hope or fear, what others seem to be doing, what senior leaders have done and believe has worked in the past, and their dearly held ideologies.”<sup>623</sup> These approaches often lack the impact or sustainability that is needed for a variety of reasons. For example, casual benchmarking—i.e., using another organization's experiences to set standards for your own—is ineffective or even dangerous because those who benchmark often fail to recognize either why the solutions worked for the specific organization or the differences in environments and models of each organization.<sup>624</sup> The common practice of doing what seems to work in the past can be a pitfall if the seemingly-clear solution is not what really caused the past success or if the new situation is not as similar to the past as it seems at surface level.<sup>625</sup> Lastly, following some deeply-held (yet unexamined) ideology can be dangerous simply because managers believe their ideology works and refuse to examine their assumptions and intuitions.<sup>626</sup> Evidence-based management is rooted in facing the facts about what works and what does not.<sup>627</sup> When organizations lack data or face complex decisions without the systems to make evidence readily available, they can instead rely on data gathered by stepping into the field and testing assumptions.<sup>628</sup>

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623. JEFFREY PFEFFER & ROBERT I. SUTTON, *HARD FACTS, DANGEROUS HALF-TRUTHS, AND TOTAL NONSENSE: PROFITING FROM EVIDENCE-BASED MANAGEMENT* 5 (2006).

624. *Id.* at 7.

625. *Id.* at 8–9.

626. *Id.* at 10–12.

627. *Id.* at 13.

628. *Id.* at 21.

One of the factors that impacts fraternity and sorority hazing is the role of alumni. These organizations have a responsibility to address this issue. While there are limited answers in the hazing and broader fraternity and sorority scholarship as to how to do this, empirical organizational behavior scholarship provides a roadmap.<sup>629</sup> While this research focuses on employees and customers, it offers the best path to understanding how to engage and corral alumni as way to more effectively work with, train, and even sanction them, where necessary.<sup>630</sup> As such, these organizations have a duty to use the best available research to address the range of factors that undergird and propel hazing.

As a general matter, this research applies where fraternities and sororities have functioning alumni chapters where members in each city can come together for the benefit of their organization and community.<sup>631</sup> The other option is alumni associations—formalized groups of alumni from individual college chapters. The former may be effective as they can operate in the same city as local college chapters and mentor those chapters. On the other hand, while alumni associations may serve as a band of members around the country but initiated through one college chapter, they are likely to have more influence over their chapter of initiation. Even more, they are likely in the best position to serve as a buffer between rogue members of their chapter of initiation and current members of that chapter.

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629. DeTienne & Westwood, *supra* note 528.

630. *Id.*

631. Bruggink & Siddiqui, *supra* note 8.