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The Impact of Sense of Community on Business Unit Work Performance

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THE IMPACT OF SENSE OF COMMUNITY ON BUSINESS UNIT WORK
PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to determine if there is a relationship between sense of community within a work unit and work performance. The hypothesis of this research was that a higher sense of community score, computed from the Sense of Community Index-2 survey, would facilitate better work performance in that work unit, as indicated by a "Work Performance Rating" form filled out by the Human Resources of each company. This hypothesis was accepted because there was a positive correlation between the two factors, however there were discrepancies with a couple of the work units studied.

To achieve the purpose and objectives of this research, six work units were chosen for research: two small (seven to ten employees) real estate companies and four work units within a larger web services provider company (2,000 employees). Each work unit had a different number of employees participate, ranging from seven employees to twelve employees. Employees volunteered to fill out the twenty-four item Sense of Community Index-2, which is a reliable measure of sense of community developed by McMillan and Chavis (1986). The survey's twenty-four questions contain six questions on each of the four components of sense of community: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. The average total sense of community score (sum of questions one through twenty-four) was computed for each of the six work units along with the average score for each of the four sense of community components.

An employee from Human Resources for each company was asked to fill out a "Work Performance Rating" form, which asks he or she to rate the work performance of that work unit one through five. With this information, the sense of community scores could be compared to the work performance scores to determine if the two factors were related.

Results showed that the work unit with the highest community score also had the highest work performance score, and the work unit with the lowest community score also had the lowest work performance score. The four work units in-between, however, did not have a definite trend, although there is a positive correlation amongst all six units.

Analysis indicated that the work units with the smallest number of employees had the highest participation rates and the highest sense of community scores. "Shared emotional connection" was the highest overall section of the SCI-2 across five of the six units and seems to have the largest tie to a higher sense of community.

While most of the results were consistent with expectancies of this research, there were also a couple discrepancies. For example, the work unit with the second highest work performance score also had a significantly low community score, indicating that sense of community does not always lead to better work performance and can even hinder productivity because some employees might find it a distraction.

The analysis yielded several limitations of this study. These limitations can be partially prevented if this study were to be continued on a larger scale.

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this research was to determine if there is a positive correlation between sense of community within a work unit and work performance. The following objectives were formulated to achieve this purpose:

1. Describe the survey instruments used to evaluate sense of community and work performance.
2. Measure work units' sense of community and work performance with the respective instruments.
3. Analyze and compare the statistical results.
4. Analyze results in terms of the six selected work units, along with other work units, companies, and communities in general.
5. Make recommendations to hiring managers, supervisors, and job seekers.
6. Indicate the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

1.2. Hypothesis

The primary hypothesis of this research is that a higher sense of community within a work unit will facilitate better work performance.

1.3. Justification and Need

Sense of community is a term that has been defined by several psychologists and sociologists. The most famous definition is by McMillan and Chavis (1986). From their definition and four key component parts - membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection - a scale called the SCI-2 ("Sense

of Community Index”) was developed as a reliable indicator of sense of community. This scale has been applied to neighborhoods, cities, recreational clubs, schools, universities, workplaces, etc.

Having a sense of community has been tied to positive factors such as higher levels of physical and mental health (Sarason, 1974). The purpose of the present research is to evaluate sense of community in the workplace and determine if it leads to better work performance, a study that has not been done before. This research could be very helpful to the six work units involved if there is, in fact, a positive correlation between sense of community and work performance because they can learn which units are using successful tactics to increase work performance and employee morale. Furthermore, the results can also be applied to companies in general, and even other types of communities, that wish to increase their work performance or be informed of the positive outcomes of having a sense of community.

1.4. Methodology

Theoretical concepts and empirical results reported in the existing literature were reviewed. The Sense of Community Index-2, developed by McMillan and Chavis (1986), was chosen as the tool used to measure sense of community.

The sample consisted of six work units: Company A (ten employees), Company B (seven employees), and the legal, sales, marketing, and finance departments of Company C, all of which have a different number of employees (ranging from six to forty-five). The SCI-2 was administered to all of the employees of these six work units. Since participation was completely voluntary as stated in the Informed Consent, there was varying participation across the work units.

To measure each work unit's work performance, a quality rating form was developed by the researcher, asking an employee in Human Resources to rate that unit's work performance one through five. The Human Resources employees were also encouraged to provide any additional information regarding the work unit's work performance, whether it was a written description or supporting facts and figures.

The SCI-2 surveys were scored and organized by work unit. The mean, standard deviation, and coefficient of variability were then computed for each work unit's total sense of community score, along with each of the four components of sense of community. The scores were then analyzed in relation to their work performance score.

1.5. Scope and Limitations

Because the respondents for this research were limited to six work units, the study lacks external validity. Generalizations about a broader population are uncertain. The problem of external validity is not especially critical to this study because the purpose was to test whether sense of community and work performance are positively related for these six work units and does not make any definite generalizations for other work units or companies. This study is a starting point for a much larger study that could be done to test this idea. Thus, the sample is considered adequate for this purpose.

Rating work performance is difficult, especially when Human Resources must choose just one number to indicate that unit's work performance. The context of work performance differs across departments, companies, and can be understood differently depending on the employee. Thus, the "quality rating" was a limitation of the study. However, it was easy and simple for Human Resources employees to fill out and having one form allowed for an equal comparison across all six work units.

The time it took to receive information back from Human Resources was longer than expected. Although everything was returned in plenty of time to complete this thesis, there was definitely a difficulty in obtaining information from human resources. Not only do they have confidentiality agreements, so they have to be careful about the information they volunteer, but also there is a difficulty in answering big workplace culture questions.

1.6. Organization of Study

Section 2 contains a review of relevant literature. This review includes literature devoted to sense of community, especially the definition developed by McMillan and Chavis (1986). The review then focuses on their definition's component parts, dynamic between elements, and limitations.

Section 3 presents the overall methodology. Included are the steps that were taken in developing and administering the ways to evaluate sense of community and work performance. Also included is the scoring method for these scales.

Section 4 contains the results. Results are presented in a chart, graph, and description form.

Section 5 presents the analysis of the results, largely in terms of the numbers. Section 6 is a discussion of results, applying the results to the six work units, other companies in general, and other types of communities. Section 6 also contains advice for hiring managers, supervisors, and job seekers.

Section 7 contains the limitations of the study. Section 8 is a summary of conclusions. The data gathering instruments and informed consent forms are contained in the appendixes. Following the appendixes are the sources used in this study.

2. Review of Relevant Literature

2.1. Early Studies and Research on Sense of Community

Ferdinand Tönnies (1955), as a thirty-two year-old in the year 1887, sought to make the distinction between “Gemeinschaft,” a smaller, neighborhood-based community, and “Gesellschaft,” a large competitive market society. Confucius had introduced the idea behind Gemeinschaft through his theory of the five fundamental social relationships: father and son, older brother and younger, husband and wife, ruler and subject, and friend and friend. This theory resembles Tönnies’ distinctions between mother and child, father and child, friends and friends, brothers and sisters, and rulers and subjects (p. vii).

Plato, too, distinguished between these two types of societies in *Republic* and *Laws*. His portrayal of Gemeinschaft is found in his description of an ideal republic, while his portrayal of the oligarchic and capitalistic society is clearly a depiction of the Gesellschaft type (Tönnies, 1955).

Tönnies (1955) argued that Gesellschaft was beginning to overrule Gemeinschaft, as the individualistic nature of the larger scale societies were overshadowing the interdependence and common goals found on the village and town level. Additionally, the Gesellschaft way of thinking would lead to alienation of the mentally ill or disabled, thus decreasing sense of community. These people needed Gemeinschaft to remain a part of society. The clash between these two types of societies was considered by several aspects of life: legal, political, economic, family, art, religion, culture, and modes of cognition, language, and understanding. Sarason (1982) paralleled Tönnies’ concerns about the disappearance of Gemeinschaft when he

opposed the building of US highways, claiming they were a threat to citizens' psychological well-being and sense of community.

Konig (1968) asserts that *gemeinde*, which is the root of *Gemeinschaft*, is "the totality of those who own something in common" (p. 15). Cohen (1976) had similar findings on the concept of the "Bund." However, a small-scale community is not a requirement for *Gemeinschaft* or *Bund*. Kasarda and Janowitz (1974) confirm that communities are not defined by location; they found that increasing a community's population does not weaken its sentiments.

Sociologist Hillery (1955) strived to determine the definite and common aspects of a community. Of the 94 definitions of community, he found that four common components occurred in 69 of them. The four components included: people, common ties, social interaction, and place. The only component found in all 94 definitions was "people" (Hillery, 1955).

Doolittle and MacDonald (1978) researched communicative attitudes and behaviors on the neighborhood or community level. They developed the Sense of Community Scale (SCS), a 40-item scale used to characterize neighborhoods as having a low, medium, or high sense of community. Five factors considered were informal interaction with neighbors, safety, pro-urbanism, neighboring preferences, and localism. The study showed that pro-urbanism and preference are inversely related. Additionally, safety and preference for neighboring are directly related. Lastly, as pro-urbanism decreases, perception of safety increases (Doolittle & MacDonald, 1978).

Based on Hillery's work as stated above, Glynn (1981) distributed a questionnaire to members of three communities, hypothesizing that the Kfar Blum and

Israeli kibbutz residents would have a greater sense of community than the residents of two communities in Maryland. Using 202 behaviors based on sense of community, he developed 120 items that embodied real and ideal characteristics. The kibbutz community ended up demonstrating a higher real level of sense of community, as predicted. The ideal scale, however, showed no difference among the three. Actual sense of community was based on three factors: expected length of residency within the community, satisfaction, and the number of neighbors one could identify by first name. The study also demonstrated that sense of community was positively related to the ability to function competently in the community (Glynn, 1981).

Riger and Lavrakas (1981) found two factors, social bonding and behavioral rootedness, when studying sense of community in terms of neighborhood attachment. Social bonding took into consideration the ability to identify neighbors, number of children in the neighborhood that the respondent knew, and feeling apart of the neighborhood. Behavioral rootedness considered whether one's home was owned or rented, expected length of stay, and years of community residency. With these two factors, they identified four categorical groups of citizens: young mobiles (low bonded, low rooted), young participants (high bonded, low rooted), isolates (low bonded, high rooted), and established participants (high bonded, high rooted). The study found that attachment was greatly determined by age. This study was important for conceptualizing the emotional aspect of sense of community.

Riger, LeBailly, and Gordon (1981) researched residents' fear of crime in relation to their involvement within the community. The study demonstrated that feelings of bondedness and extent of residential roots were inversely related to fear of crime. Use

of local facilities and social interaction with neighbors, on the other hand, were not greatly related to fear of crime.

Ahlbrant and Cunningham (1979) found that those with the most commitment and satisfaction with their neighborhood saw their neighborhood as a small community within the city, and they felt more loyalty there than to the rest of the city. The study found that one's commitment to their neighborhood was affected by the strength of interpersonal relationships, measured by different types of interactions amongst neighbors, and the offering of certain activities to cater to the residents.

Bachrach and Zautra (1985) studied the coping responses of citizens of a rural community when there was a proposed hazardous waste facility inside the community. Problem-focused coping behaviors, such as attempting to counter or alter the threat, were found in those with a stronger sense of community. There was no bearing whether emotion-focused coping strategies, efforts to emotionally adjust to the threat, were applied. Problem-focused coping had a positive relation to one's community involvement, as demonstrated by a path analytic model. Whether the involvement was reading reports or signing petitions, the authors found that a greater sense of perceived control and sense of purpose in dealing with a threat was caused by stronger sense of community (Bachrach & Zautra, 1985).

Similarly, Florin and Wandersman (1984) along with Wandersman and Giamartino (1980) concluded that those who participated in block associations, compared to those who did not, self-reported high levels of sense of community.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) were able to take these initial studies and form their first understanding of the concept. They realized the concept's importance for "research,

intervention, and policy” (p. 3). They noticed the reoccurrence of the following concepts: satisfaction within the community, both planned and actual length of residency, home ownership, and neighboring. McMillan and Chavis (1986) recognized the limitations from these studies, however. The studies used measures that were not directly developed from a definition of sense of community. Authors conducting the studies assumed that the elements in their measures equally affected one’s experience within their community. Sarason (1974) opposed this, claiming that certain needs, feelings, and experiences are more important than others. The studies also focused on the differentiation of the communities and individuals rather than the factors common among the participants.

All in all, McMillan and Chavis (1986) were able to confirm that the sense of community experience does, in fact, exist. From there, they were able to provide a full description of the nature of the concept through a definition and theory. Gusfield (1975) and Sarason (1974), too, were among the first to coin a definition for the concept.

2.2. Early Definitions

Psychologist Seymour Sarason (1974) formulated a foundational theory for sense of community. Although the concept did not have a common definition, Sarason found that the general public still understood the term. In exploring the concept, people expressed their feelings of loneliness, the desire to belong, and the desire to be mutually dependant (p. 192). Thus, he concluded that sense of community exists everywhere, and without it, humans are miserable. His psychological research on the topic focused on the strength of the sense of community along with the linked benefits for members, such as increased psychological health. Further research also found that

higher levels of sense of community leads to higher levels of economic prosperity, physical health, mental health, and can impact social justice and change (Chavis & Pretty, 1999; Peterson et al., 2008; Shinn & Toohey, 2002).

In his 1974 book, Sarason introduced the concept of “psychological sense of community,” claiming it is “one of the major bases for self-definition” (p. 157). His full definition is:

“The perception of similarity to others, an acknowledged interdependence with others, a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving to or doing for others what one expects from them, and the feeling that one is part of a larger dependable and stable structure” (p. 157).

Gusfield (1975) characterized two dimensions of a community: territorial and relational. The relational component refers to the nature and quality of relationships within the community. Some relational communities might not be territorial, such as a group of scholars working together; they maintain contact and have a relationship, yet they may live in different parts of the world. Other communities might be defined according to territory, such as a neighborhood. These two dimensions are quite similar to the “social bonding” and “physical rootedness” concepts used by Riger and Lavrakas (1981) in their study of urban neighborhoods. Although Gusfield found that territorial and relational communities are not mutually exclusive, Durheim (1964) points out that more often, communities are formed around interests and skills rather than locality.

McMillan and Davis’ definition and description became perhaps the most accepted and widely utilized model of sense of community (Long, D.A. & Perkins, D.D., 2003). In forming their definition and theory, they had four criteria: the definition needs to be clear, be concrete with identifiable parts, represent the warmth implied by the

term, and “provide a dynamic description of the development and maintenance of the experience” (p. 9). With this, their one-sentence definition for sense of community is:

“A feeling that members have of belonging, a feeling that members matter to one another and to the group, and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together” (p. 9).

Included in the definition are four elements, including membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection.

2.3. Membership

Membership, according to Aronson and Mills (1959), is a feeling that one rightly belongs to be a member after investing part of his or herself. It is the feeling of belonging (Backman and Secord, 1959). There are those who belong and those who do not, thus there are boundaries. Boundaries can be identified by dress, ritual, or language, and these boundaries protect people from threat and protect their personal space (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). In some groups, outsiders might be held with lower regard. With this, “boundaries” are the most problematic part of the membership definition, however, “while much sympathetic interest in and research on the deviant have been generated, group members' legitimate needs for boundaries to protect their intimate social connections have often been overlooked” (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 9).

Boundaries create isolation, which might cause people pain if they are rejected membership. These deviants are often used as the scapegoats to create solid boundaries. However, deviants might also take advantage of the group, volunteering to take on the role as the deviant through rule breaking or speaking against the group for attention (Mead, 1918).

Some boundaries are only recognizable by its members, such as graffiti on the walls of a neighborhood (Berger & Neuhaus, 1977). Others might clearly define who is a member and who is not. Boundaries protect members against threat and decrease the anxiety of members by demarcating those who members cannot trust (Berger & Neuhaus, 1977).

A second component to the definition of membership is emotional safety, or, more broadly, security. Emotional safety is the willingness to reveal one's feelings. Security can also be physical, as seen with gangs, for example (Doolittle & MacDonald, 1978).

The sense of belonging and identification, another component, involves the feeling of being accepted by the group, willingness to make sacrifices for the group, and the feeling that one has a place within the group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Personal investment is significant in developing an emotional connection, such as with owning a home. McMillan (1976) argues that working for membership in a group will allow one to feel they have earned their place and membership will feel more valuable because that person made a personal investment. Hazing rituals by college fraternities, for example, have been proven to bring the group closer together (Peterson & Martens, 1972).

The fifth and final component of membership is a common symbol system. A symbol, as defined by White (1949), is "a thing the value or meaning of which is bestowed upon it by those who use it" (p. 39). Nisbit and Perrin (1977) assert, "The symbol is to the social world what the cell is to the biotic world and the atom to the physical world...the symbol is the beginning of the social world as we know it" (p. 47).

National symbols include flags, holidays, and language. At the neighborhood level, symbols might be found in its name, a logo, landmark, or the style of architecture (Jung, 1912). Groups establish boundaries to separate members from nonmembers through rites of passage, rituals, ceremonies, speech, or dress (McMillan, 1976).

A study by Kolodinsky, Stewart, and Bullard (2006) sought to find the economic and social impacts of membership in a community development financial institution (CDFI). They found that the more connections the member had with the credit union, i.e. the more services they used, the larger the impact on their lives. Another universal result was that influence was impacted by member goals and identification of the most important services. In conclusion, the use of CDFI services through membership “does change lives for the better” (p. 44).

2.4. Influence

McMillan and Chavis (1986) proposed two components of influence in a community. First, members must feel motivated to influence group activity because this corresponds to willingness to participate (Peterson & Martens, 1972). Secondly, the group’s influence over its members will affect group cohesiveness (Kelley & Volkart, 1952). McMillan and Chavis (1986) point out that these forces can work at the same time, however: “People who acknowledge that others’ needs, values, and opinions matter to them are often the most influential group members, while those who always push to influence, try to dominate others, and ignore the wishes and opinions of others are often the least powerful members” (p. 11)

Lott and Lott (1965) found a positive correlation between pressure to conform and group cohesiveness, which could be seen as a negative effect of group

cohesiveness as there is a loss of freedom (Festinger, Schachter, & Back, 1950). McMillan and Chavis (1986), through further research, found that this force toward uniformity is transactional, coming from both the group and the person. Hunter and Riger (1986) found that personal choice is not always lost to conformity; many people, in fact, try to escape conformity so that they can express their individuality. Thus, there is a need for communities that appreciate people's differences. McMillan (1996) discusses the element of "trust," the prominent component of influence.

2.5. Integration and Fulfillment of Needs

For a group to have a sense of togetherness, the association between group and individual must be rewarding, or in plainer terms, there must be reinforcement (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). There are many reinforcements that tie the various groups and individuals together. One such reinforcer is status; for example, group members become closer through group success (Kelley, 1951). Competence is also significant, as people are attracted to the idea of being rewarded or compensated for their skills (Zander & Havelin, 1960). This is called a "person-environment fit," according to Rappaport (1977).

For groups that have a sense of community, people can meet their own needs while also meeting the needs of others (Riley, 1970). People do what serves their needs, and often times, people are taught personal values by their culture or family. When other people share these same values and come together, they believe that joining this group is beneficial because it will satisfy their priorities and needs (Cohen, 1976).

Through his further research, McMillan (1996) admits that he should give more credit to the similarities within a group, as it is an “essential dynamic” of the development of a community (p. 320). He cites multiple studies that prove that perceived similarity to others is an important asset to group interaction.

2.6. Shared Emotional Connection

A large part of having a shared emotional connection is being able to identify with other group members' history. Interacting in shared events, or certain characteristics of that event, might help the relationship amongst members to group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The authors list seven features that are important “shared emotional connection.”

1. Contact hypothesis: people are more likely to become close as they interact more and more (Allan & Allan, 1971).
2. Quality of interaction: the bond will be greater if the experience is positive (Cook, 1970).
3. Closure to events: ambiguous interaction and unresolved tasks restrain cohesiveness (Hamblin, 1958).
4. Shared valent event hypothesis: if the event is important to the group members, the bond will be greater (Myers, 1962).
5. Investment: those who have invested more time and energy into the community regard the community as more important (Aronson & Mills, 1959).
6. Effect of honor and humiliation on community members: if one is rewarded in front of the community, they will be more attracted to it. Feeling humiliated facilitates less attraction (Festinger, 1953).
7. Spiritual bond: although difficult to describe, “this is present to some degree in all communities” (p. 14). Bernard (1973) links this “community of spirit” to the concept of soul that formed in national black communities in the nineteenth century.

2.7. Dynamics within Elements

According to McMillan and Chavis (1986), the five components of membership fit in a “circular, self-reinforcing way, with all conditions having both causes and effects” (p. 15). As far as influence, the relationship is codependent; community influence on the member facilitates the member having more influence on the community. People are more often chosen as leaders when they have good listening skills and are influenceable rather than domineering (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Concerning the integration and fulfillment of needs, McMillan and Chavis (1986) stated that people will choose a community in which their needs can be met. Additionally, successful communities are mutually rewarding in that people enjoy helping others and they enjoy being helped. The authors developed “heuristic” formulae regarding the shared emotional connection component (p. 15):

Formula 1: Shared emotional connection = contact + high-quality interaction

Formula 2: High-quality interaction = (events with successful closure – ambiguity) x (event valence x sharedness of the event) + amount of honor given to members – amount of humiliation

McMillan and Chavis (1986) admit that it is difficult to describe the elements’ interworkings (p. 16). They use the kibbutz as an illustration of the elements that make up sense of community. They say, “Sense of community is not a static feeling. It is affected by time through changing values and external forces such as commerce, the media, transportation, specialization of professions, economics, and employment factors” (p. 19).

In a study regarding the sense of community across online and offline communities, Jenny Fremlin (2012) asked members of an online community to “Please explain the phrase ‘Sense of Community’ (p. 97). *Leximancer*, an automated text

analysis software, could tie factors (shared emotional connection, membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and friendship) to their related concepts. For example, “shared emotional connection” included concepts such as “commitment and belief that members have and will share a history, common places, time together, and similar experiences” and so on (Fremlin, 2012, p. 99). The reason that “friendship” was included in addition to the traditional four factors was because the factor was prevalent in the emergent concepts from past literature (Blanchard & Markus, 2004). The *Coding Analysis Toolkit* (CAT) was also used so that multiple categories could be assigned to a single, open-ended response.

Results showed that 41% of responses fell within the “membership” category and 35% fell within the “shared emotional connection” category. Further, 11%, 9%, and 4% fell within the “integration and fulfillment of needs,” “friendship,” and “influence” categories, respectively (Fremlin, 2012, p. 100). This study showed that membership and shared emotional connection are, by far, the most commonly identified factors for the general sense of community term.

2.8. Limitations of the Theory

The definition and theory of sense of community, McMillan and Chavis (1986) believe, are applicable to all types of communities, yet the four elements might vary in importance. However, the elements provide a framework for comparing different communities (p. 19). In contrast, Nowell and Boyd (2010) contended McMillan and Chavis ignored the possibility that community members choose to participate for reasons other than fulfilling individual power, affiliation, and achievement needs.

Nowell and Boyd (2010) pointed out that there is a lack of competing theories, as there is such a large emphasis on McMillan and Chavis' singular theory. One recent study suggested expanding the understanding of sense of community by using a different framework, which includes a sense of responsibility to the community and other members (Nowell & Boyd, 2010). Although Nowell and Boyd suggested adding "responsibility" as a separate framework, the concept is in fact covered under the "membership" factor as the willingness to sacrifice for a group (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Brodsky et al. (2002) theorized that the factors that affect sense of community might differ by the means of connecting to the community. Additionally, the meaning of sense of community to the members will differ based on the community. For example, when researching online communities, Obst and White (2005) found "social identification" to be a separate construct that tends to be stronger in communities with a higher level of choice in belonging.

2.9. Sense of Community Index

The Psychological Sense of Community Scale (PSOC) demonstrated that sense of community was measurable and quantifiable in 1981 (Puddifoot, 1996). The scale included 60 items measuring perceptions of an ideal community and 60 items measuring the participants' own communities. Since the scale's items were developed based on a panel of judges from the American Psychological Association, however, the scale was criticized for a limited understanding of sense of community (Puddifoot, 1996).

The original Sense of Community Index (SCI) was developed in 1986 as a 23-item scale with both open-ended and closed-ended questions (Chavis et al., 1986). In contrast to the PSOC, this scale was developed by a panel of 21 judges including community professionals, social scientists, political and neighborhood organization leaders, and the general public, chosen based on a diversified mix of social class, gender, race, occupation, and exposure to situations pertaining to sense of community. All of these unique judges had a common understanding of sense of community. The 23-item scale was later shortened to a 12-item scale, with three true/false questions for each of the four “sense of community” factors developed by McMillan and Chavis (Chavis et al., 1986). This scale had a reported internal reliability coefficient of .80 ($n=720$) (Perkins, Florin, Rich, Wandersman, & Chavis, 1990).

The 12-item scale reported low internal reliability, however, with SCI alphas ranging from .64 to .69 and subscale alphas from .07 to .72 (Chipuer & Pretty, 1999). It is likely the subscale’s low reliability was due to the true/false format and because there were only three questions per subscale (Chipuer & Pretty, 1999).

Several new scales were developed in effort to make up for the shortcomings of the SCI. For example, Long and Perkins (2003) did not support the single nor four-factor model; instead, they weeded out survey questions and developed a three-factor, eight-item Brief Sense of Community Index (BSCI). The three-factors included Social Connections, Mutual Concerns, and Community Values (Long & Perkins, 2003).

2.10. Sense of Community Index-2

With a study on immigrant integration in a western US state, the SCI research team was able to revise the SCI, addressing previous concerns (Chavis, Lee, & Acosta,

2008). A 24-item scale was developed, the SCI-2, which was able to cover all the attributes described in the original theory. Rather than true/false format, the authors used a Likert scale. When used within a large survey of 1800 people, the SCI-2 was proved a more reliable measure with a coefficient alpha of .94. The subscales had coefficient alpha scores of .79 to .86, also proving to be reliable (Chavis, Lee, & Acosta, 2008).

3. Method

3.1. Research Methodology

While much has been researched on the sense of community across cultures and contexts including urban, suburban, rural, tribal, schools, universities, recreational clubs, and online communities (Chavis, Lee, & Acosta, 2008), there are not many studies on the sense of community within a workplace. As stated in section 2, higher levels of sense of community lead to higher levels of economic prosperity, physical health, and mental health (Chavis & Pretty, 1999; Peterson et al., 2008; Shinn & Toohey, 2002). As an International Business major, there was a curiosity as to whether it also leads to better performance in the workplace. The purpose of this research was to determine if the sense of community within a work unit has an impact on that unit's work performance. Section 3 describes the research methods employed in the study to measure both sense of community and work performance in specific work units.

3.2. Measuring Sense of Community

The Sense of Community Index-2 was chosen to assess sense of community. This 24-item scale has proven to be a reliable measure with a coefficient alpha of .94

(Chavis, Lee, & Acosta, 2008). The scale does not ask for the participant's name, but it asks the participant for their community name. Next, it asks: "How important is it to you to feel a sense of community with other community members?" and the participant can circle a number one through six. The main component of the survey is 24 questions, which is comprised of six questions on each of the four components of sense of community: reinforcement of needs, membership, influence, and shared emotional connection. For each question, the participant can select "not at all," "somewhat," "mostly," or "completely."

This survey was given to all the employees in specific work units within the companies being researched. With the results, each work unit's sense of community score could be computed.

There were very minor modifications made to the form. The first line, which asks for the participant's community name, was replaced with "your work unit." It was also reiterated that when a question says "my community," it is referring to that participant's work unit (i.e. marketing unit within their company).

See Appendix 1 for the SCI-2 scale.

3.3. Measuring Work Performance

To measure work performance, the Human Resources department of each company being researched was contacted. An employee within the Human Resources department filled out a form created by the researcher for each work unit in that company receiving the SCI-2. The Human Resources form contained one question: "On a scale of 1 – 5 with 5 being the most positive, how would you rate the overall work performance of this unit (circle one)?" A score of one corresponds to "unsatisfactory,"

three corresponds to “successful,” and five corresponds to “exceptional.” The form was kept to one question for simplicity. Additionally, most Human Resources departments have confidentiality agreements, so this form allows them to quickly rate work performance without releasing confidential information.

See Appendix 2 for the “Work Performance Rating” form.

3.4. Informed Consents

An Informed Consent was created for both employees filling out the SCI-2 and the Human Resources department. The Informed Consent contained: purpose of the study, what will be done, benefits of the study, risks or discomforts, confidentiality, decision to quit at any time, how the findings will be used, and contact information. The Informed Consent also explained that the SCI-2 was chosen because “it is a strong predictor of behaviors and is a valid measurement instrument.”

The document states that the participants are contributing to the knowledge on the sense of community within a small business work unit. Each company being researched will be given the results of the study upon completion, which might be valuable information for the companies if there is, in fact, a relationship between sense of community and work performance.

Regarding risks or discomforts, it is stated that participants can choose to skip a question or withdraw from the study altogether if they do not feel comfortable. All responses are completely confidential. Only the name of the work unit is asked on the survey; individual names and company names will not be used in the paper unless the company wishes so. The document states that participation is voluntary and one can withdraw their participation at anytime. Lastly, it states that the findings will be used for

scholarly purposes only, and results might be published in a professional journal in the field of business.

Stated at the bottom is: "By beginning the survey ('filling out the form' for the Human Resources Informed Consent), you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this research, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty."

See Appendix 3 for both Informed Consent forms.

3.5. Sampling Method: Company A and Company B

The first company chosen for the study is an international private investment organization. Within this company, two smaller real estate companies within the investment firm, "Company A" and "Company B," were chosen for research. These two companies were chosen because they are similar in size, 7-10 employees each, making results comparable. The researcher interned for one of these smaller companies in the past and therefore knew employees personally. Upon selection, the cooperation of the President of the companies and the Human Resources of each department was sought and obtained.

The population amongst the seventeen employees includes both males and females. The age range in Company A is 23 to 59, and the range in Company B is 23 to 78.

3.6. Sampling Method: Company C

Company C is a provider of Web services with about 2,000 employees. This company was chosen because its industry, size, office, and overall atmosphere contrasts with that of Company A and Company B and would provide interesting results

to compare to the smaller real estate companies. The researcher also interned for this company in the past and therefore knew certain executives and managers. The cooperation of the executives and the Human Resources department was sought and obtained.

Within Company C, four departments were selected for research: sales, marketing, finance, and legal. There are approximately 20, 35, 45, and 6 employees in each department, respectively. These four departments were included in research because their department heads were willing and able to participate. Additionally, their varying sizes and positions would, again, provide an interesting comparison to other results. Included in the population of the four departments are males and females, aging from twenty's to sixty's.

3.7. Survey Procedure: Company A and Company B

The SCI-2 was administered by the President's secretary, via email, to seventeen employees total: all ten in Company A and all seven in Company B. The email stated a brief description of the project with two attachments: the Informed Consent and the SCI-2 survey. The email asked for all surveys to please be filled out as soon as possible and returned directly to the researcher's email within two weeks.

After speaking to Human Resources on the phone to further describe the study, it was decided that one employee would be better suited to fill out the "Work Performance Rating" form for Company A while a different employee would be better suited to fill out the form for Company B. This was because the employees in Human Resources tend to work closer with one of the two companies.

The initial email to these contacts in Human Resources stated the objective of the

study, what was being asked of the employees (the SCI-2 survey), what was being asked of Human Resources, and that any additional information beyond the “Work Performance Rating” form was greatly appreciated. The “Work Performance Rating” form and Informed Consent were attached to the email.

Response was almost immediate, however, the time it took to receive information was longer than expected. In the end, both quality rating forms were returned along with a paragraph description of each company, from the President, and a few facts and figures regarding number of events held per year and number of properties sold.

3.8. Survey Procedure: Company C

After meeting with the sales, marketing, finance, and legal department heads, it was decided that it would be most effective if each department head emailed the survey to their entire department rather than the researcher, someone the employees did not know, try to contact all 106 employees. Thus, the SCI-2 was administered, via email, to each employee of the four departments by their manager. The description in the email was:

“One of our interns from last summer is working on a survey as part of a school project. She has asked us to take five minutes to complete the survey for her. It has to do with the sense of community that may or may not exist within organizational departments. Please take five minutes, complete the attached survey, and return to her directly at avanover@rollins.edu. Other departments internally are participating as well. No one in the company will see your responses. Directions and additional detail below.”

The survey and Informed Consent, which further described the thesis and stated that the survey was completely voluntary, were attached. A follow-up email was sent to each department by their department head one week later to further encourage their participation.

The four department heads suggested talking to a certain employee involved with Human Resources for that component of the study because she was unbiased, meaning she did not prefer one department over the other, and knowledgeable with the company as a whole. An email was sent to her describing the project, what was asked of employees, what is being asked of Human Resources, and that any other additional information is appreciated. The Informed Consent and “Work Performance Rating” form were attached. She returned the quality rating form for each of the four departments along with a couple notes on each department’s work ethic.

3.9. Scoring the SCI-2

Employees were given two weeks to complete and return the SCI-2. Next, the surveys were organized by company, then by work unit.

The initial question, “How important is it to you to feel a sense of community with other community members?” was not included in the numeric scoring of the survey, but it served as a qualifying question to aid in interpreting results.

For the twenty-four questions, participants could select “not at all,” “somewhat,” “mostly,” or “completely.” The following is how it is scored:

Not At All= 0, Somewhat= 1, Mostly= 2, Completely= 3

Total Sense of Community Index = Sum of Q1 to Q24

Subscales Reinforcement of Needs = Q1 + Q2 + Q3 + Q4 + Q5 + Q6

Membership = Q7 + Q8 + Q9 + Q10 + Q11 + Q12

Influence = Q13 + Q14 + Q15 + Q16 + Q17 + Q18

Shared Emotional Connection = Q19 + Q20 + Q21 + Q22 + Q23 + Q24

The total sense of community index (Q1 to Q24) was computed for each

participant. For each work unit, the average total sense of community index was computed by adding each employee's total sense of community index and dividing by the number of employees. The standard deviation of the mean was also computed.

Additionally, for each employee, the four sense of community components were considered separately. For example, questions 1 through 6 were added to get a total "reinforcement of needs" score for that participant. Next, all of the "reinforcement of needs" scores for every employee in that work unit were added together and divided by the number of employees to get the average. The same was done for membership, influence, and shared emotional connection. In the end, there was an average score (0 being lowest, 18 being highest) for each of the four components of sense of community for each work unit: Company A, Company B, and sales, marketing, finance, and legal within Company C. The standard deviation was also computed for each of the four components. From there, the coefficient of variation was computed by dividing the standard deviation by the mean. This was done for the overall work unit along with each of the four components.

3.10. Scoring "Work Performance Rating" Form

Since the Human Resources department was only asked to provide one number rating of each work unit in their company, no scoring was involved. However, the emails to Human Resources stated that any other information they were willing to provide about each work unit, whether it was a description of their work performance or facts and figures on their performance, was appreciated. Each company sent different types of additional information, but all information was considered and compared to the SCI-2 scores that had been computed for the work unit.

4. Results

4.1. Results of the SCI-2 by Component

Table 1 is a chart of each work unit's mean total sense of community score (the average of the sum of questions 1 through 24) along with the mean score of each of the four components of sense of community for that work unit. The chart also gives the number of participants, standard deviation, and coefficient of variation.

Table 1
Sense of Community Scale: Descriptive Statistics

Sense of Community Index-2 (24 items)	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Coefficient of Variation (stdv/mean)
Company A	10	48.5	11.6	.2
Initial Question (not scored)	10	5.4	0.7	.1
Reinforcement of Needs (6)	10	11.3	3.5	.3
Membership (6)	10	11	3.1	.3
Influence (6)	10	12.3	2.7	.2
Shared Emotional Connection (6)	10	13.9	3.4	.2
Company B	7	52.9	9.8	.2
Initial Question (not scored)	7	5.3	1.1	.2
Reinforcement of Needs (6)	7	13.4	3.1	.2
Membership (6)	7	12.7	3.0	.2
Influence (6)	7	12.3	3.0	.2
Shared Emotional Connection (6)	7	14.4	2.6	.2
Company C: Legal Department	6	47.8	7.8	.2
Initial Question (not scored)	6	4.8	0.4	.1
Reinforcement of Needs (6)	6	11.2	2.6	.2
Membership (6)	6	12.2	1.0	.1
Influence (6)	6	11.8	3.5	.3
Shared Emotional Connection (6)	6	12.7	2.9	.2
Company C: Sales Department	9	44.4	12.1	.3
Initial Question (not scored)	9	5.4	0.7	.1
Reinforcement of Needs (6)	9	11.6	3.1	.3
Membership (6)	9	11.9	2.9	.2

Influence (6)	9	10.1	3.5	.3
Shared Emotional Connection (6)	9	10.9	4.1	.4
Company C: Marketing Department	12	40.0	19.0	.5
Initial Question (not scored)	12	4.8	0.8	.2
Reinforcement of Needs (6)	12	9.7	4.4	.5
Membership (6)	12	9.6	4.9	.5
Influence (6)	12	10.2	4.8	.5
Shared Emotional Connection (6)	12	10.5	5.6	.5
Company C: Finance Department	10	40.1	13.1	.3
Initial Question (not scored)	10	4.5	0.7	.2
Reinforcement of Needs (6)	10	9.9	3.2	.3
Membership (6)	10	10.1	3.1	.3
Influence (6)	10	9.6	3.4	.4
Shared Emotional Connection (6)	10	10.5	4.0	.4

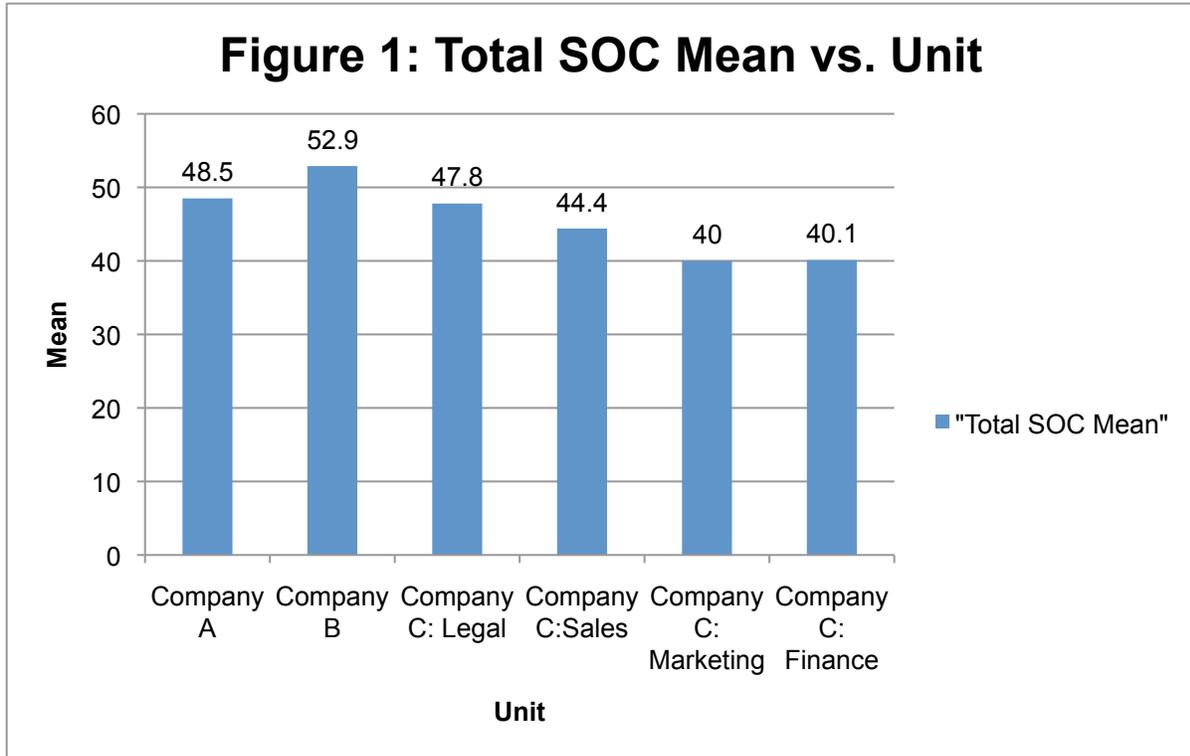
4.2. Participants

The first column in Table 1 is organized by work unit. The initial question (which is not used in scoring total sense of community) and each of the four components of sense of community have their own row.

The second column, *N*, is the number of participants for that department. For companies A and B, 100% of the employees responded. For company C, 100% of the legal department (6 out of 6), 45% of the sales department (9 out of 20), 34% of the marketing department (12 out of 35), and 22% of the finance department (10 out of 45) responded.

4.3. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Coefficient of Variation

The mean, in column three, was computed for each work unit as a whole, as seen in the same row as the work unit's name. Figure 1 is a chart of the mean "total sense of community score" (sum of questions 1 through 24, which could be a maximum score of 72) for each of the six units.



The mean was also computed for the initial question and each of the four components of sense of community. The same was done for the standard deviation and coefficient of variation.

4.4. Quality Rating Form Scores and Additional Facts

Table 2 contains the scores from the “Work Performance Rating” form, filled out by a Human Resources employee from each company.

Table 2
Work Performance Rating Scores

Work Unit	Score	Corresponding Meaning	Additional Comments
Company A	3	Successful	(See below)
Company B	5	Exceptional	(See below)
Company C: Legal	3	Successful	Good communication and cooperation. Mutual Respect.
Company C: Sales	3	Successful	Team celebrates their success. Attempts to involve team members in objective setting.
Company C: Marketing	2.5	In-between satisfactory and successful	(See below)
Company C: Finance	4	In-between successful and exceptional	Strong sense of teamwork. Willingness to help each other. Likes to have fun together.

Additional comments from an employee within the Human Resources department of

Company A:

“The (Company A) team demonstrates a perfect blend of quality experience and diverse knowledge. Their consistent efforts to push the limits of conventional real estate is what keeps them among the top Realtors of their area. With a support staff of top tier professionals, there is not a challenge that can get in the way of keeping this team as the influential force of luxury real estate in (their city).”

Additional facts:

- Average listing price: \$3,917,293
- 69 properties sold in 2013
 - \$25,896,150 sold through listings
 - \$20,696,035 sold through buyers
- 6 Agents

Additional comments from an employee within Company B’s Human Resources department:

“Team is incredibly crossed trained and collaborative. They socialize with each other, they like each other, and there is a strong culture. The team would take a 40% pay cut and not leave. They work nights and

weekends and they view it as a sport, not as a job. Everyone on the team is involved with each other's personal lives. There is a family environment, not top down. They have a company policy: in doubt cc others. They are as transparent as possible. They give a lot of rewards and recognition. The President forces them to take time off and work on projects outside of the scope of (the company). Encourage them to continue more training and education. They do sporting things together and have a good time!"

Additional facts:

- Average listing price: \$3,206,724
- 19 homes sold in 2013
- 31 events held in 2013
- 8 core team members:
 - 1 Account Manager
 - 1 Director of Marketing
 - 1 Marketing Assistant
 - 3 Luxury Real Estate Specialists
 - 1 CCIM, Broker
 - 1 In-house photographer
- Solid team of interns

Additional comments from an employee within Human Resources on the Marketing department of Company C:

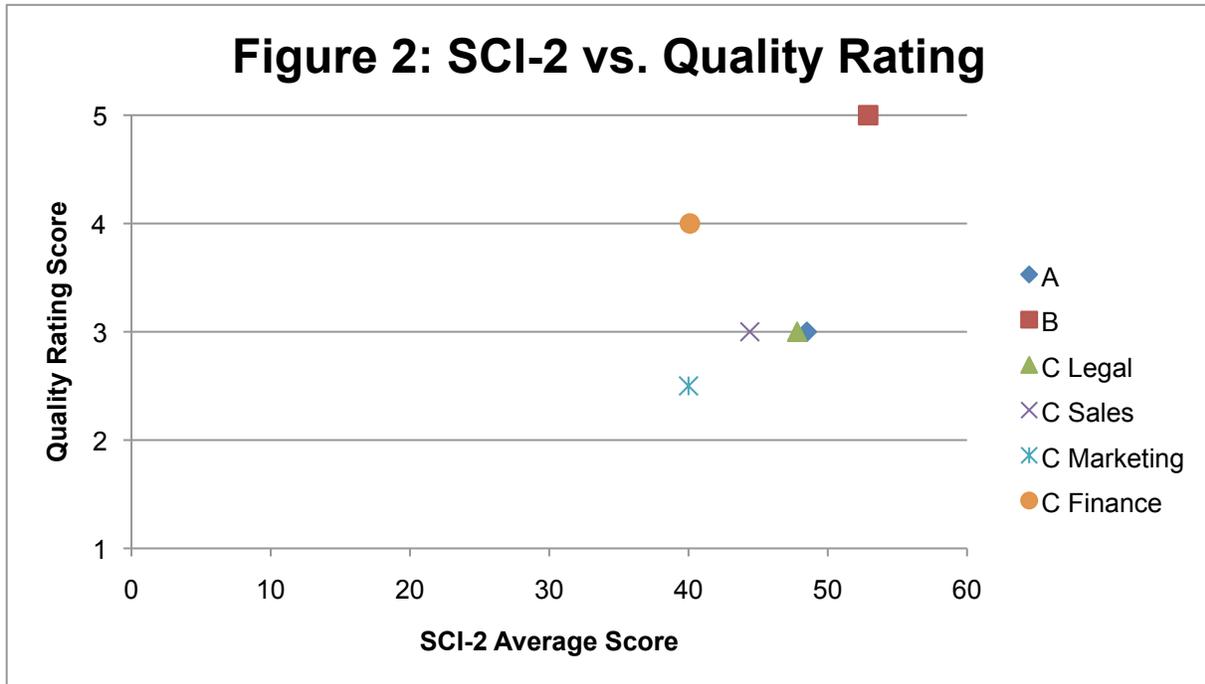
"Lack of teamwork. Most people only focused on their own initiatives or their individual division's performance. Because they are under pressure to move things forward, they often take short cuts or do not involve others that need to know to ensure success."

4.5. SCI-2 Score vs. Quality Rating

Figure 2 is a graph of each unit's average SCI-2 score versus their quality rating. The x-axis with the SCI-2 scores could be a minimum zero and a maximum of 72 (three points for all 24 questions). The highest SCI-2 score average is 52.9 from Company B. The lowest SCI-2 score average is 40 from the marketing department of Company C.

The y-axis contains the quality rating scores, which could be a minimum of one and a maximum of five. Company B also scored highest in quality rating with a score of

five. The marketing department of Company C also scored lowest in quality rating with a score of 2.5.



5. Analysis

5.1. Analysis of Numerical Results

As seen in Figure 2, there is a general positive correlation between sense of community and work performance. Company B, which had the highest community score, also received the highest work performance score. The marketing department of Company C had the lowest community score and also the lowest work performance score. The other four work units in the middle, however, do not follow a definite trend. Company A, for example, had the second highest community score yet received a work performance score of three. A score of three corresponds to “successful,” which is still a satisfactory score to receive. The finance department of Company C received a high

work performance score of four yet had the second lowest community score. Thus, there is a general positive relationship although not all six data points follow this trend.

The companies with the highest sense of community score averages, Company A, B, and legal department of C, also had the lowest standard deviations. Their scores therefore do not deviate far from the mean. On the other hand, the three companies that had the lowest sense of community scores also had the highest standard deviations, indicating that their scores are not as close to the mean of their data set. This is also true of the coefficient of the variation.

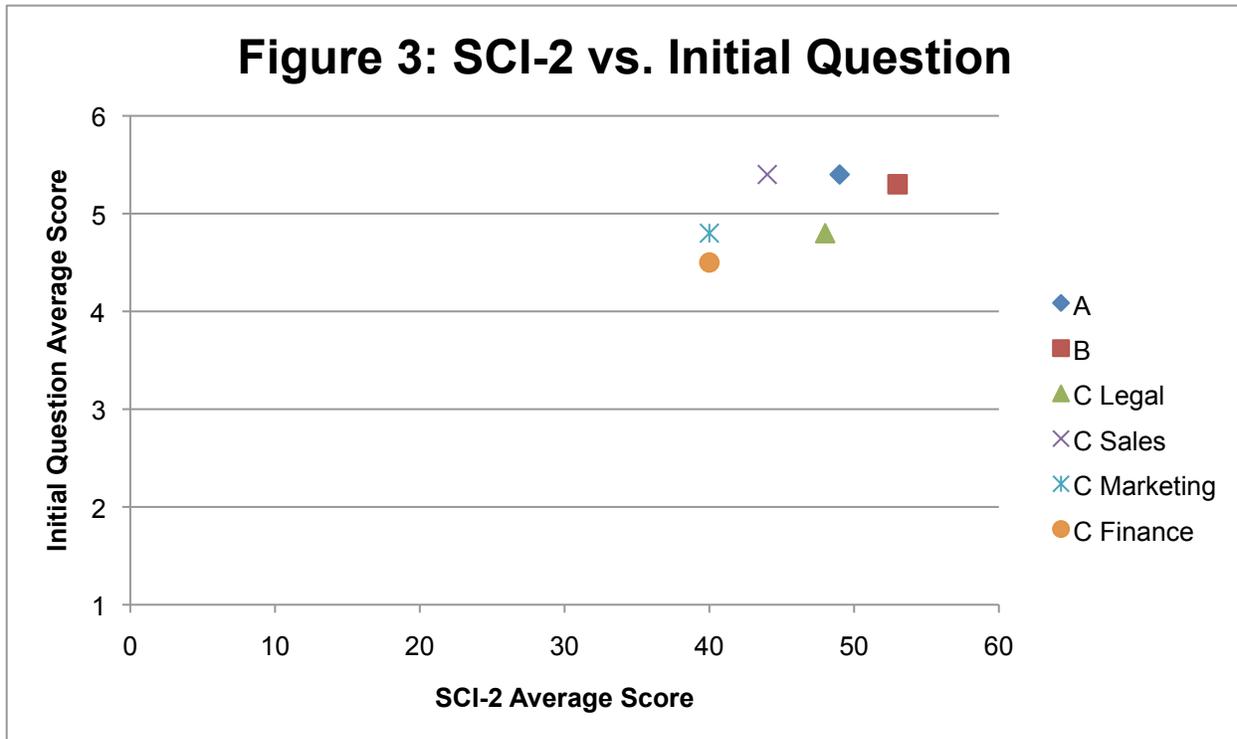
5.2. Initial Question

The first question in the SCI-2 asks, “How important is it to you to feel a sense of community with other community members?” The participants then choose a number one through six:

- 1= Prefer Not to be Part of This Community
- 2= Not Important at All
- 3= Not Very Important
- 4= Somewhat Important
- 5= Important
- 6= Very Important

The initial question is not included in the total sense of community score. It only serves as a validating question that can help interpret results. McMillan and Chavis (1986) found that total sense of community is correlated with this initial question; however, it is not true for every community.

Figure 3 graphs sense of community scores of each work unit against their average initial question score. The x-axis has a minimum of zero and a maximum of 72, and the y-axis has a minimum of one and maximum of six. There is a general positive correlation between the two factors.



This could indicate that those who think it is important to feel sense of community with other co-workers seek and choose a job with this community environment. Those that do not find it important to feel a sense of community can therefore tolerate, or maybe even prefer, a work environment in which co-workers are not as inclusive, trustworthy, or caring about each other's needs.

Of course, this is not true of all work environments. There might be employees who filled out this survey and gave this initial question a score of six yet they are stuck in a work unit with a very low sense of community for many possible reasons: it was the only job they were offered at the time, the pay is good, they are experienced in the nature of that work and therefore must be a part of that work unit, etc. There also might be employees who gave the initial question a score of one yet they were hired into a work environment where sense of community is very strong; they celebrate birthdays,

know about each other's personal lives, the community is small and co-workers all work closely together, etc.

5.3. Work Unit Size

The smaller work units included Company A with ten employees, Company B with seven employees, and the legal department of Company C with six employees. All three of these work units had 100% participation in filling out the SCI-2. Only 45% of the sales department, 34% of the marketing department, and 22% of the finance department participated in filling out the SCI-2.

Ironically, the three companies that had 100% participation had the highest sense of community scores (scores of 49, 53, and 48 out of a possible 72). The next highest participation came from the sales department, which had the next highest community score of 44. The marketing and finance departments, which had the least amount of participation, also had the lowest community scores of 40 and 40.1.

Given this, an implication from this study could be that smaller work units are more likely to respond because they can easily encourage their co-workers to participate, whereas a larger work unit might be more spread out and hard to communicate. Additionally, there is more pressure on the employees of a smaller unit to respond since there are less of them whereas an employee of a large department might assume that there will be enough participation from the others.

If it is, in fact, true that smaller work units have a higher sense of community, perhaps the employees were more excited to fill out the scale, knowing that their department is close and that their department will receive a higher score than others. Company B is very aware that they have a very close work community, similar to a

family environment, and they were very excited to hear about this study and that would be included. They were confident that they would have a very high score. Contrastingly, if an employee of a large, spread-out department in which there is a lower sense of community sees an email with a “sense of community index” to fill out, they might not even bother participating because they know that their department will not receive a high score.

On the other hand, it is certainly possible that there were many low scores from employees of large departments because those employees had a negative taste toward their department and wanted to give it a low sense of community score. For example, one survey from an employee in the marketing department of Company C gave the initial question, “How important is it to you to feel a sense of community with other community members?” a score of six: very important. For the following 24 questions on the sense of community within his department, however, he answered each question with, “not at all,” a total sense of community score of zero. For someone that highly regards feeling a sense of community with others, it seems that he is very unhappy with his current work environment and possibly wanted to make that known in this study.

The Human Resources employees of the smaller companies, A and B, were also able to provide much more information on each company’s work performance. It was easier to get in contact with them since the Human Resources employee of company C, a company with about 2,000 employees, is probably much busier than an employee managing a company of seven to ten people. Human Resources for A and B were able to elaborate much more on the work units’ environments and provide specific facts and figures, most likely because they know all of the employees personally and can attest to

how they all work together. On the other hand, Company C's Human Resources department could not possibly know every individual in the four work units being researched, so she was able to provide a couple broad bullet points about each work unit and unfortunately did not have time to provide any facts or figures on the work units.

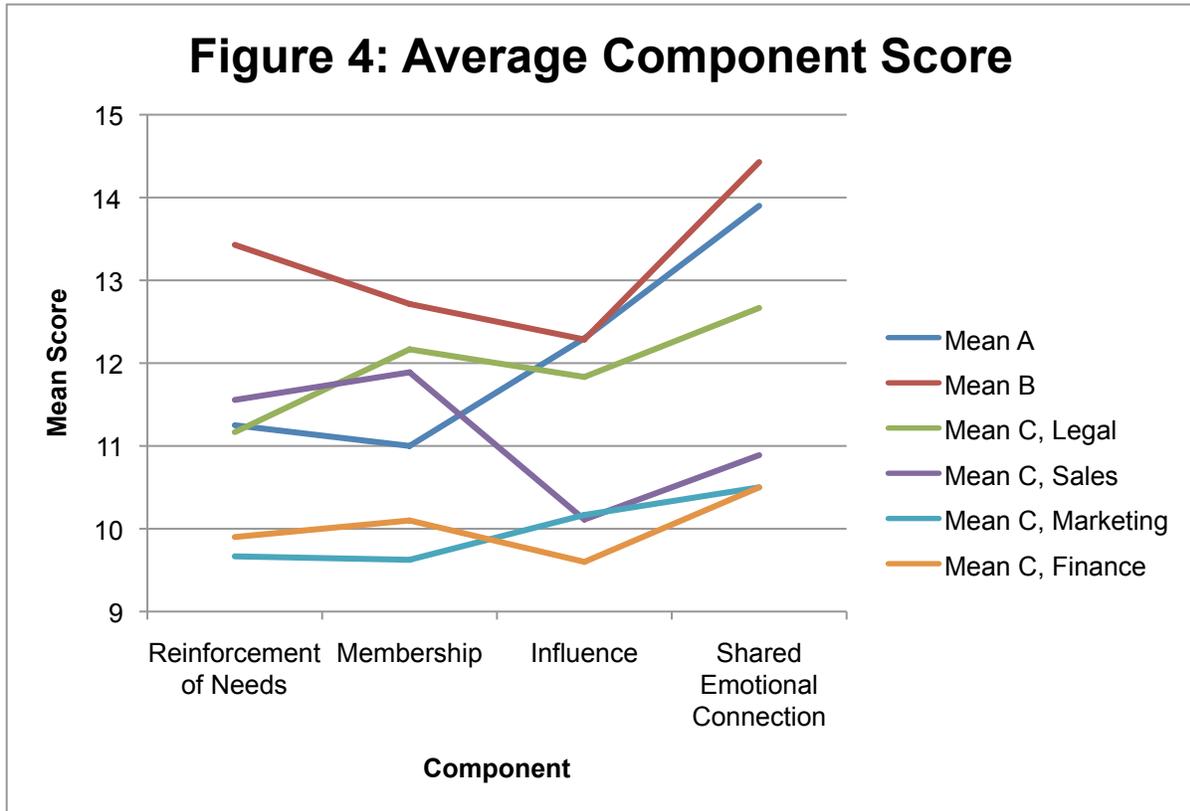
5.4. Factors Within the SCI-2

McMillan and Chavis's (1986) definition of "sense of community" includes four components: reinforcement of needs, membership, influence, and shared emotional connection. They do not, however, specify if one is more important than the other, or if a community can have two of these components without having the other two, for example. McMillan and Chavis (1986) also state that the four elements will vary in importance depending on the type of community. This study sought to see which elements stood out in the workplace community.

As stated in the literature review, Jenny Fremlin (2012) asked participants of her study to define sense of community. As a result, 41% of responses identified with the "membership" category, 35% identified with the "shared emotional connection" category, 11%, identified with the "reinforcement of needs" category, and 4% identified with "influence" (in her study, she also included a fifth factor, "friendship," which 9% of responses identified with). Thus, membership and reinforcement of needs seemed to be the most commonly identified factors for the general sense of community term.

In the present study, when looking at the breakdown of the averages of each component for each work unit, "shared emotional connection" had the highest average score for five of the six work units. "Membership" scored highest for the sixth work unit.

“Influence” was the lowest scoring component for half of the work units. Thus, the results of this study align with Fremlin’s (2012) findings; her most identified factors were the highest scoring factors in this study. Figure 4 contains a breakdown of each work unit’s average scores for each of the four components. As seen in the graph, the “Shared Emotional Connection” score is highest for five of the six units.



The six questions in the SCI-2 scored for “shared emotional connection” are:

1. It is important to me to be a part of this community.
2. I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them.
3. I expect to be a part of this community for a long time.
4. Members of this community have shared important events together, such as holidays, celebrations, or disasters.
5. I feel hopeful about the future of this community.
6. Member of this community care about each other.

Thus, five of the six work units ended up with the highest average score for these six questions. As stated in the literature review, there are several factors that contribute

to a “shared emotional connection”: being able to identify with other group members’ history (McMillan & Chavis, 1986), interacting in shared events (McMillan & Chavis, 1986), becoming closer as group members spend more time together (Allan & Allan, 1971), positive quality interactions (Cook, 1970), investing time and energy into the community (Aronson & Mills, 1959), and being rewarded or recognized in front of the community (Festinger, 1953).

Company B had a very high average score for this section with 14.4 (the highest score possible for each section is 18). Many of the points made by Human Resources when describing Company B’s work environment and performance pertain to the above factors. For example, the company held 31 events in 2013. When they hold events, all eight employees, along with interns, are present. In addition to work events, the President states, “they socialize with each other, “work on nights and weekends,” and “do sporting things together.” Thus, they are interacting in shared events even after work hours and become closer as they spend more time together both in and out of the office. It is evident that the employees invest much time and energy into their company if they are working full days, often into the evening hours, and then working on weekends for events or to socialize with each other.

It could definitely be argued that the “shared emotional connection” factor is the most “important” element for the workplace community, or it is the most significant factor that leads to the higher work performance. If members enjoy being a part of that work unit, expect to be there for a long time, feel hopeful about their unit’s future, and care about their co-workers, they are going to work hard to ensure the future success of their work unit and company. They realize that their work and success also affects their co-

workers' and company's success, and if they care about them, they will work hard to succeed. They will not mind working after hours or on weekends if that means helping their company. If a worker feels it is important for them to be apart of their work community, they will work hard to stay in it. They will invest their time and energy to prove that they deserve to be in their position and that they plan on staying in that company. Additionally, positive reinforcement is an extremely powerful tool in motivating workers, and if managers or supervisors often reward or recognize their employees, the employees will be inspired to continue to produce positive results.

As stated, the marketing department of Company C had the lowest overall sense of community score and the lowest "shared emotional connection" score. The human resources employee's comment that the marketing department has a "lack of teamwork" and that "they are under pressure to move things forward, often taking short cuts or do not involve others" demonstrates a lack of shared emotional connection. Because the employees of this department generally do not have a strong sense of teamwork and therefore are focused on their own initiatives, it is evident as to why their shared emotional connection score is low; they do not care about the other members of that work unit and probably do not spend as much time together as other departments.

6. Discussion

6.1. Results Connected to the Companies in the Study

The information from this study certainly reveals information on the six work units. The top three sense of community scores had work performance scores of five, three, and three. A score of three, corresponding to "successful," is not an exceptional

score. In fact, in the scope of the six work units, a score of three is on the lower end of a work performance rating since the scores were 2+, 3, 3, 3, 4, and 5. Thus, there is not a very strong and definite correlation between sense of community and work performance for these companies, nevertheless there is a positive correlation as seen by Figure 2.

This study did support the hypothesis, especially in looking at the highest and lowest sense of community scores. Company B with the highest community score also had the best work performance, an “exceptional” score of five. Marketing with the lowest community score also had the lowest work performance, a score of 2+, in-between unsatisfactory and successful. The comments from the human resources department of both Company B and marketing further supported these outcomes because Company B was praised for their family environment and strong work ethic while marketing was criticized for their lack of teamwork.

6.1.1. Consistencies

There were a couple results that were consistent with the study’s expectations. Company B’s results were not surprising. Their reputation as a company is extremely successful and noteworthy, and having worked in their office, it is not surprising that they had a high community and work performance score. The results aligned with the researcher and company’s expectations that they would score well in this study.

The legal and sales department results were also consistent with expectations. Since legal is such a small department with only six employees, one can expect that they all know each other, work together often, and have a strong work ethic since there are less people to cover the department’s work. The researcher and manager expected their high sense of community score and “successful” work performance rating.

Similarly, the sales department has a much different vibe than the other departments in the company since they must constantly reward and recognize their employees to motivate them to make more sales. Additionally, it is not a very large department with 20 employees, and since they work in teams, it is not surprising that their department's sense of community score was on the higher side and that their work performance was "successful."

6.1.2. Discrepancies

It was surprising that Company A received a work performance score of three, "successful." Being rated as successful is obviously not a bad thing. However, the comments made by the human resources employee, that "their consistent efforts to push the limits of conventional real estate is what keeps them among the top Realtors of their area" along with the impressive facts (69 properties sold in 2013 between six agents) made it surprising that they did not receive a higher work performance score. Their reputation as one of the top luxury real estate companies in the area led the researcher to believe that they would at least get a score of four. It is not surprising that they scored second highest in sense of community, however. With only ten employees and a work culture similar to Company B (since A and B are part of the same mother company), the researcher and company expected their sense of community to be strong. If they had received a higher work performance score, the sense of community/work performance correlation would have been much stronger for this study.

Another discrepancy was the sense of community score of the finance department. They received a high work performance score; in fact, their score of four was the second highest work performance score given in this study. The human

resources employee supported her decision in assigning a score of four by commenting that the finance department has a “strong sense of teamwork,” “willingness to help each other,” and “likes to have fun together.” In analyzing their low sense of community score, the human resources employee’s comments do not align. This unit had the lowest “shared emotional connection score,” which, as discussed before, seems to have a large tie to work unit success. Additionally, they had the lowest “reinforcement of needs” score, which could imply that the association between this work unit and the individuals is not always rewarding and that some of the individuals’ needs are not met through working in this department.

It is important to note that this department is the biggest of all the departments included in this study with 45 employees. Thus, one can expect that their sense of community would be lower since it would be harder to know everyone on the same personal level as a department with less than ten employees. Additionally, the finance department had the lowest average score for the initial question, which implies that the employees, on average, find it less important to feel a sense of community in their community and therefore do not mind working in a department where the strong community-feel might be lacking. However, if the finance department had received a higher sense of community score, the community/work performance correlation in this study would have been stronger.

See Figure 5 for a hypothetical graph of what the correlation would have looked like based on the researcher’s expectations and reasoning. One of the adjusted scores is Company A’s work performance score; the researcher believes they should have received a score of 4 based on the President’s comments, their reputation as a luxury

real estate company, and the facts presented. The second adjusted score is Company C’s finance department’s mean sense of community score. Results showed their mean score to be 40.1 but based on the human resources comments that they have a “strong sense of teamwork,” “willingness to help each other,” and “like to have fun together,” the researcher would adjust their score to 45.

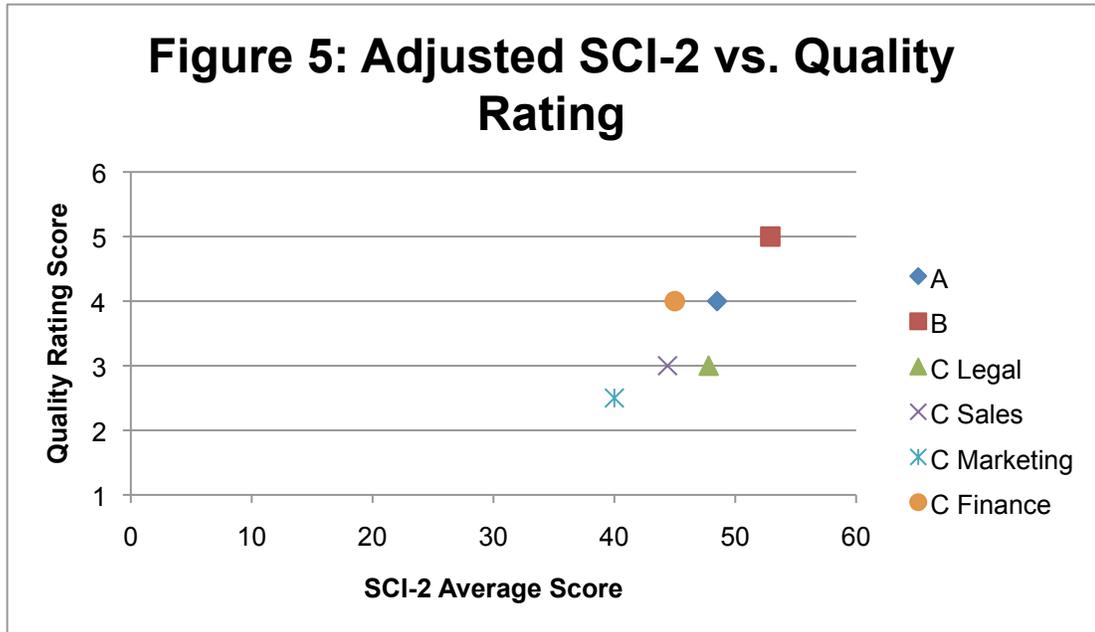
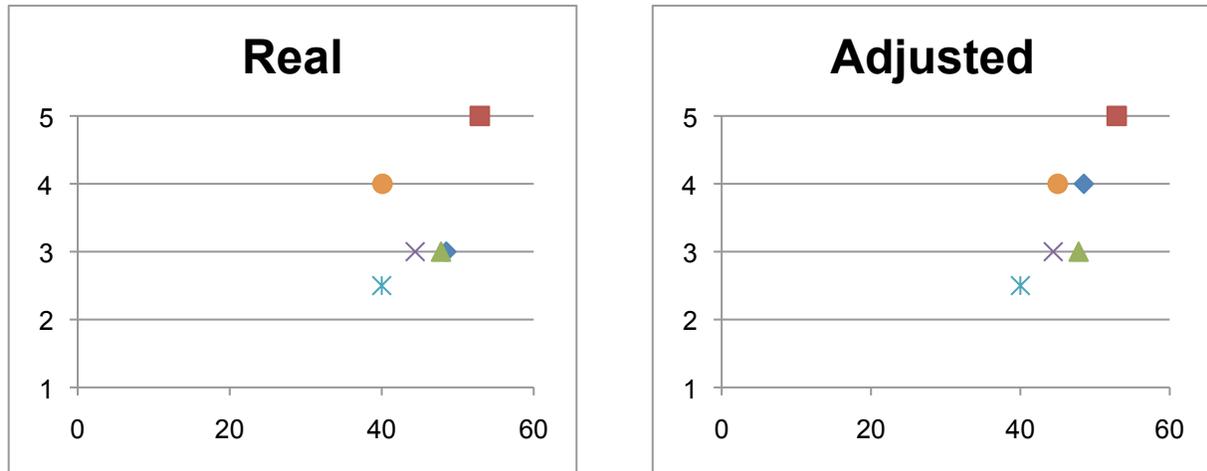


Figure 6 shows a comparison between the real results and the adjusted results. As shown, the two adjustments definitely lead to a more positive correlation between sense of community and work performance.

Figure 6: Real vs. Adjusted SCI-2 and Quality Rating Scores



6.2. Results Connected to Companies in General

The results from this study can be applied to an organization's culture and sense of community more broadly. A company with a higher sense community will, in general, have higher production. This, of course, depends on the industry. Since Companies A and B are in the real estate industry, they naturally have more events outside of work, which, in turn, brings their small team of employees closer together. The nature of their work also requires collaboration and working closely to ensure that they are continue to market and sell homes. The marketing or finance department of a large web services provider company, on the other hand, does not necessarily need events and parties after work hours to help their productivity and sales because their company success is primarily achieved during work hours when they are working quietly in their cubicle or on the phone with clients.

Thus, it is difficult to say that a high sense of community will always benefit the company. For smaller companies and companies in industries that require more socialization, team collaboration, and working after hours or on weekends, a high sense of community is important. It will lead to closer teams, more trust in the company, and a deeper care for the company to succeed. For extremely large companies, a high sense of community will be difficult to achieve except in the smaller work units. Additionally, the company may not desire a high sense of community because perhaps that is not the company's goal. The company might just want their employees to work 9am to 5pm and simply meet certain expectations every day without necessarily exceeding their expectations. These companies would be happy with a work performance score of a three because it implies that the work is getting done. Other companies, such as Company B, do not want to be scored a three; they are driven to be exceptional in their field and would want nothing less than a five.

Although some companies might not care about sense of community, this study does show that there is a link between sense of community and work performance, so that is something for managers of these companies to consider. Perhaps more companies would see the value in having a community-feel if they knew that it could lead to better work performance. So while it is difficult to make a generalization since each industry differs, this study can at least recommend that companies strive to strengthen the sense of community within the context of their work environment because there is a good chance it will lead to better work performance.

6.3. Advice to Supervisors and Hiring Managers

When a hiring manager for a company is trying to convince a potential employee why their company is desirable to work for, he or she must assign priorities as to what is really important. This research can serve as aid to hiring managers or supervisors who are either trying to win over a potential employee or increase their current employee's loyalty to the company.

Since there is a positive correlation between sense of community and work performance, there are certain key factors from the research that can serve as advice to supervisors on how to increase sense of community in their work environment:

- Make sure employees have good communication. When there is a problem, they should feel comfortable talking to their co-workers about it. If employees are always going to you (as a supervisor) to solve problems, point them in the direction of other employees who could help them.
- Encourage teamwork and collaboration. For example, if you are in the sales industry, make teams within your department so that employees will start caring about other team members' success, not just their own. Create fun competitions amongst teams.
- Reward employees for their efforts and achievements. Recognize them in front of other members of the company.
- Ensure employees are getting their needs met by their work unit/ company by making sure everyone is on the same page in terms of needs, priorities, and goals.

- Create opportunities for employees to get to know their co-workers so that they can recognize others and be recognized by others. This could be as simple introducing new employees when they join your department or conducting icebreakers, office trivia, get-to-know you activities, etc.

In addition to the above points, the following are also key factors taken from this study that hiring managers should assign priority to when recruiting candidates:

- The employees respect each other and feel comfortable communicating with each other.
- The employees enjoy spending time together at work and at events outside of work.
- The employees care about the success of the company, not just their own success.
- The employees are hopeful about the future of this company.
- The employees highly regard their work and events outside of work.
- Employees devote much time and effort to the company because it is important to them to be part of this community.

6.4. Advice to Job Seekers

In addition to hiring manager and supervisors, this research can benefit job seekers. For those that are applying and interviewing with several companies, it might be difficult for them to decide which company can ultimately meet their needs and provide a desirable work environment. In addition, job seekers are going to be looking at the success, or performance, of the companies. Since sense of community is linked to

work performance, which affects success, they might want to consider choosing a company with the qualities found in high sense of community environments.

This depends on the individual and can be tied back into the initial question of the SCI-2: “How important to you is it to feel a sense of community with other community members?” If their answer were “not important at all” or “not very important,” they would not be as interested in the following advice. However, if they are interested in a company that performs well, this could still be valuable information for them. If their answer is “somewhat important,” “important,” or “very important,” they should seek companies with the following qualities:

- Employees not only recognize each other but also trust each other.
- Employees value teamwork and collaboration rather than only focusing on their own initiatives.
- Employees enjoy spending time together, whether it is during or after work hours.
- Employees are proud to work for their company and care about the success of the company.
- Employees are rewarded and recognized for their work, progress, or success.

6.5. Personal Anecdote

I have interned for both companies involved in the study. In summer 2012, I was hired as an intern for Company C and was placed on the sales floor, floor two. As it turns out, this company also hired a friend from high school, and she was placed on the marketing floor, floor four. The difference between the two floors was incredible. The

sales floor was loud; there was music constantly playing to motivate workers to make sales, the cubicles were organized by teams, there were competitions amongst the teams to see who could sell the most leads, employees blew a loud train whistle whenever a sale was made over the phone and everyone cheered, there were always fun contests going on (such as a “decorate your cubicle” contest), and employees were friendly. Although my position was primarily a research position and did not involve much social interaction, I knew everyone in my department by the end of the twelve-week internship, and they knew me. My manager and executive often took me to lunch along with other sales employees, and the whole department even threw me a going away party on the last day of my internship. I felt very welcome there from the start and appreciated when I left.

Floor four, on the other hand, was a different story. My friend did not know a single employee except her manager; she never even exchanged words with the employee on the other side of her cubicle. The floor was so quiet that one could hear a pin drop. Just as stated by the Human Resources employee, there was a serious lack of teamwork. There were no decorations, much unlike the sales floor, and there certainly was not any music. The department did not start inviting my friend to their department meetings until about six weeks into the internship, whereas I had been attending the sales meetings from the start. At the end of the twelve-week internship, my friend left that department knowing hardly anyone, and needless to say, she had a negative experience. Her negative experience had nothing to do with her; she is an outgoing and friendly individual. It was the department that was seriously lacking in sense of

community, and after this study, I now realize why that made such a difference between her and my experience with that company.

In spring 2013, Company B hired me as an intern. Unlike my previous internship where I had a specific role and project, this internship position involved me working with all of the seven employees, which I enjoyed. With the smaller number of employees, the office setting was much different because everyone is much closer together. Additionally, everyone has his or her own office versus a cubicle (a positive change in my opinion). I could tell immediately that everyone knew each other very well; not just in terms of work but they knew about each other's personal lives. Everyone was serious about their work during the day, but they also took time to walk in each other's offices and talk about other things- their family life, plans for the weekend, upcoming trips, etc.

Although I left at a certain time of the day when I interned, the employees were always there after hours (6pm, 8pm, sometimes later), yet they did not seem to mind. In fact, it was evident that they enjoyed being in the office and spending time with each other. As stated in section 5, Company B held 31 events in 2013, and I was present at three of these. Every employee attended, and it never came across as an extra burden or annoyance that they had to work an event on a weekend or on a weeknight evening. They always showed up smiling, willing to help each other in any way, and stayed as long as necessary to ensure the event ended smoothly.

When interning for Company B, I was truly astonished at the extent in which they cared about their company and each other. It is, no doubt, a unique and rare work environment to find, but I believe more companies should strive to be like Company B. I realize that their industry, real estate, naturally requires more events. However, their

respect toward one another is extremely noteworthy and one would be lucky to be able to join their team. I was sad when my internship ended because I did not want to say goodbye to this group of people that made me feel like one of their team members. They had given me the opportunity to work closely with all of them and even trusted me to create the internship program and serve as their “Director of the Internship Program” within my first two weeks of interning with them. Although I knew from my experience how desirable of a work environment this company had, this study further supports how well their team functions as a result of a strong sense of community. I know that if I were to end up working for them full-time, I would enjoy my work as much as they do, and I would be happy.

As a college senior, I am now applying for several jobs: big companies, small companies, some in Florida, some in other states, and all in completely different industries with completely different work environments. I can confidently say that I have learned a great amount from this study and will most definitely be taking into consideration a workplace’s sense of community when choosing my career. Through my past internships, I have seen first-hand how much sense of community makes a difference on work performance and overall happiness at work, and it is something all job seekers should consider if they their workplace to be more enjoyable. I am excited to try my own advice as I continue the application process, and I hope to end up in a company that values an environment in which employees trust each other, enjoy spending time with each other, and truly care about their company.

6.6. This Study's Intervention

While there have been many studies done on sense of community tying the results to various factors, as stated in the literature review, there has not been a study tying sense of community to work performance. The SCI-2 was developed to be applied to all types of communities, including the workplace, so this research utilized the SCI-2 to see if there was a connection to work performance. When companies assess work performance, they might set up random methods of quality control (example: reviewing phone calls), survey clients about their customer service experience, evaluate performance of employees (example: how fast he or she makes a sale), initiate employee appraisals, or hire a professional assessor who can appraise the everyday functionality of the business. While these all might be effective forms of measuring work performance, taking steps to increase sense of community might be the missing piece in the company. Not only can this help work performance, but also it can create a better overall work environment.

Although this study did not directly measure happiness or directly tie happiness to work performance, it can be inferred that higher sense of community in the workplace leads to happier employees. If employees know each other and can trust each other, they are more likely to consider their co-workers as friends, too. Being surrounded by friends at work, or people one gets along with, could certainly make going to work a more positive experience. This happiness connection is important to those who want to be able to find a job that they enjoy.

Companies surely realize that they need to make their employees happy or else they might leave and look elsewhere. That is why they often administer formal quarterly

or yearly satisfaction surveys or they will spend thousands of dollars on consultants that analyze and interpret employee satisfaction. Something most have not been doing and should is considering the four components of sense of community: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection. Do workers feel a sense of belonging? Do workers trust each other? Do workers share events together? Do they feel appreciated and recognized for their efforts and achievements? Do they meet their own needs while meeting the needs of others by working here? Are workers able to find a balance between influencing their work community and being influenced by their community? There are many factors to take into consideration.

Companies must look back to their mission statement and goals as an organization and then evaluate how they can meet those performance goals and stay true to their mission while also providing a work environment in which employees feel connected to the company and one another. Many companies track key performance indicators (such as profits or customer feedback) but fail when it comes to tracking employees' morale. It is also quite easy for employees to lose engagement in their work. A successful way to measure work performance while maintaining high company morale is focusing on sense of community because it should be able to bring a balance between both factors.

6.7. Results Connected to Different Types of Communities

Communities can come in many contexts besides the workplace: cultures across the world, urban, suburban, rural, tribal, workplaces, schools, universities, recreational clubs, online communities, etc (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). The same four components

of a community - membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection - are also applied to these other types of communities. Thus, results of this SCI-2 study in relation to the workplace and work performance could be applied to a larger world concept.

Since this study has positive implications for workplaces with a higher sense of community, it could be true that schools, universities, towns, recreational clubs, etc. with higher sense of community also see more positive outcomes than those with lower senses of community. The context of “positive outcomes” changes depending on the type of community. For this study, “work performance” was the factor affected by sense of community. For a school or university, work performance could also be positively affected, as well as factors such as retention rate or average GPA. A town or city could possibly have lower crime rates or longer-lasting community members. Recreational clubs might see increasing memberships, longer retention rates, or better performance in their club’s area. There are numerous possibilities, but the bottom line is that sense of community, in most cases, will help the community.

6.8. Negatives of Community

Community, with all of its positive correlations, can also create barriers between its members and outsiders. People who report having a high sense of community do not necessarily describe their community in a positive manner. Additionally, individuals might feel a lack of freedom. Prejudices might form against certain members, others might face power struggles, and hierarchies might be created.

In terms of the workplace, a department or company might have a “strong sense of community” because they celebrate holidays and birthdays, know each other on a

personal level, socialize both during work and after hours, spend time together at events after work, etc. This could be seen as a negative thing to some workers because while it might create a more social and friendly setting, it also could create distractions and hurt, rather than help, productivity and work performance. There are certainly employees that would much rather sit alone and quietly get their work done than have to get up from their desk to sing a co-worker "Happy Birthday" with all the others. Too much of a community or family-feel might serve as an added form of tension in the workplace to some.

All work environments are different, and depending on the industry and company, workers must decide their priorities and what type of community they desire. A financial analyst, for example, might absolutely despise working for Company B because they might view all of their extra events and family-environment as a distraction or as a form of tension. Contrastingly, an employee from Company B would probably be very bored and unhappy working on the marketing floor of Company C. Thus, sense of community has many positive correlations, but they might actually be seen as negatives depending on the person.

7. Limitations of This Study

7.1. Sample Size

The sample size, six work units, is small. Luckily there was enough participation from each of the six work units to have credible results and to show a trend, but the study definitely needs to be done on a larger scale if more reliable results are desired. Since it was difficult enough receiving timely responses from these three companies, all

of which the researcher had a connection with as well, the researcher did not reach out to additional companies. This study serves as a starting point to introduce that idea that sense of community can impact work performance. If one wishes to continue researching this topic, it is definitely recommended to include more than six work units. One hundred work units, for example, would be a better and more credible sample size. This would also ensure that enough industries are taken into consideration so that results can be compared both within and across industries.

7.2. Quality Rating Form

The “Work Performance Rating” form, which asks the Human Resources department to rate the work performance of a given work unit one through five, is not the best indicator of work performance. The researcher developed this specific form so that the Human Resources department only had one quick, simple question to fill out and return. If the form had been too complicated or time-consuming, the response time would have been much longer or perhaps nonexistent since human resources departments have confidentiality agreements. This form was also created so that the results from the six units were comparable rather than each human resources department giving their own score on their own scale. If they were simply asked to give some evaluation of work performance, it would be hard to compare the work performance of Company A and B versus Company C, for example. Thus, the “Work Performance Rating” form was created and human resources were also encouraged to provide additional facts or descriptions beyond the form if they wished.

A limitation of the form is that it is not a thorough indicator of work performance. Additionally, each work unit is different, so the context of “work performance” depends

on the department and industry. The work performance of an entire, small real estate company is a completely different context than the work performance of a 45-person finance department.

Additionally, since a different human resources employee filled out the form for each of the three companies, each employee could understand the question differently. There is also the possibility of reporting bias, or the employee wanting to make their company look better by giving it a high score. The human resources employee for Company C could have also been bias toward certain work units, which could have resulted in misleading scores for the four work units.

If this study were to be continued in the future, getting more information on work performance would be crucial. It would require having a comparable form across all companies and work units, but the form should be more detailed (but not too complicated or long) so that more insight can be given into the work unit's performance.

7.3. Participation within the Work Units

Each work unit had a different number of people, N , filling out the SCI-2. Company A and B had 100% participation with their ten and seven employees whereas the units in Company C all had a different number of people participating. In future studies, perhaps the same number of people in each work unit should fill out the SCI-2 for consistency.

7.4. Representation of Businesses in General

The results for these six units are not representative of all business or work units because of their respective industries, departments, and company culture. It can be

assumed that there might be similar results if the study was done on more companies, but the conclusions drawn for this study can only be definite for the six units involved.

7.5. Obtaining SCI-2 Results and the Human Resources Form

The SCI-2 was administered via email, so when scales were emailed back to the researcher, the researcher could see individual names because of their email address. This was a fault of the study since results were supposed to be anonymous. Nothing was done with their name information, however.

The time it took to receive SCI-2 results was not long, however it was a very long process to get the quality rating forms and additional descriptions or facts back from Human Resources. It took many reminder emails and phone calls, over the course of about two months, to finally get back all of the information on work performance.

7.6. Individuals versus Work Units

This study had six data points representing the six units. There was a relationship seen between sense of community and work performance, however other researchers might look to see if there is this relationship with individuals rather than a work unit as a whole. It would have been interesting to have obtained a “work performance score” on each of the 54 participants and then graph the individuals’ score against their SCI-2 results, however getting that information would have been too difficult given the time frame. It was timely enough getting one score on a work unit, so getting scores on each individual would have been even timelier and perhaps too much information to ask of Human Resources.

7.7. SCI-2 Reliability

The SCI-2 has a coefficient alpha of .94, and the subscales have coefficient alpha scores of .79 to .86 (Chavis, Lee, & Acosta, 2008). This is quite reliable but not 100% reliable. While it is a good indicator of sense of community, it cannot indicate sense of community perfectly. For example, some individuals might have had a high SCI-2 score yet do not even enjoy working in their department or company.

7.8. Workplace Culture

There is a difficulty in the work place thinking about these big picture, workplace culture questions and participating in research that would help to answer some of these issues. If there were work that more clearly or compellingly illustrated the connection between sense of community and work performance, then maybe work toward community would be seen as consistent toward performance. However, since that is not always the case (example: finance department), then maybe the community booster activities, such as birthday parties, get in the way of work. It could be distracting rather than a performance aid. Thus, a limitation of the study is that it is difficult for companies to think about the big picture culture questions however it is equally difficult to find a clear and compelling solution to the workplace culture issues.

8. Summary of Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to administer the SCI-2 to employees of six different work units to determine if a higher sense of community yielded a higher work performance. A “Work Performance Rating” form was developed for human resources

to rate the work unit's performance one through five. The results from these two instruments were compared to determine if there was a relationship.

Analysis indicated that there was a relationship between the two factors because a higher sense of community, in general, yielded a higher work performance score. This was not true of all six units, however it was true for the highest and lowest scoring work units (highest SCI-2 score had highest work performance score and lowest SCI-2 score had lowest work performance score). This led to one of the study's limitations that the sample size was not big enough and for more valid results, a study should be done on a larger scale with perhaps one hundred units rather than six.

A few key trends were found from results. First, the smaller the unit size, the better the participation rate and the higher the SCI-2 scores. Second, "shared emotional connection" was the highest scoring component for five of the six units. The companies with the highest total sense of community scores also had the highest "shared emotional connection" scores. Additionally, much of the comments made about the work ethic and work environment of the higher SCI-2 scoring work units referred to the factors that compile the "shared emotional connection" component. Thus, this component could possibly be the most indicative of the overall sense of community of a work unit. Lastly, there was a positive correlation between the initial question score (one through six) and overall sense of community.

The results led to several important pieces of advice for hiring managers, supervisors, and job seekers. Since there seemed to be a significant tie between shared emotional connection and sense of community, and then sense of community and work performance, there are certain key objectives that hiring managers and supervisors

should keep in mind when running their company. Some of these are: encourage communication and teamwork amongst employees, reward and recognize employees for their efforts and accomplishments, and create opportunities for employees to get to know each other.

There were both consistencies and discrepancies found with the results. The discrepancies show that sense of community does not always lead to better work performance. In fact, there are certain types of companies or employees in which performance might be hindered, not helped, by a community feel. Thus, community is not always a positive and can be a distraction in the workplace.

A significant limitation was the "Work Performance Rating" form because one number does not imply much about a work unit's work performance. The employees in human resources might also understand the context of this question differently, thus affecting the way they score the work unit. For future research, the quality rating form should be more specific and have more than one question, however it should still be same form for each unit so that it is comparable across work units.

In conclusion, sense of community might be an underestimated significant contributor to better work performance and overall employee morale and happiness. Supervisors and hiring managers might take extra steps to increase their company's sense of community if they knew the benefits, including better work performance, which this community-feel could bring. This research is to introduce the idea that there is a relationship between sense of community and work performance, and it is definitely suggested that this idea be researched on a larger scale so more reliable results can be obtained and this idea can be further spread to help the workplace.

9. Honor Code

“On my honor, I have not given, nor received, nor witness any unauthorized assistance on this work.” Ansley Vanover 4/15/14

APPENDIX 1

SCI-2

Sense of Community Index

SENSE OF COMMUNITY INDEX II

The following questions about community refer to: [insert community name].

How important is it to you to feel a sense of community with other community members?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Prefer Not to be Part of This Community	Not Important at All	Not Very Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important

How well do each of the following statements represent how you *feel* about this community?

		Not at All	Somewhat	Mostly	Completely
1.	I get important needs of mine met because I am part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	Community members and I value the same things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	This community has been successful in getting the needs of its members met.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	Being a member of this community makes me feel good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	When I have a problem, I can talk about it with members of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	People in this community have similar needs, priorities, and goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	I can trust people in this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Sense of Community Index

		Not at All	Somewhat	Mostly	Completely
8.	I can recognize most of the members of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	Most community members know me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10.	This community has symbols and expressions of membership such as clothes, signs, art, architecture, logos, landmarks, and flags that people can recognize.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11.	I put a lot of time and effort into being part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12.	Being a member of this community is a part of my identity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13.	Fitting into this community is important to me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14.	This community can influence other communities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15.	I care about what other community members think of me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16.	I have influence over what this community is like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17.	If there is a problem in this community, members can get it solved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18.	This community has good leaders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19.	It is very important to me to be a part of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20.	I am with other community members a lot and enjoy being with them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21.	I expect to be a part of this community for a long time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22.	Members of this community have shared important events together, such as holidays, celebrations, or disasters.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23.	I feel hopeful about the future of this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24.	Members of this community care about each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

APPENDIX 2

Work Performance Rating Form

Work Performance Rating

Company: _____

Work unit: _____

On a scale of 1 – 5 with 5 being the most positive, how would you rate the overall work performance of this unit (circle one)?

1	2	3	4	5
Unsatisfactory	>	Successful	>	Exceptional

APPENDIX 3

Informed Consents

**(First Informed Consent: for SCI-2 Participants
Second Informed Consent: for HR Department)**

Sense of Community: The Impact of Sense of Community on Business Unit Performance in Different Countries

Informed Consent Form

Purpose of the Study:

This is study conducted by Ansley Vanover, an undergraduate Honors Degree Program student at Rollins College majoring in International Business. Research is being conducted for her Senior Honors Thesis, which must be completed to graduate with honors in May 2014. The Thesis Committee is composed of Dr. Danny Arnold, Chair of the Department of Business and Social Entrepreneurship at Rollins College, Tonia Warnecke, Associate Professor of Business and Social Entrepreneurship at Rollins College, Dr. Emmanuel Kodzi, Associate Professor of International Business at Rollins College, and Emily Russell, Associate Professor of English at Rollins College.

The purpose of the study is to determine the relationship between the sense of community within a work unit and the overall performance quality of the unit. The study will compare work units in different companies.

What will be done:

You and your co-workers in your work unit will complete this 24-item "Sense of Community Index" (SCI), which is a strong predictor of behaviors and is a valid measurement instrument. The Sense of Community Index will be administered to several units within your company, along with units in a few other companies being researched.

The Human Resources department of each company will be providing the researchers with a "quality rating" of each unit being researched. This "quality rating," a number 1-5, will indicate the unit's work performance.

With the results from the "quality rating" and SCI from each unit, the researchers can assess whether sense of community has an impact on work performance.

Benefits of the Study:

Much has been written and researched on the sense of community from the psychological and sociological perspective, but very little research has been done from a business perspective. You will be contributing to the knowledge on the sense of community within a small business work unit. By comparing the results from the surveys, along with the "quality rating" of the units, the researchers can assess whether sense of community affects work performance.

Your company and work unit will be given the results of the study upon completion in April 2014. This information might be very valuable for your company if the results show that there is, in fact, a relationship between sense of community and performance.

Risks or Discomforts:

No risks or discomforts are anticipated from taking part in this study. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, you can skip the question or withdraw from the study altogether. If you decide to quit any time before you have finished the questionnaire, your answers will NOT be recorded.

Confidentiality

Your responses will be kept completely confidential. You will not need to put your name on the survey, but the survey will ask that you list your department and company. The names of the companies will NOT appear in the thesis; it will be simply be a general description of the company. Only the researchers will know which responses belong to each company and work unit.

Decision to quit at any time:

Your participation is voluntary; you are free to withdraw your participation from this study at any time. If you do not want to continue, you can simply ignore the survey.

How the findings will be used:

The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only. The results from the study will be presented in educational settings at Rollins College. The results might be published in a professional journal in the field of business.

Contact Information:

If you have concerns or questions about this study, please contact Ansley Vanover at avanover@rollins.edu or the Rollins College Department of Business and Social Entrepreneurship chairperson, Dr. Danny Arnold at darnold@rollins.edu.

By beginning the survey, you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this research, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty.

Sense of Community: The Impact of Sense of Community on Business Unit Performance in Different Countries

Informed Consent Form: HR Department

Purpose of the Study:

This is study conducted by Ansley Vanover, an undergraduate Honors Degree Program student at Rollins College majoring in International Business. Research is being conducted for her Senior Honors Thesis, which must be completed to graduate with honors in May 2014. The Thesis Committee is composed of Dr. Danny Arnold, Chair of the Department of Business and Social Entrepreneurship at Rollins College, Tonia Warnecke, Associate Professor of Business and Social Entrepreneurship at Rollins College, Dr. Emmanuel Kodzi, Associate Professor of International Business at Rollins College, and Emily Russell, Associate Professor of English at Rollins College.

The purpose of the study is to determine the relationship between the sense of community within a work unit and the overall performance quality of the unit. The study will compare work units in different companies with locations both in the United States and overseas.

What will be done:

The members of a work unit(s) in this company will complete this 24-item "Sense of Community Index" (SCI), which is a strong predictor of behaviors and is a valid measurement instrument. The Sense of Community Index will be administered to several units within your company, along with units in a few other companies being researched.

The Human Resources department of each company will be providing the researchers with a "quality rating" of each unit being researched. They will fill out the "Work Performance Rating" form, created and administered by Ansley Vanover, to indicate which number rating they would give each unit being researched.

With the results from the "quality ratings" scale and SCI from each unit, the researchers can assess whether sense of community has an impact on work performance.

Benefits of the Study:

Much has been written and researched on the sense of community from the psychological and sociological perspective, but very little research has been done from a business perspective. You will be contributing to the knowledge on the sense of community within a small business work unit. By comparing the results from the surveys, along with the work performance rating of the units, the researchers can assess whether sense of community affects work performance.

Your company and work unit will be given the results of the study upon completion in April 2014. This information might be very valuable for your company if the results show that there is, in fact, a relationship between sense of community and performance.

Risks or Discomforts:

No risks or discomforts are anticipated from taking part in this study. If you feel uncomfortable filling out the “Work Performance Rating” form, you do not need to complete it.

Confidentiality

Your response will be kept completely confidential. You will not need to put your name on the survey, but the survey will ask that you list your company and the work unit being rated. The names of the companies will NOT appear in the thesis; it will be simply be a general description of the company. Only the researchers will know which responses belong to each company and work unit.

Decision to quit at any time:

Your participation is voluntary; you are free to withdraw your participation from this study at any time.

How the findings will be used:

The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only. The results from the study will be presented in educational settings at Rollins College. The results might be published in a professional journal in the field of business.

Contact Information:

If you have concerns or questions about this study, please contact Ansley Vanover at avanover@rollins.edu or the Rollins College Department of Business and Social Entrepreneurship chairperson, Dr. Danny Arnold at darnold@rollins.edu.

By filling out the form, you acknowledge that you have read this information and agree to participate in this research, with the knowledge that you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty.

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