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The University of North Carolina at Greensboro, 1988

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The Relationship Between the Effectiveness of Resident Assistants and the Variables of Assertiveness, Empathy, Unconditional Positive Regard, and Congruence

by

Stanley Steve Maleski

A Dissertation Submitted to
the Faculty of the Graduate School at
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
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1987

Approved by

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APPROVAL PAGE

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103 pp.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the independent variables of assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence could be used as predictors of Resident Assistant effectiveness. Resident Assistant effectiveness was determined by mean scores from student raters using the Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale. The four predictor variables were measured by two self-report instruments that were administered to the Resident Assistants (RAs). The College Self-Expression Scale measured assertiveness and the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory measured empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence.

The sample of 47 RAs was taken from a population of 64 RAs who had at least one semester of experience as an RA. A total of 217 (34%) student rater responses were used.

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine correlations between RA effectiveness and each of the four predictor variables. The results indicated that none of the four predictors had a significant correlation with the dependent variable at the .05 level of significance. Step-wise multiple regression was used to determine any combination of the four predictor variables that would most effectively predict RA effectiveness. Because none of the predictor variables met the required .05 level of significance, a regression equation was not established.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The residence hall has long been a part of university life. Initially, it was viewed simply as a means of housing and controlling students. Recent studies suggest that residence halls play an integral part in the development and education of students.

In conducting a study to compare residence hall students with commuter (off-campus) students, Astin (1973) found that residence hall students (a) exceeded the learning and personal development predicted when their advantages in ability, prior education and extracurricular activities, and community and family backgrounds were considered; (b) were more fully involved in academic and extracurricular activities and social activities with other students; and (c) earned higher grade point averages, even when differences in abilities were taken into account. Similar results were also obtained by Chickering (1974), Scott (1975), and Astin (1977).

> It has been the contention of Riker (1974) that the residence halls are one of the logical places on campus where colleges and universities can concentrate some of their skilled educators to work to humanize the teaching process. These educators can help by recognizing and reacting to the individual student as an important person with special talents and needs. This help can be reinforced and expanded through the peer living groups of which each resident student becomes a member and to which he most frequently turns for guidance and support (p. 1).

One segment of the university community that has attempted to capitalize on the educational potential of the residence halls has been the residence life staff. Upcraft and Pilato (1982) stated that the residence life paraprofessional staff are crucial for creating a good educational environment because they interact daily with the resident students and are attuned to the students' needs, interests, and problems. By definition, paraprofessionals in an educational setting "are students who have been selected and trained to offer educational services to their peers. These services are intentionally designed to assist in the adjustment, satisfaction, and persistence of students toward the attainment of their educational goals" (Enders, 1983, p. 324).

Today's residence hall paraprofessionals or resident assistants (RAs) are typically expected to (a) provide personal help and assistance; (b) manage and facilitate groups; (c) facilitate social, recreational, and educational programs; (d) inform students or refer them to appropriate information sources; (e) explain and enforce rules and regulations; and (f) maintain a safe, orderly and relatively quiet environment (Upcraft & Pilato, 1982).

In viewing the variety of tasks, Ostroth (1981) stated that "Because residence hall work involves so many functions, the prediction of success in these diverse tasks is a complex challenge for the selector" (p. 66). To date, the research concerning potential predictors of RA effectiveness has been somewhat inconclusive. Yet, because of the facilitative influence that RAs appear to have on the educational and personal development of resident students, it seems appropriate that researchers continue to investigate potential predictors or RA effectiveness.

Rationale for the Study

Resident assistants are typically undergraduate students who serve as part-time employees within the residence halls. As Upcraft and Pilato (1982) explained earlier, a large portion of an RA's responsibilities involve routine or mundane activities. It is during the unexpected times of crisis, however, that the effectiveness of the RA becomes critical. As in many occupations, it is the times of crisis that necessitate the most training and skill. To complete a maintenance report is one thing, but to be helpful to someone who is experiencing great stress or is contemplating suicide is quite another. It is in this latter situation that the potential for selecting the most effective RAs becomes critical.

As will be presented in Chapter II, a number of studies have been conducted regarding the prediction of RA effectiveness. These studies, however, have provided little statistical support for several of these potential predictors. Regardless of the results, many of the studies contained flaws. These flaws included (a) inadequate criterion variables that were created for a specific study and did not include any psychometric data (Shelton & Mathis, 1976); (b) predictor variables that were too broad and not easily defined, such as self-actualization as measured by the Personal Orientation Inventory (Atkinson, Williams, & Garb, 1973); (c) single predictor variables that tried to measure too many qualities or characteristics, such as the California Psychological Inventory (Haldane, 1973; Ball, 1977); and (d) single predictor variables that measured only one aspect or concept, such as assertiveness (Gilbertson, 1979). With regard to this last point, a study utilizing such a variable tends to ignore the ambiguity of the RA position that is created by the complexity of the tasks to be performed.

Pedhazur (1982) stated that one of the major purposes of regression

analysis in prediction research is the selection of applicants for such things as jobs, college, and the armed forces. Based on the status or scores of the applicant on these predictors, his or her performance on a given criterion (e.g., job effectiveness) may be predicted. If all available predictor variables could be used, the prediction of the criterion variable would be very accurate. The magnitude of such a task, however, would makes its execution unfeasible. The alternative is to select the least number of variables necessary to predict the criterion variable almost as effectively as if the total set of predictor variables had been used. With this process in mind, it is the intent of this study to investigate a combination of predictor variables as Pedhazur has suggested. It is also hoped that the selection of these variables will help eliminate some of the ambiguity that exists because of the complexity of RA tasks. The first three predictor variables selected for the present study relate to the counseling or interpersonal skills of the RA. The fourth variable will relate to the more administrative aspects of the RA position.

Counseling/Interpersonal Skills Predictor

Delworth, Sherwood, and Casaburri (1974) stated that the RA "is predominantly judged by his competency in the area of counseling...(which) by definition is probably the most ambiguous of all" (p. 49). Winston, Ullom, and Werring (1984) related that

> RAs must establish relationships of mutual trust and respect, communicate their willingness to be of assistance and make a commitment to expend the time and energy required to help residents deal with personal concerns....they can typically deal effectively with students as students encounter typical developmental issues or tasks primarily by listening, showing warmth and support, providing

information, and helping students to analyze problem situations and formulate plans (p. 53).

Among the many theories that propose ways of facilitating client growth, the theory of Carl Rogers seems particularly appropriate as a means of viewing the effectiveness of the RAs as they work with people engaged in developmental activities. Rogers (1957) emphasized the development and use of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence by the counselor as she/he relates to the client. It was Rogers' contention that as the counselor uses these three qualities in to relating the client, the client will be provided with a situation that will facilitate positive growth and/or change on the client's part.

As part of the recruitment and/or selection process, Rogers (1980) and Carkhuff (1969) concurred that individuals who possess higher levels of these qualities have more potential to be effective helpers than those individuals who possess lower levels. Truax (1970) stated that the measurement of the core conditions is the critical factor in the selection process. Although many RA training programs are based on Rogers' theory, most educational institutions do not measure for such characteristics prior to or during the selection process. Furthermore, little research has been conducted to investigate the use of these core conditions as predictors for RA effectiveness. The Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (Barrett-Lennard, 1962) was used to measure the core conditions as potential predictors of RA effectiveness.

Administrative Predictor

The second aspect of the RA job is more administrative and often goes back to the early role of rule enforcer. There will be times when the RA must officially represent the institution with regard to rules and policies or represent the residents as a corporate group. As Upcraft and Pilato (1982)

have stated

> But RAs do not only work with students seeking help....For example, the RA must deal with students who drink too much and subsequently harm themselves, others, or the institution's facilities. These students may not realize that they have a problem, yet most RAs would initiate contact with those students and try to help (p. 10).

As with most jobs, the RA position is not without its difficulties. For example, Schuh and Shipton (1983) found that RAs reported obscenities, sexual and racial slurs, malicious pranks, damage to personal property, harassment, and physical abuse. Hornak (1982) found that the RAs also experienced high levels of stress, burnout, and personal problems caused, in part, by the "fishbowl" experience, long hours..., crisis intervention, role ambiguity, and expectations to discipline peers.

With this in mind, it would seem that the quality of assertiveness would potentially be very profitable to the RA. Alberti and Emmons (1974), stated that assertiveness involves behavior which enables a person to act in one's own best interests, to stand up for oneself without undue anxiety, to express one's honest feelings comfortably, and to exercise one's own rights without denying the rights of others. As Upcraft and Pilato (1982) and Schuh and Shipton (1983) indicated, there will be times when an individual infringes on the rights of the RA or the members of the corporate living group. Such situations may dictate that the RA pursue his/her own assertive rights and the rights of the students living in the residence hall. The degree of assertion that an RA possesses may give an indication of how effectively the RA may respond in such situations. The College Self-Expression Scale (Galassi, Delo, Galassi, & Bastien, 1974), therefore, was considered as a potential predictor variable which measures the degree of

assertiveness among the college student population.

Demographic Variables

It has been recommended from various sources (e.g. Hudnall, 1979) that demographic variables should also be considered predictors of RA effectiveness. Therefore, the demographic variables of age, sex, race, academic classification, academic classification of students residing in each residence hall, major, and completion of course work related to helping skills were analyzed for both the RAs and student raters.

Statement of the Problem

This study investigated the relationship between Resident Assistant effectiveness and the variables of empathy, unconditional positive regard, congruence, and assertiveness. The criterion variable was measured by the Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale. Empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence were measured by the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory. Assertiveness was measured by the College Self-Expression Scale.

Statement of Hypotheses

H_1: There will be no linear relationship between RA effectiveness as measured by the Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale and the demographic variables of age, gender, race, academic classification, academic classification of students residing in each residence hall, major, and completion of course work related to helping skills. These relationships will be tested at the .05 level of significance.

H_2: There will be a significant linear relationship between RA effectiveness as measured by the Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale and assertiveness as measured by the College Self-Expression Scale. This relationship will be in the positive direction such that higher scores on one instrument will be related to higher scores on the other. This relationship will be significant at

the .05 level.

H_3 : There will be a significant linear relationship between RA effectiveness and the variables of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence as measured by the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory. This relationship will be in the positive direction and will be significant at the .05 level.

H_4 : There will be a significant multiple correlation between RA effectiveness and a combination of the variables of assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence. This correlation will be in the positive direction and will be significant at the .05 level.

H_5 : There will be a significant positive relationship between RA effectiveness as rated by resident students and RA effectiveness as rated by other RAs. This relationship will be in the positive direction and will be significant at the .05 level. This hypothesis is based on Tibbits' (1977) contention that peer evaluation is an effective means of evaluation and selection.

Limitations

1. The sample of resident assistants used was not a randomly selected sample from all RA populations, but consisted specifically of the RAs at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Therefore, caution should be exercised in generalizing results, since conclusions may not be indicative of RAs and students at other colleges or universities.
2. The self-reported measurement of assertion, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence may not be indicative of actual RA attitudes and behavior.
3. The measurement of RA effectiveness by student perceptions may not reflect actual job performance.

4. The design of the study will not allow for the study of cause-and-effect relationships.

5. The low number of student rater responses (i.e., 217 of 640 responses) may have affected the statistical results. As the number of responses received moves toward the total number of potential responses for the population, the more accurate the mean scores for the responses will be in reflecting the overall response of the population. The low number of responses received (217) may or may not reflect the actual response of the total population.

Summary

Chapter I presented a brief background for the study, the need for the research, the problem statement, the hypotheses, and the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Theoretical Positions

This chapter presents the theoretical perspectives that are relevant to this study. The first section provides descriptions of several positions that help comprise student development theory. This section is followed by a discussion of the literature related to person-centered therapy, assertiveness training, resident assistant selection, and resident assistant evaluation.

Student Development Theory

Student development is a compilation of varied theoretical approaches that describe the challenges and developmental tasks faced by an individual during the college-age years (18-25). This growth process is not only facilitated by the learning that occurs in the classroom, but by those experiences that occur in other environments as well. Thus, an understanding of these approaches can assist the educator in his/her attempt to help students integrate and/or apply what they learn in the classroom to their everyday lives. These approaches include cognitive development, psychosocial development, the humanistic-existential approach, and the person-environment approach.

Cognitive development theory. Cognitive development is a theoretical perspective that describes how an individual develops as he/she progresses through a series of sequential developmental stages that must be approached in precisely the same order. Each stage provides the foundation for each succeeding stage, which is more complex than its preceding stage.

Specifically, cognitive development deals with how an individual thinks,

reasons, and makes sense of one's experiences. When challenged by a more advanced way of thinking/reasoning, the individual experiences some degree of cognitive conflict. The individual will either ignore the challenge, assimilate it (i.e., force it into one's way of thinking), or accommodate it. Accommodation involves the restructuring of one's thinking/reasoning process to incorporate the new way of thinking or reasoning, thus, providing a means of growth into the next phase or stage of development. The work of Piaget, Perry, Kohlberg, and Gilligan are representative of cognitive theory.

Piaget (1952, 1954, 1965) was one of the initial theoreticians to describe cognitive development. Piaget described how an individual's thinking moves from very simplistic terms to the concrete and then abstract. Perry's (1970) initial stage describes reasoning as either "right or wrong" as determined by some external authority. The final stage is characterized by the appropriateness or rightness for the individual's life as determined by his/her personal experiences and willingness to make commitments. Kohlberg's (1969) moral development describes how an individual's moral reasoning develops from the initial stage of obedience to avoid punishment to the final stage of reasoning that views personal rights and freedom on a higher plane than externally imposed moral law.

Gilligan's (1981) work takes a different perspective. Moral development is viewed as an ethic of responsibility to self and others, rather than formal categories of moral ideology. Her contention is that moral development does not occur in a vacuum of hypothetical situations, but involves real people with real crises. As individuals make moral decisions in this context, the pursuit of personal identity is replaced by intimacy of relationships. Further, the abstraction of justice and the concept of fairness are replaced by the ethic of responsibility which focuses on the care of self and others.

Psychosocial development theory. As with cognitive development, psychosocial development also involves sequential stages. However, these stages do not form the foundation for each succeeding stage, and a new stage can be entered without being adequately developed in the previous stage. The contention is that these stages are internally, socially, psychologically, and biologically timed so that a new phase will begin whether or not an individual is ready for the new stage. Rodgers and Widick (1980) stated that each stage raises certain self-definitions or crisis such as competence or identity that the individual must resolve. These authors further stated that at each life stage, there are certain attitudes and skills that must be developed if the individual is to manage the present and be prepared for any future stages. The development of these attitudes and skills represents the developmental task(s) for each stage.

As an example of this process, Erikson's (1968) model presented the college student in the midst of the identity stage which involves the development crisis of personal identity versus role confusion. The developmental task is typically accomplished by the determination of such things as personal values, career choices, and life-style choices.

A major portion of Chickering's (1969) model relies on Erikson's stages of identity versus role confusion and intimacy versus isolation. Chickering (1969) described seven developmental tasks or vectors that an individual should accomplish or develop during the college years. (This represents the period of 18 to 25 years of age for those individuals who do not attend college.) These tasks or vectors include the establishing of personal competence (intellectually, physically, and socially), managing personal emotions, and seeking to be autonomous (i.e., the ability to handle and cope without the continued approval and praise of others). Accomplishing these tasks should lead to the development

of an identity which, in turn, should (a) foster freedom in interpersonal relationships; (b) develop purpose based on personal values, vocational goals, and lifestyle; and (c) develop integrity which is described as a state of congruence between personal values and actual behavior.

Humanistic existential theory. Unlike the two previous theories, humanistic-existential theory is not based on various developmental stages. Instead, this perspective suggests that the individual is free to make, and is responsible for his/her decisions. The individual has a real or honest view of self and continually strives to become self-actualizing. Rodgers (1980) stated that self-actualization "is the striving towards one's fullest sense of identity and optimal level of functioning" (p. 61). This perspective also infers that the individual has the power and potential within himself/herself to determine what and how he/she needs to grow and develop. Rodgers (1980) described this process as follows:

> Humanistic/existential theorists believe in the integrity, potential and individuality of the person. The forces of growth are within the person and are facilitated by self-disclosure followed by self-acceptance and self-awareness. Given self-acceptance and self-awareness, persons free themselves to make unique individual choices and, thus, to become their unique selves. The questions become, therefore, how is the growth force facilitated and what is an appropriate environment to force a person to use his/her growth force to move toward self-actualization? (pp. 59-60).

Person environment theory. This perspective, also referred to as an ecosystem, is based on the ways an individual perceives and is influenced by a specific environment. Banning and Kaiser (1974) and Heubner (1979) have

described ecosystems as not only the impact of the environment on students but also with the way in which students and environment interact. As Insel and Moos (1974) stated "The climates or environments in which people function relate to their satisfaction, mood...self-esteem, and to their personal growth. Environments shape adaptive potentials as well as facilitate or inhibit initiatives and coping behavior" (p. 186). Ideally, Corazzini and Wilson (1977) related that

> In order to enhance the quality of life on campus, the environment must be designed in such a way that dysfunctional stress would be eliminated. By matching student needs, goals and expectations to environmental resources, matches would replace mismatches; as students and environments become more and more congruent, educational process casualties would decrease (p. 68).

As Rodgers (1980) stated, it is the environment that should be changed rather than forcing the student to conform to the environment.

The most widely noted model for designing such a student-oriented environment was developed by Kaiser (1972) for the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education. The seven basic steps for the model are listed below.

Step 1: Designers, in conjunction with community members, select educational values.

Step 2: Values are then translated into specific goals.

Step 3: Environments are designed that contain mechanisms to reach the stated goals.

Step 4: Environments are fitted to students.

Step 5: Students' perceptions of the environments are measured.

Step 6: Student behavior resulting from environmental perceptions is

monitored.

Step 7: Data on the environmental design's success and failures, as indicated by student perceptions and behaviors, are fed back to the designers in order that they can continue to learn about student/environment fit and design better environments (p. 372).

In summary, Cross (1976) concluded that the concept of student development would probably rest on the following propositions:

1) Development is a lifelong process occurring in sequence and spurts rather than in linear or regular progression.

2) Development involves the total being, integrating cognitive and affective learning.

3) Development involves active internal direction rather than "adjustment" to culturally determined criteria.

4) Development is stimulated when the individual interacts with an appropriately challenging environment.

5) The phenomena of developmental growth can be submitted to scientific study.

6) Educational programs and interventions can be designed to make an impact on the rate, level, and direction of development (p. 167).

Person Centered Theory

Person-Centered Theory is based primarily on the work of Carl Rogers. It has been Rogers' (1957) contention that positive or constructive personality change would occur when certain core conditions exist within the therapeutic relationship. These conditions are as follows:

1. Two persons are in psychological contact.

2. The first, whom we shall term the client, is in a state of incongruence, being vulnerable or anxious.
3. The second person, whom we shall term the therapist, is congruent or integrated in the relationship.
4. The therapist experiences unconditional positive regard for the client.
5. The therapist experiences an empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference and endeavors to communicate this experience to the client.
6. The communication to the client of the therapist's empathic understanding and unconditional regard is to a minimal degree achieved (Rogers, 1957, p. 96).

In a later work, Rogers and Truax (1967) related that points 1, 2, and 6 are now considered to be necessary assumptions about the therapy process, while points 3, 4, and 5 remain as the necessary and sufficient conditions for constructive personality change.

As a means of clarifying these terms, Rogers and Truax (1967) has provided the following definitions.

> Congruence-Genuineness: In relation to therapy it means that the therapist is what he [sic] is during his encounter with his client. He is without front or facade, openly being the feelings and attitudes which at the moment are flowing in him. It involves the element of self-awareness, meaning that the feelings that the therapist is experiencing are available to him, available to his awareness, and also that he is able to live these feelings, to be them in the relationship, and able to communicate them if appropriate (pp. 100-101).

> Unconditional Positive Regard: This concept means that the therapist communicates to his [sic] client a deep and genuine caring for him as a person with human potentialities, a caring uncontaminated by evaluations of his thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. The therapist experience a warm acceptance of the client's experience as being a part of the client as a person, and places no conditions on his acceptance and warmth. He prizes the client in a total rather than a conditional way (pp. 102-103).
>
> Accurate Empathic Understanding: The ability of the therapist accurately and sensitively to understand experiences and feelings and their meaning to the client during the moment-to-moment encounter of psychotherapy constitutes what can perhaps be described as the "work" of the therapist after he [sic] has first provided the contextual base for the relationship by his self-congruence or genuineness and his unconditional positive regard...It is a sensing of the client's inner world of private personal meanings "as if" it were the therapist's own, but without ever losing the "as if" quality (p.104).

Rogers (1957) also believed that these conditions were for a variety of clients, therapies, and settings and could be developed through life experiences and not just through the intellect. As an hypothesis for future research concerning these conditions, Rogers (1957) stated that "If all six conditions are present, then the greater the degree to which Conditions 2 to 6 exist, the more marked will be the constructive personality change in the client" (p. 100). This hypothesis has led to a great deal of research with varied results, which is discussed in the following sections.

Positive research results in the therapeutic setting. One of the earliest studies was conducted by Fiedler (1950) to determine what practicing therapists

would consider to be the ideal therapeutic relationship. Fiedler had therapists with different theoretical perspectives and techniques rate a series of 119 qualitative statements about the therapeutic relationship by means of a Q-sort. The results indicated that the ideal therapeutic relationship was characterized by such traits as empathy, understanding, trust, and acceptance.

Barrett-Lennard (1962) conducted a study to determine whether there was a relationship between therapeutic change and the therapeutic conditions described by Rogers (1957). To measure the core conditions, the author used the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory. Data from the Relationship Inventory were collected from 21 therapists and 42 clients after the 5th, 15th, and 25th sessions (if the clients continued that long). Barrett-Lennard found that there was a significant relationship between the therapists' self-reports and the clients' rating of the therapists on the Relationship Inventory. The results also indicated that there was a significant positive relationship between the therapists' levels of the core conditions and positive change in the client.

Another study was conducted by Gross and DeRidder (1966) utilizing clients from a university counseling center as subjects. The Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory was used to determine the client's perception of the counselor's level of empathy, congruence, and positive regard within the counseling relationship. The Gendlin-Tomlinson Experiencing Scale was used for pre and post treatment measures to determine any constructive change. The results indicated that there was a significant positive correlation at the .05 level between the core conditions and positive change.

In a series of studies with schizophrenic patients, Truax et al. (1966) used raters to determine therapist levels of the core conditions which then correlated with two outcome measures. In the first study, the results indicated that high

levels of accurate empathy were positively and significantly correlated with constructive personality change. In separate but identical studies using different raters, levels of unconditional positive regard and genuineness were correlated with outcome measures taken from the MMPI and the Final Outcome Criterion Scale. The results showed that there was a significantly positive relationship between the core conditions and the results on the MMPI and the Final Outcome Criterion Scale.

Truax, Silber, and Wargo (1966) conducted a study to evaluate the relationship between the core conditions and patient outcome in a group counseling setting with 70 female institutionalized delinquents. The subjects were divided into a control and experimental group. The experimental group received 24 sessions of group psychotherapy while the control group received the normal hospital routine. At the end of the treatment, the experimental group showed greater gains in self-concept and perceptions of authority than the control group. They also showed significant gains over the control group on a measure designed to differentiate between delinquent and nondelinquent subjects. However, because the control group did not receive the psychotherapy but only the normal hospital treatment, it seems that it would be difficult to determine whether the core conditions caused the change or whether it was a result of the group counseling process in general.

Truax et al. (1966) conducted a study that involved 40 psychoneurotic patients and four resident psychiatrists. The psychiatrists were given three scales developed by Truax to determine their levels of empathy, nonpossessive warmth and genuineness. The measurement of client improvement involved two measures of overall improvement and three measures of specific improvement. The results indicated that those clients involved with therapists having the

highest combined levels of empathy, warmth, and genuiness showed greater improvement on the two overall measures. However, when compared to the three specific measures, the combined core conditions did not reach a level of significance. When considered individually with the three specific measures, empathy and genuineness continued to show a significant correlation with all five measures, while nonpossessive warmth only correlated significantly with one.

Rogers and Truax (1967) also conducted an extensive study involving schizophrenic patients. Forty-eight patients were divided into control and experimental groups. Raters were used to determine levels of empathy, regard, and genuineness for each of the eight therapists by using rating scales developed by Truax. To determine patient improvement, a series of pre and post therapy measures such as the MMPI, the Thematic Apperception Test, the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale, The Rorschach, and the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory were used. The results indicated that there was no measurable difference between the experimental group and the control group (i. e., the group exposed only to the general hospital program). However, within the experimental group, those patients who had therapists with high levels of the core conditions tended to be more self-exploring, self-experiencing, open, and willing to communicate with others. Those patients receiving the highest levels of accurate empathy showed the greatest decrease in schizophrenic tendencies as determined by the MMPI. Those patients who received low levels of empathy showed less reduction in schizophrenic tendencies than those patients in the control group.

Positive research results in the educational setting. A number of studies were conducted to investigate the relationship between the core conditions and effectiveness in an educational setting. In a series of such studies, Aspy and

Roebuck (1974) found that teacher empathy, congruence, and positive regard were related significantly and positively to students' academic achievement, attendance, cognitive processes, and intelligence measures. The studies also indicated that individuals with high levels of the core conditions tended to be more effective trainers of teachers.

In a series of related studies conducted in West Germany, Tausch (1978) indicated that

> Empathic understanding, genuineness, warm respect, and non-directive facilitative activities proved in all five studies to significantly facilitate the quality of the pupils' intellectual contributions during the lessons, their spontaneity, their independence and initiative, their positive feelings during the lessons and their positive perceptions of the teacher (pp.4-5).

Negative research results in the therapeutic setting. Edelman and Goldstein (1984) conducted a study with 108 male delinquents who were divided into four groups designated by the Warren Interpersonal Maturity Level Category. The study was conducted to determine if there was a relationship between the therapist's levels of empathy and genuineness and four client related outcomes after the initial interview. The results indicated that interviewers who communicated with low empathy-high genuineness had a significant positive relationship on three outcome measures with two groups and on two outcome measures with a third group. The other two combinations of empathy and genuineness did not have any positive significant relationship with the outcome measures.

A study that resulted in no significant relationship between the core conditions and client outcome was conducted by Garfield and Bergin (1971).

The subjects consisted of 38 clients seen at a university counseling center. The MMPI and a series of checklists and ratings were used as pre and post therapy measures of outcome. The therapists were rated by independent judges for empathy, warmth and genuineness using the scales developed by Truax and Carkhuff (1967) to measure these conditions. The authors found a positive correlation between empathy and warmth, both of which were negatively correlated with genuineness. The results also indicated that there was a complete lack of relationship between the three therapeutic conditions and any outcome variable. Because of similar inconsistencies in the results of other studies, a number of other researchers including Mitchell, Bozarth, and Krauft (1977) and Parloff, Waskow, and Wolfe (1978) challenged the evidence that these conditions are necessary and sufficient in and of themselves.

Although there have been some negative research results, Meltzoff and Kornreich (1970), Smith and Glass (1977), Bergin and Lambert (1978), and Frank (1979) indicated that there is no research that consistently indicates the superiority of any one school of psychotherapy with regard to outcome over a long period of time. Even with the somewhat discouraging results, Mitchell, Bozarth, and Kraft (1977) and Gurman (1977) still suggested that much can be learned and gained from research with regard to the core conditions.

Assertiveness Theory

The concept of assertiveness or assertive training was initially developed in the works of Arthur Salter (1949) and Wolpe and Lazarus (1966). Yet, the last two decades have not provided a consensus definition of what assertiveness is in its completest form. One definition states that "Assertion involves standing up for personal rights and expressing thoughts, feelings, and beliefs in direct, honest, and appropriate ways that do not violate another person's rights" (Lange

& Jakubowski, 1976, p. 71). Rich and Schroeder (1976) defined assertive behavior as "the skills that (a) are concerned with seeking, maintaining, and enhancing reinforcements and (b) occur in interpersonal situations involving the risk of reinforcement loss or the possibility of punishment" (p. 1084). From a broader perspective, Galassi, Galassi, and Vedder (1981) contended that assertiveness is determined by a series of response classes which are listed below.

> Giving and receiving compliments; making requests; expressing liking, love and affection; initiating and maintaining conversations; standing up for rights; refusing requests; expressing personal opinions; expressing justified annoyance and displeasure; and expressing justified anger with the ability to express these responses being influenced by the person to whom they are directed as well as by other situational and cultural context factors (p. 290-291).

But these behaviors do not seem to consider the concept that assertiveness is an interactional behavior. Flowers, Whiteley, and Cooper (1978) stated that assertive behavior also "involves being able to receive requests, refusals, and expressions which necessitate respect for the other person's assertive rights" (p.17).

Galassi, Galassi, & Vedder (1981) noted that nonassertive behavior seems to result from inability to determine when assertive behavior is appropriate, from a lack of assertive skills, from a lack of knowledge concerning appropriate assertive responses, or from inhibition due to anxiety. To counter these deficiencies, assertiveness training incorporates four basic procedures:

> (a) teaching people the difference between assertion, aggression, nonassertion and politeness; (b) helping people identify and accept their own personal rights as well as the rights of others; (c) reducing existing

> cognitive and affective obstacles in acting assertively; and (d) developing assertive skills through active practice (Lange & Jakubowski, 1976, p. 5).

To add specific detail to the description stated above, Flowers, Whiteley, and Cooper (1978) stated that

> Assertion training is psychological intervention which treats intrapsychic or mediating variables of behavior as well as specific, overt behaviors. Feelings, thoughts and fantasies are therefore also the subject matter of behavior change in most models of assertion training. It encompasses the traditional behavioral techniques of behavior rehearsal, modeling, successive approximation, response shaping and positive reinforcement; and...cognitive restructuring of the belief systems....As an intervention, assertion training is specifically designed to deal with dysfunctional interpersonal behaviors, where transactions with other persons are the focus of behavior (p. 1).

Because RAs not only face the pressures that a typical student faces, but also those situations and pressures described earlier by Hornak (1982), authors such as Hummers (1980) and Darrah and Ochroch (1982) recommended that RAs receive assertive training. This would not only help the RA personally, but would also provide a role model for the other residents as well. But does the existing research indicate such action? Although hundreds of studies have been conducted on assertion during the last two decades, the discussion that follows will only deal with those studies that appear to be relevant to the job performance of the RA.

Research on assertiveness. Gembol (1981) conducted a study that involved a population of college women and a population of federally employed women at a

military installation. The study investigated the potential effects that assertion training would have on the self-concept, locus of control, and occupational satisfaction and prestige of the participants. The participants were divided into an experimental group that would receive assertion training and a waiting list/control group. Post training results indicated that the experimental group at both sites produced significantly higher assertion scores than the control groups; scored higher on four of the subscales of the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale including total score; and were less willing to settle for occupations with low levels of prestige and perceived lack of satisfaction.

Keating (1976) conducted a study involving student leaders to investigate the effects of assertion training on self-concept. Keating divided 49 student leaders into experimental groups, four of which were led by professional trainers and four by paraprofessional trainers. A control group was composed of 65 randomly selected students from the general student body. Pre-test comparisons of the experimental and control groups did not indicate any significant difference in levels of assertiveness. The College Self-Expression Scale and the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale were used to measure assertion and self-concept respectively. The results indicated that regardless of the type of trainer, the experimental group showed significant gains on the post test scores for assertion and on 8 of the 11 subscales used on the Tennessee Scale.

Perkins and Kemmerling (1983) conducted a study that examined the effects of paraprofessional trainers on levels of assertion and self-actualization. Students who volunteered to participate in assertion training were randomly assigned to a treatment group or a control group. The participants in the control group were assured of training after the study. Treatment groups were led by two paraprofessional trainers who followed specific guidelines

developed by professional counselors. To measure assertiveness and self-actualization, the College Self-Expression Scale and the Personal Orientation Inventory were used respectively. The results indicated that the treatment groups demonstrated higher levels of assertiveness than the control group. Significant differences were also found on 6 of the 12 subscales of the Personal Orientation Inventory at the .05 level. The study indicated that assertion training led by paraprofessional trainers tends to increase the self-reported values and behaviors of assertiveness and self-actualization.

In a similar study, Olczak and Goldman (1981) also studied the relationship of assertion and self-actualization. However, unlike Perkins and Kemmerling (1983), Olczak and Goldman did not use paraprofessional trainers. The authors also used the College Self-Expression Scale and the Rathus Assertion Scale to measure assertiveness. There were significant, positive correlations at the .05 level for the Rathus Scale on 7 of the 12 subscales of the Personal Orientation Inventory for male students and 9 of 12 subscales for the female students. The College Self-Expression Scale obtained significant, positive results on 9 of 12 subscales for the males and 8 of 12 for the females.

A study was conducted by Goddard (1981) to determine whether didactic training of Rogerian theory and assertion theory could increase assertiveness and self-actualization in 65 low assertion undergraduates. These students were randomly assigned to one of five groups. Three of the groups were control groups which included either no treatment, video tapes of instruction concerning the learning principles of Skinner, or video tapes giving the beneficial effects of psychology. The two experimental groups were either taught Rogerian or assertion theory by means of three 20 minute video tapes which emphasized instruction and modeling.

Goddard stated that assertion training, a behavioral theory, emphasizes growth through overt behavior change while Rogerian theory views the awareness and acceptance of feelings as a key to growth. But he contended that assertion, self-actualization, and Rogerian theory are, to some extent, interrelated conceptually and/or behaviorally. Because of this interrelation, Goddard hypothesized that the two treatments would increase assertion and self-actualization. To test the hypothesis, the Personal Orientation Inventory was used to measure self-actualization. Three instruments were used to measure assertion: the Dominance Scale of the California Personality Inventory, the Conflict Resolution Inventory, and the Gambrill-Richey Assertion Inventory. The instruments were administered prior to treatment, after the third or final video tape, and again at a 3 week follow-up testing. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between each of the treatment groups and the control groups when considering increases in self-actualization. However, the results did not support the hypothesis that assertion could be increased through a short didactic training program.

Flowers and Goldman (1976) conducted a study to investigate whether or not paraprofessional counselors trained in assertion would demonstrate increased assertive behavior and would clarify client's problems better than those counselors who were not trained. The sample of 16 counselors was taken from a population of 32 paraprofessional counselors who worked in a state mental hospital. The sample was divided into a control group and an experimental group which received 20 hours of assertive training over a 10 week period. Assertiveness for both groups was measured by the Rathus Assertiveness Scale during pre and post treatment testing. The results indicated that the assertion trained counselors were more effective at helping the client define the problem,

how it occurred, and how specifically the problem behavior might be changed.

Processes for the Selection of Resident Assistants

The process of selecting potentially effective RAs is probably as varied as the number of institutions that employ RAs. The process often includes such activities as individual and group interviews, leaderless group discussions, role plays, and pre-selection training programs. Personal information about the candidates is also acquired from records of past experience, recommendations or ratings from others, and personality assessment inventories. Typically, the selection process is a means of evaluating certain criteria or personal qualities of the applicant. Winston, Ullom, and Werring (1984) stated that these criteria might include

> 1) demonstrated academic achievement; 2) a warm, friendly personality; 3) good basic interpersonal skills; 4) emotional stability; 5) ability to cope with stress and ambiguity; and 6) ability to accept people with different values and backgrounds (p. 57).

After reviewing the literature, German (1979) summarized a number of personal characteristics generally thought desirable for undergraduate paraprofessional counselor candidates. They are as follows:

> 1) a concern for and desire and ability to contribute to the academic, social, and personal development of others; 2) good communication skills; 3) the ability to provide an emotional climate facilitative to growth; 4) adequate personal adjustment; 5) the ability to manage one's own school life; 6) good leadership skills; and 7) the capacity to profit from training (p. 31).

In looking specifically at personal qualities, Harvey (1964) stated that the purpose of selection procedures for the paraprofessional counselor was to

evaluate such qualities as a sincere regard for self and others; acceptance, warmth and sensitivity in dealing with others; and a capacity for empathy.

As stated earlier, Rogers (1980) and Carkhuff (1969) contended that there is a relationship between the potential helper's level of functioning in a given area (e.g., empathy) and future success in the counseling setting. In conjunction with this idea, Carkhuff (1969) stated that "Studies of selection and training suggest, in general, that the helper trainee's original response dispositions become more intensified over time and with training...Characteristics discriminated by the implied self and institutional selection processes are further reinforced over the course of training" (p. 80).

Enders (1984) summarized this point by stating that certain writers or researchers

> think that the helper's personality is a significant criterion for the helper's effectiveness in helping interventions. Given that the training of most paraprofessionals emphasizes relationship skills, the use of personality assessment instruments as a selection device appears to have some merit. The Enders and Winston (1984) survey found very little attention given to the personality assessment procedure (15 percent) which may be useful and which needs further investigation (p. 14).

Research Related to Predictors of RA Effectiveness

A number of studies have been conducted to investigate the use of various personality assessment instruments to predict RA effectiveness. Descriptions of several of these studies are presented below.

Use of the Personal Orientation Inventory. One instrument that has been used to predict RA effectiveness is the Personal Orientation Inventory or POI

(Shostrum, 1966). The POI is a 150-item, forced-choice instrument that compares personal values and behavior judgments. These values and judgments include such areas as self-regard, self-acceptance, capacity for intimate contact, and acceptance of aggression.

To examine the use of the POI, Kipp (1979) administered the POI to 50 individuals who had either been accepted or rejected as RAs for the following year. Kipp found that the individuals who had been accepted as RAs indicated a significantly greater amount of self-actualization as determined by the POI than those individuals who had been rejected. The study did not, however, attempt to correlate the POI results with RA effectiveness.

Atkinson, Williams , and Garb (1973) also investigated the use of the POI as a predictor of RA effectiveness. Of the possible 59 RAs available, 44 were finally involved after scoring as one of the highest or lowest scores on at least one of the five POI scales. The RAs were rated for effectiveness by the resident students and administrators. An inverse relationship was found, in that, 71% of the mean ratings of effectiveness were lower for the high POI group than for the low POI group when considering student ratings. Thus, the high POI scores tended to be related to RA ineffectiveness while the low POI scores tended to be related to RA effectiveness. This same relationship was true with regard to resident director ratings as 67 percent of the mean scores for the high POI group were lower than the low POI ratings. The authors, thus, concluded that the study did not support the use of the POI as a selection instrument.

Use of the California Psychological Inventory. Dorin (1974) conducted a study to investigate whether the California Psychological Inventory or CPI (Gough, 1975) could be used as a predictor of effectiveness for 53 female and 29 males RAs as determined by resident student and supervisor ratings. The CPI is

a 480-item instrument that examines 18 socially desirable behaviors, which include dominance, status, self-acceptance, self-control, and responsibility. Of the 18 scales on the CPI, six scales correlated significantly at the .01 level for male RAs, while five scales were significant for the female RAs. The authors concluded that the CPI could be a valuable addition to the RA selection process.

In a similar study, Ball (1977) used the CPI as a potential predictor of RA effectiveness as measured by the Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale. With a sample of 33 RAs, Ball found that, of the 18 scales, only the scales of Flexibility and Achievement were significant at the .05 level.

A third study using the CPI was conducted by Haldane (1973). She found that there were significant negative correlation between RA effectiveness and the five scales of dominance, sociability, sense of well-being, intellectual efficiency, and psychological-mindedness.

Although each of the three studies obtained significant correlations with various subscales of the CPI, none of the 18 subscales provided significant results in all three of the studies. Only five scales were significant in two of the three studies. The inconsistent results of these studies raises a question about the reliability of using the CPI as a predictor of RA effectiveness.

Use of the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule. Dolan (1965) considered several instruments as predictors of RA effectiveness including the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule or EPPS (Edwards, 1959), an instrument which is similar to the POI and the CPI. Dolan used a variety of rating groups to determine the effectiveness of 42 female RAs. After correlating the various predictor instruments with the effectiveness ratings, Dolan concluded that the EPPS was a discriminator of effectiveness among the three instruments used. However, she also concluded that none of the instruments significantly

discriminated between those RAs rated more effective and those RAs rated less effective.

In a study with 93 male RAs, Murphy and Ortenzi (1966) found that although a few individual items had significant correlations at the .01 level, the EPPS overall did not provide for any significant correlation with RA rated effectiveness or success.

Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. Wachowiak and Bauer (1976) investigated the use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator or MBTI (Myers, 1962) as a possible predictor for RA effectiveness. Influenced by the Jungian theories of personality, the instrument considers four bi-polar aspects of personality; introversion-extroversion, sensing-intuitive, thinking-feeling and judging-perceiving. The study just cited involved 48 introductory psychology students, 42 RAs who had been accepted for positions, and 25 students who had been rejected as RA applicants. When compared to the norm group (i.e. the psychology students), both the accepted and rejected groups were more extroverted. When comparing the accepted group and rejected group, the accepted group tended to be more judging, and more comfortable with the process of making decisions. However, there was no significant relationship found between the results of the MBTI and the RA measures of effectiveness.

Use of resident assistant characteristics. Zirkle and Hudson (1975) investigated whether maturity development among freshman males was influenced by RA orientations. The RAs were divided into two groups: counselor-oriented RAs or administrator-oriented RAs. The former group tended to be more of a student advocate who was interested in assisting students develop an internal sense of responsibility, counseled students on personal, academic, and social matters, and only intervened when the student's well-being was in question. The

administrator-oriented RA's primary duty was to maintain order, promote the maintenance of discipline, and serve more as a university advocate. The Perceived Self-Questionnaire or PSQ (Heath, 1965) was used to determine the change in maturity level of the students. There was a significant positive relationship between the counselor-oriented RAs and maturity development in that those students from the counselor-oriented units had significantly higher scores on the PSQ at the .001 level than those students from the administrator-oriented units. This relationship also held true across the varied subscales of the PSQ. To some degree, this study is encouraging, but it also raises some questions. Was the PSQ an adequate measure of the RAs effectiveness or performance? How valid or accurate was the grouping of RAs into the two groups? Was there any measure for consistent behavior on the part of the RAs?

A study conducted by Wyrick and Mitchell (1971) investigated the relationship between empathy and warmth as the predictor or independent variables and RA effectiveness as the dependent variable. A sample was taken from a population of 90 RAs. Each RA participated in a 20 minute counseling interview that was rated by independent judges using Truax's scales of Accurate Empathy and Non-possessive Warmth. Resident assistant effectiveness was determined by scores collected from the Duncan Residence Hall Counselor Evaluation Scale. There was a significant positive relationship between the two independent variables and the dependent variable for the female RAs but not for the male RAs.

The results of these two studies indicate that attitudes and behaviors related to helping skills may be useful in predicting RA effectiveness. Caution should be taken, however, in the generalization and application of the results.

The first study used counselor-oriented behavior as the independent or predictor variable. Because this variable would include a number of characteristics that could serve as an independent variable, it would be difficult to determine which one(s) correlated significantly with the criterion variable. The second study used a more defined predictor variable, but the results were not significant for both male and female RAs. These inconsistencies may indicate the further research is needed to determine which helping skills or characteristics, if any, may be appropriate to use as predictors of RA effectiveness.

Use of assertion instruments. Shelton and Mathis (1976) investigated the relationship between RA effectiveness and levels of assertion. The Rathus Scale (1973) again was used to measure the level of assertiveness of the RAs. The Rathus score was used to designate high or low assertive RAs. Approximately 25% of the population of 64 RAs was placed in each group. The participating RAs were then rated for effectiveness by a minimum of 50% of the students living on the corresponding RA's floor. The results indicated that the high assertive RAs were rated as more effective overall than the low assertive RAs. The students also perceived the high assertive RAs as being significantly more open and honest, less likely to avoid conflict, and more capable of handling discipline. However, the instrument measuring RA effectiveness was created by the senior author for this specific study. Further, it did not have any accompanying psychometric data. Therefore, the reliability and validity of the results may be in question.

In a similar study, Gilbertson (1979) found that RAs who received assertiveness training had significantly higher post treatment scores on the College Self- Expression Scale and the Rathus Assertion Scale than RAs who did not receive training. However, in comparing RA effectiveness as measured by

the Resident Advisor Evaluation Form with assertion training, the results indicated that the control group of RAs who did not receive assertion training obtained significantly higher ratings than the RAs receiving assertion training. These results conflict with those of Shelton and Mathis (1976).

In a study involving group assertive training, Layne, Layne, and Schock (1977) investigated whether assertive training would increase assertiveness among RA staff and, thereby increase their job performance. An experimental group was composed of 26 volunteers from a population of 140 RAs while the control was composed of approximately 91% of the remaining RA population. A pre-treatment comparison of the two groups indicated that there was no significant difference between the two groups with regard to levels of assertiveness. Effectiveness was measured by supervisor ratings, observer ratings of a video-taped behavior performance test, student ratings on an 18-item rating scale, and supervisor ratings of a 15-item rating scale. The experimental group had significantly better performance with regard to eye contact, content response, and quality of assertive responses. However, there were no significant results on the two rating scales. As in the Shelton and Mathis (1976) study, the rating scales were developed by the senior author and did not provide any reliability or validity data. The authors also noted that this study did not measure these qualities in real life settings and, therefore, questioned whether or not the new skills were actually transferred to the RA's work/living setting.

These studies indicate that assertiveness may have some use in predicting RA effectiveness. Because of the questions concerning the reliability and validity of the instruments used to measure the criterion variable, further research using instruments with stronger psychometric data may be appropriate.

Evaluation of Resident Assistant Effectiveness

Baird, Beatty, and Schneier (1982) defined performance appraisal as "the process of observing, identifying, measuring and developing human behavior in an organization" (p. 197). Levinson (1976) described three basic functions of performance appraisal: (a) to provide feedback to each person on his or her performance; (b) to serve as a basis for modifying or changing behavior toward more effective working habits; and (c) to provide data to managers with which they may judge future job assignments and compensation. In addition, Fortunato and Waddell (1981) stated that performance appraisals or evaluations help "to insure that duties performed are consistent with institutional objectives" (p. 196).

Meabon, Sims, Suddick, and Alley (1978) conducted a national survey to determine how extensively student affairs divisions used six pertinent managerial principles: statement of purpose, goals, objectives, job descriptions, evaluations, and rewards. The researchers' sample included the student affairs divisions from two and four-year, public and private institutions. The results indicated that these institutions often used statements of purpose 82%), goals (61%), and job descriptions (85%). However, only 53% had any measurable departmental objectives and only 50% had any measurable objectives for individuals. Further, less than half of the institutions had any kind of periodic or annual review or evaluation for the staff. Similar results also were obtained by Ender and Winston (1984) and Marion (1985).

To fill the apparent void of knowledge and implementation of the performance appraisal in higher education, a number of books (Farmer, 1979; Fortunato & Waddell, 1981), journal articles (Pappas, 1983; Barnette, 1985), and entire journal issues (Foxley, 1980) have been written and published.

Pappas (1983) stated that "In these days of tightening fiscal resources,

managers everywhere (and especially housing officers) are being held accountable for the successful fiscal operation of their facilities and for the provision of a level of quality of life that will attract students to the campus" (p. 7). Thus, the trend for program accountability and fiscal efficiency will make it essential that the residence life department use performance evaluations. The need for evaluation is not only important for the professional staff, but is critical for the paraprofessional staff (RAs) as well.

Consistent with the lack of literature concerning evaluation in higher education administration, there is little literature or research concerning the effective evaluation of paraprofessionals (RAs) or paraprofessional effectiveness. Researchers and practitioners such as Delworth, Sherwood, and Casaburri (1974) and Upcraft and Pilato (1982) have provided literature to help meet the apparent need.

Consistent with the definition of performance evaluation given by Baird, Beatty, and Schneier (1982), Upcraft and Pilato (1982) stated that the purpose of the performance evaluation is to help the RA work effectively with students and staff, in accordance with the job performance expectations defined by the institution or department. However, to implement any type of performance evaluation, the institution must first determine what should be evaluated. Delworth, Sherwood, and Casaburri (1974) suggested the following areas: fulfillment of job responsibilities; support, dedication, and attitude issues (with regard to the department or institution); impact on residents and floor; and skill development.

With the above ideas in mind, Upcraft and Pilato (1982) recommended the implementation of a four step evaluation procedure: (a) provide RAs with a very clear understanding of job functions and expectations; (b) identify the sources of

information that will be used in evaluating RA performance; (c) conduct an initial conference with RAs to review job expectations and the evaluation process; and (d) evaluate the RA on the basis of stated criteria and information collected from all available sources. Typically, a complete and concise job description will provide the needed information about job functions and expectations. The evaluation information, should be collected from a number of sources to help impede the effects of personal bias and subjectivity. These sources would include supervisors, resident students, other RAs and the RAs themselves.

The supervisor's input would involve observations of the individual planned programs, staff meetings, training sessions, and times of crisis. The supervisor and other RAs could provide further information by ranking and rating each individual RA, by completing a standardized evaluation instrument for each RA, and by providing verbal and/or written feedback during a group meeting designated for gathering such information.

Often information is obtained from resident students by using a standardized instrument that evaluates the effectiveness of the RA. When necessary, an institution will create an evaluation instrument for internal use only. An example of such an instrument is the Student Evaluation of the Resident Assistant (SERA) created by Peterman, Pilato, and Upcraft (1979). The SERA is a 15-item, Likert-type instrument that is based on the six major roles or functions describe by Upcraft and Pilato (1981) in Chapter One. However, the authors encourage institutions to develop instruments based on the six functions, but with the particular needs of the individual institution in mind.

Another method of developing a standardized instrument for a particular institution is the Behaviorally Anchored Rating Scale technique or BARS (Smith

and Kendall, 1963). According to Knouse and Rodgers (1981), the BARS procedure involves four basic steps. First, the RAs develop a list of critical incidents or examples of good and bad performances on the job. Next, the RAs determine the basic dimensions or duties for their job as an RA. The selected critical incidents are then organized by groups under the appropriate job dimensions. Finally, the RAs rate the critical incidents from very undesirable (1) to very desirable (5). Mean values are calculated from the RA ratings for each critical incident. In essence, the RAs have developed a job description based on actual job behavior, or their perception of that behavior. This job description can be translated into a performance evaluation instrument. Students would then be asked to complete the instrument by choosing those critical incidents that describe their RA. Effectiveness ratings for each job dimension and overall effectiveness would be calculated by adding the rating values for those critical incidents chosen.

It should be noted that this type of instrument has two potential weaknesses. First, the job dimensions chosen by the RAs might not include all pertinent job dimensions. Second, the instrument typically observes the extreme types of behavior and does not include the incidents of average job performance (i.e., the mundane, everyday types of jobs that go unnoticed). An instrument somewhat similar to the BARS-type instrument is the Duncan Rating Scale (Duncan, 1967). The instrument is a forced-choice rating scale that consists of 32 triads or blocks of three statements each (96 statements in all). Two of the three statements have discrimination indexes between effective and non-effective RAs. Like the SERA and BARS, the 32 triads are related to 10 job activity categories for an RA. Initial normative data resulted in split-half reliability coefficients that ranged from .70 to .74.

Another instrument that was developed for cross-institutional use is the Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale (Rodgers & Goodman, 1974). However, the instrument will only be referenced here since it will be discussed in depth in Chapter Three.

Summary

The chapter presented relevant literature that related to student development theory, person-centered theory, assertiveness, resident assistant selection, and resident assistant evaluation. Where appropriate, discussions about pertinent research were also included.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the procedures that were used to investigate the problem under study. This chapter provides a description of (a) the population, (b) the research instruments used, (c) the procedures for gathering the data, and (d) the statistical procedures that were used to analyze the data.

Description of the Population

The population for this study consisted of 64 Resident Assistants (RAs) on the Residence Life staff at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) during the 1986-1987 academic year. A sample of 47 RAs was eventually used. Demographic data collected from the 47 RAs and student raters included age, gender, race, academic class, academic classification of students residing in each residence hall, major, and completion of courses related to helping skills. The demographic data served as the independent variables for the first hypothesis. A more complete description of the demographic data is presented in conjunction with Hypothesis One in Chapter IV.

Instrumentation

This study used three instruments to collect data from the RA sample and the student raters who evaluated the effectiveness of the RAs. The College Self-Expression Scale or CSES (Galassi, Delo, Galassi, & Bastien, 1974) was used to measure the RA's level of assertiveness. The Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory or BLRI (Barrett-Lennard, 1962) was used to measure empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence. The Goodman-Rodgers Rating

Scale or GRRS (Rodgers, & Goodman, 1974) was used to measure RA effectiveness.

College Self-Expression Scale

The College Self-Expression Scale (Galassi, DeLo, Galassi, & Bastien, 1974) was used to measure the RA's level of assertiveness. The scale is a 50-item, Likert-type instrument containing 21 positively-worded items and 29 negatively-worded items. The scale was specifically developed to measure assertion in college students. All items focus on campus or classroom situations and all normative data have been collected from college students. The initial normative data provided test-retest reliability coefficients of .89 and .90 for the first two samples. Kern and McDonald (1980) obtained test-retest reliability coefficients of .88 with a retest period of 2 weeks and .81 with a retest period of 10 weeks.

Initial construct validity was obtained by comparing the College Self-Expression Scale with the Adjective Check List (Gough, 1965). The CSES correlated positively with ten of the Adjective Check List Scales that typify assertiveness. The correlation coefficients ranged from .33 to .48 and were significant at the .05 level. The CSES correlated negatively with five of the Adjective Check Lists Scales that typify non-assertiveness. These correlation coefficients were also significant at the .05 level, ranging from -.24 to -.43. In six studies comparing this scale with the Rathus Assertion Scale (Rathus, 1973), correlations ranged from .52 to .84. When the Scale was compared with the Conflict Resolution Inventory (Heath, 1965), a correlation of .72 was obtained. With regard to concurrent validity, significant results were obtained when scores on the College Self-Expression Scale for student teachers were compared with ratings of assertiveness provided by their immediate supervisors.

Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory

The Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (Barrett-Lennard, 1962) is a 64-item, Likert-type instrument that was used to measure the RAs' levels of empathy (E), congruence (C), unconditional positive regard (UR), and level of regard (LR). Each of these variables is measured by 16 items. Half the items are stated positively and half are stated negatively.

In testing for reliability, Barrett-Lennard (1962) obtained the following split-half reliability coefficients from his initial sample: LR=.93, E=.96, C=.94, and UR=.92. Using a sample of college students, Barrett-Lennard (1962) conducted test-retest reliability comparisons which resulted in reliability coefficients ranging from .89 to .94. Gurman (1977) reviewed a series of studies which provided split-half reliability coefficients from .74 to .91 and test-retest reliability coefficients ranging from .74 to .88. Rogers and Truax (1967) also obtained similar results ranging from .79 to .94.

Barrett-Lennard (1962) established content validity for the Inventory by having five expert judges who were experienced client-centered therapists rate the items in the instrument. Positively stated items were rated from +1 to +5 and negatively stated items were rated from -1 to -5. A score of zero (0) was given to those items considered neutral and/or inappropriate. Mean scores from the judges' rating were calculated for each item. The 85 items with the highest mean scores were then used to create two samples for split-half reliability assessment.

Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale

The Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale (Rodgers, & Goodman, 1974) was used to measure or determine the RAs' inferred level of effectiveness. The Scale is a 24-item, Likert-type instrument composed of 12 favorable and 12 unfavorable

items. These items were weighted to produce a favorable score of +5 and an unfavorable score of +1. The initial study of the instrument produced a split-half reliability coefficient of .93 (Rodgers & Goodman, 1975).

Rodgers and Goodman (1974) then investigated evidence for validating the instrument. First, the authors compared those students from the first sample who were referred to a disciplinary board with those students from the initial sample who were not referred. As predicted, those individuals who were referred to the board rated their RAs significantly lower (.01) than those students who were not referred. The second criterion for validation involved the hypothesis that those students in the sample who desired to return to the residence halls the following year would give a more positive rating of the RA than those students in the sample who did not desire to return to the residence halls. As in the previous comparison, a one-tailed t-test was computed between the two groups. The results indicated a positive difference at the .05 level of significance. A third criterion for validation involved the comparison of ratings of students who held positive or negative attitudes toward the RAs. However, since it was difficult to identify a definite negative group of students, a positive group of students was identified by the RAs and then compared with the ratings of the original sample that was composed of students who had positive and/or negative attitudes. The hypothesis was that the positive group would provide significantly higher ratings than the original sample. The results indicated that there was a positive difference between the two groups at the .05 level of significance.

The following year, 719 students rated 87 new RAs with the GRRS. The results of the 12 highest-rated and 12 lowest-rated RAs indicated that the instrument was sensitive to a range of attitudes for both sexes when compared

to the personality subscales of the Adjective Check List and style of interpersonal relationships as determined by the Firo-B. During the same study, the 87 new RAs completed a self-rating form of the GRRS. Similar results were again obtained when comparing the 12 highest-rated and 12 lowest-rated RA scores with the Adjective Check List Scales and the Firo-B.

Data Collection Procedures

The CSES was administered to the RAs participating in the study to measure their levels of assertiveness. Similarly, the BLRI was administered to measure their levels of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence. In conjunction with Hypothesis five, the RAs also were asked to complete the GRRS on the other participating RAs in the raters' residence hall. The instruments were administered to the RAs during a normal weekly staff meeting for each of the residence halls, or shortly thereafter. The instruments were distributed to the RAs by the Resident Director for each residence hall.

Prior to the distribution of the research instruments, meetings were conducted with the Assistant Director of Residence Life, the Area Coordinators, and the Resident Directors to explain the study, seek their cooperation and commitment, and explain what their roles would be in the process. A letter was then sent to the Resident Assistants that briefly explained the process for the study.

During the third week of March, a packet was delivered to the Resident Directors that included a list of the RA code numbers, copies of the three instruments, computer answer sheets, No. 2 pencils, and instructions concerning the administration and completion of the three instruments. Of the 64 RAs available to participate in the study, 53 (83%) completed the CSES and the BLRI. The results from 47 RAs were eventually used based on the requirement of three

student rater responses per RA. Thus, 73% of the 64 RAs participated fully in the study.

Students were selected to complete the RA evaluation instrument (GRRS) by a stratified random selection process. This process is often used when a population is naturally divided into subgroups. To accurately represent the population, an equal number of random selections are taken from each subgroup or strata. In this situation, the resident student population is divided into subgroups by residence hall floors or wings on which an RA typically resides. Therefore, to help insure that adequate evaluation data (three responses per RA) would be available for all RAs that participate in the study, a random sample of students was selected from each strata or subgroup. This selection process was completed by numbering students on each of the residence hall charts and selecting corresponding student numbers from a table of random numbers. Ten students were selected for each subgroup or RA, for a total of 640 students.

Those students selected were sent a letter that briefly explained the purpose of the study. Students also were asked to consider participating in the study on a voluntary basis. The following week, the RAs gave the selected students a packet containing the GRRS, a computer answer sheet, a No. 2 pencil, instructions for completing the instrument, and a coded envelope in which they were asked to return the completed answer sheets to their respective Resident Directors. Because of a low rate of response, a second letter was sent to the same students asking them again to consider participating in the study. Eventually, 264 (48%) of the original 640 requests were returned. Of these, 217 (34%) were used and analyzed. These 217 responses represent the total number of responses for the 47 RAs with a minimum of three student rater responses per RA.

Statistical Procedures

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation or PPMC (Glass & Stanley, 1970) and stepwise multiple regression (Pedhazur, 1982) were used to analyze the data in this study. The PPMC is typically used to determine the degree to which two variables co-vary, or vary together. That is, as one variable increases or decreases, the other variable will also increase or decrease with the first variable. When plotted on an X,Y axis, the values would tend to fall along a straight line. Thus, by definition, the PPMC is a simple statistic that indicates the degree of linear relationship between two variables (Jaeger, 1983). The PPMC was used to determine the degree of relationship between the effectiveness of the RAs and each of the following variables: assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence.

Jaeger (1983) stated that multiple regression is a statistical procedure used to predict the value of one variable (dependent) from the values of at least two other variables (independent). The procedure provides the researcher with a multiple correlation coefficient which is a simple statistic that summarizes the degree of linear relationship between a criterion or predicted (dependent) variable and a linear combination of independent variables. In essence, it indicates how well a combination of independent variables can predict a given dependent variable. The stepwise selection procedure is used to determine the optimal combination of independent variables from the group of variables being considered. As tests of significance are conducted, variables that obtain the smallest nonsignificant contribution to prediction are removed until no variables are added or removed. The stepwise multiple regression procedure was used to determine the optimal combination of assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence as predictors of RA effectiveness. All statistical

procedures used a .05 level of significance.

Summary

This chapter presented the procedures used to conduct the study. From a population of 64 RAs, 47 eventually participated in the study. Descriptions of the instruments used to measure the independent and dependent variable were provided. They were followed by a discussion of the process used to collect data from the RAs and student raters. The chapter concluded with a description of the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation and a step-wise multiple regression that were used to analyze the data.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results and interpretation of the statistical analysis for each of the five hypotheses. The chapter is presented in two sections. The first section describes the demographic data for the Resident Assistants and the student raters. The second section describes the results of testing the hypotheses.

Results Related to the Demographic Data

As stated in Chapter III, the demographic data are presented here because they serve as the independent variables in Hypothesis One. The demographic data for the RAs and student raters consist of age, gender, race, U.S. citizenship, academic classification, academic classification of students residing in each residence hall, major, and completion of course work related to helping skills. For the RAs, this last category was specified as Education 310, a helping skills course for undergraduate students.

The mean and modal age group for the RAs was 21-22 years of age (67%). Most of the RAs were female (81%). They worked predominantly in residence halls that house all undergraduate academic classifications of female students (62%). With regard to race, 28% of the RAs were Black while 67% were Caucasian. Only 5% were not U.S. citizens. The RAs tended to be juniors or seniors (85%) and a majority of the RAs had taken Education 310 (55%). Of the four majors specified (i.e. sociology, psychology, education, and business), 21% of the RAs indicated education as their major while 52% selected the "Other Major" category (i.e., a major other than sociology, psychology, education, or business).

The results were similar for the student raters with two exceptions. The raters tended to be younger than the RAs with 77% of them falling into the 19-20 year old category. This also was true for the classification category as 72% of the student raters were either freshmen or sophomores.

Results Related to Testing Hypotheses

Hypothesis one: There is no significant linear relationship between RA effectiveness as measured by the Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scales and the demographic variables of age, gender, race, major, U.S. citizenship, academic classification, academic classification of the students residing in each residence hall, and completion of course work related to helping skills. Table 1 presents the correlations between the demographic variables (for RAs and student raters) and the mean scores on the GRRS (the dependent variable).

Table 1

Correlation of the Resident Assistant and Student Demographic Variables with the GRRS Mean Scores

Variables	Age	Gender	Race	USC	Class	Classres	Major
RAs							
Coefficient	.191	-.017	.115	-.092	.345	.166	.121
Prob>F	.200	.913	.450	.542	.020	.270	.430
Students							
Coefficient	-.003	-.075	.063	.062	.041	.058	.078
Prob>F	.970	.274	.360	.368	.550	.400	.260

$p<.05$

The RAs' academic classification obtained a significant, positive correlation ($r=.35$, $p<.02$). This result may be related to the stages of developmental growth which are discussed further in Chapter Five. The 15 remaining demographic variables did not obtain significant correlations. Table 3 (see Appendix H) provides additional information by presenting a comparison of independent and

dependent variable mean scores across RA demographic variables.

Hypothesis two: There is a significant linear relationship between RA effectiveness as measured by the Goodman-Rogers Rating Scale and assertiveness as measured by the College Self-Expression Scale. This relationship will be in the positive direction such that higher scores on the GRRS will be related to higher scores on the CSES. This relationship will be significant at the .05 level.

The Pearson Product Moment Coefficient was used to determine the relationship between RA effectiveness (GRRS) and assertiveness (CSES). As indicated in Table 2 the correlation coefficient for assertiveness (r=.02) is quite small.

Table 2

Correlations of RA Effectiveness with Assertiveness, Empathy, Unconditional Positive Regard, and Congruence

Variable	GRRS	CSES	Empathy	UPR	Cong
CSES	.0243	1.0000			
Prob>F	.8712	----			
Empathy	.2732	-.2386	1.0000		
Prob>F	.0632	.1063	----		
UPR	.1289	-.1547	.7853	1.0000	
Prob>F	.3877	.2991	.0000	----	
Congruence	.1856	-.2802	.7409	.7754	1.0000
Prob>F	.2117	.0564	.0001	.0001	----

p<.05

The regression results also presented in Table 2 indicate that the coefficient was not found to be significant at the .05 level. The hypothesis was, thus, rejected. As might be expected, assertiveness, which is more self-centered, was negatively correlated with the other three independent variables, which are more other-centered. This was especially true of congruence with a correlation coefficient of -.28 which was significant at the .06 level.

Hypothesis three: There is a significant linear relationship between RA effectiveness and each of the variables of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence as measured by the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory. These relationships will be in the positive direction and will be significant at .05 level.

The variables of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence were measured by the same instrument and were, therefore, combined in a single hypothesis. However, the data for each variable were analyzed as separate variables and are presented in the same manner. As previous studies found, three variables were highly correlated with each other, since they are a part of the same instrument. When correlated with RA effectiveness, however, the results were quite low. Table 2 also indicates that none of the variables was significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the third hypothesis was rejected. It should noted, however, that empathy was significantly correlated with RA effectiveness (r=.27) at the .06 level of significance. The statistical results indicated a positive relationship between the two variables.

Hypothesis four: There is a significant multiple correlation between RA effectiveness and a combination of the variables of assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence. This correlation will be in a positive direction and will be significant at the .05 level.

In this stepwise multiple regression model, a variable was required to have a .15 level of significance for entry into the regression equation and a .05 level to remain in the equation when other variables were added. Empathy was the first variable entered with a significance level of .06 and accounted for 7.5% of the variance in the responses. Although empathy did not have the .05 level of significance, it remained in the equation since no other variable met the

qualifying .15 level of significance. However, since no combination of variables met both qualifications, the fourth hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis five: There is a significant positive relationship between RA effectiveness as rated by resident students and RA effectiveness as rated by other RAs. This relationship will be significant at the .05 level.

This hypothesis is based on Tibbit's (1977) contention that peer evaluation is an effective means of evaluation and selection. However, instead of a strong relationship between ratings of the two groups, the results only indicated a correlation coefficient of .12, which was not significant. Therefore, this hypothesis also was rejected.

Summary

This chapter presented the statistical results of the five hypotheses. The first hypothesis was stated in the null and investigated the use of demographic variables as potential predictors of RA effectiveness. With the exception of the RAs' academic classification, none of the demographic variables correlated significantly with RA effectiveness. The hypothesis was supported. The results of the three hypotheses that investigated assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence as predictors of RA effectiveness were rejected since none of the variables correlated significantly with the dependent variable. The final hypothesis studied the relationship between group ratings. The results did not indicate a significant correlation. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected. Thus, with the exception of the first hypothesis, all the hypotheses were rejected.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the independent variables of assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence could be used as predictors of RA effectiveness. Resident Assistant effectiveness was determined by mean scores from student raters on the Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale. The four predictor variables were measured by two self-report instruments that were administered to the RAs. The College Self-Expression Scale measured assertiveness and the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory measured empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence.

The remainder of the chapter will present the conclusions about each of the five hypotheses. They are presented in sequential order beginning with Hypothesis One. Since the statistical results of Hypothesis Two and Three serve as the basis for Hypothesis Four, any conclusions for the former Hypotheses are to be considered as conclusions for Hypothesis Four as well.

Hypothesis One

Hypothesis One predicted that there would be no correlation between RA effectiveness and demographic variables presented in Chapters III and IV. Except for the academic classification of the RAs, none of the demographic variables correlated significantly with the student raters' mean scores on the GRRS. Therefore, the hypothesis was supported with the one exception or qualification stated above. It was interesting that age did not have a significant correlation in conjunction with academic classification. The answer may be

found in student development theory. Blimling and Miltenberger (1981) stated that students in college "must wrestle with issues relating to their parents and their autonomy, relationships with their peers, discovering who they are as individuals, the integration and acceptance of a workable value system, a career and life direction, and establishing an ethical and moral base of reasoning" (p. 46). The authors divided these developmental crises and tasks into three basic stages, with the last stage beginning sometime during the junior year (85% of the RAs at UNCG were juniors or seniors). Although age is related, it is the unique setting that college affords to allow the individual to come into contact with the variety of developmental crises and tasks described above and in Chapter II.

Another interesting result concerned the lack of relationship between Education 310 and RA effectiveness. Those RAs who completed Education 310 had slightly lower mean scores (85.3) than those RAs who did not complete the course (87.8). This result may imply that such courses or training programs are not as effective in teaching skills and attitudes as intended. For example, a study by Dameron, Wolf, and Aguren (1980) found that a training course dealing with helping skills had little effect on the job perceptions of RAs (i.e., rule enforcer perceived as more important than helper). This study is discussed in more detail in conjunction with Hypothesis Three.

Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis Two had predicted a significant negative relationship between RA effectiveness and assertiveness. The data did not provide significant results at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

At this point, however, it may be appropriate to question whether the study actually investigated a full range of assertive attitudes and behaviors. The CSES

is a self-report instrument that attempts to measure the degree of assertiveness that an individual possesses or practices. The scores on the CSES range from 50 to 250. These scores represent the extremes of being more assertive and less assertive, respectively. All scores for RAs in this study occurred at or above the midpoint (i.e. 150) for the range of scores on the CSES. The grouping of all scores toward the upper regions of the scale tend to indicate scores that are less assertive. The mean scores obtained from normative data by Galassi, Delo, Galassi, and Bastian (1974) ranged from 167 to 183 with a standard deviation ranging from 14 to 23. The RAs' mean score of 187.5, thus, occurred above the mean score of the norm groups. These results indicate that the RAs at UNCG tended to be somewhat less assertive than the college students who participated in the norm groups. Therefore, since none of the scores in this study would be indicative of more assertive attitudes and behavior, it might be more precise to state that the results indicated that the lack of assertiveness was rejected as a predictor of RA effectiveness.

Further, these results may give some indication as to how favorably or unfavorably students and RAs perceive assertiveness. It may seem obvious to researchers and practitioners in student development that assertion involves attitudes and behaviors that are beneficial to the individual. There does not seem to be any research, however, which indicates that students and RAs are convinced of its benefits. Therefore, it would seem appropriate to question whether assertiveness is a priority for their lives now, or whether it is a goal to be considered in the future.

Flowers, Whitely, and Cooper (1978) stated that assertion not only involved standing up for one's own rights, but also "being able to receive requests, refusals, and expressions which necessitate respect for the other person's

assertive rights" (p.17). This statement has the potential to greatly impact the interactions between resident students and the RAs. If a student does not receive the RA's comments with respect for the RA's assertive rights, or perceives these comments to be aggressive and self-centered, a negative impression will be created, regardless of the intentions of the RA. Will the typical RA be willing to take such a risk?

This tendency is further constrained by the fact that RA's are members of various peer groups, especially within the residence hall. Blimling and Miltenberger (1981) stated that

> The single most important influence on students' development in college, upon values, career aspirations, and over-all adjustment is the peer group. The peer group sets the standards for interaction, acceptable behavior, and approval, and serves as a mirror to reflect the images that students have of themselves. It is a key in helping students determine who they are and what they wish to become (p. 49).

Being a member of the Residence Life staff and a member of a peer group that resides within a residence hall can create a great deal of role conflict for the RA. Forsyth (1983) stated that the conflict may be perpetuated by the proximity arrangements, the closeness of age, the encouraged involvement in activities, and the similar academic concerns of both students and RAs. Thus, these situations can create some interesting questions. For example, are RAs influenced to behave more like a staff member, or as a resident student? Does such behavior influence how students might evaluate them as RAs? Although interesting, these questions were not specifically addressed in this study. The answers, however, may be pertinent to any future research concerning resident assistant

effectiveness.

Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis Three predicted a significant negative relationship between RA effectiveness and each of the three variables of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence. None of the three variables had a correlation that was significant at the .05 level of significance. The hypothesis was, thus, rejected.

Although empathy did not have a significant correlation at the .05 level, it was determined to be significant (r=.27) at the .06 level. The statistical results, thus, revealed a positive relationship between the two variables. This typically indicates that lower scores on Scale A correlate with lower scores on Scale B and higher scores on Scale A correlate with higher scores on Scale B. Higher scores on the GRRS infer greater degrees of RA effectiveness. In this situation, however, lower scores on the empathy subscale of the BLRI infer higher degrees of empathy. A positive relationship between empathy and RA effectiveness should result in a negative correlation coefficient since lower scores on one scale would be related to higher scores on the other scale. Therefore, the positive correlation obtained in this study actually indicates a negative relationship between the two variables. That is, higher scores on the empathy subscale of the BLRI (inferring lower degrees of empathy) are correlated with higher scores on the GRRS (indicating greater RA effectiveness). The results imply that the more effective an RA was rated, the less empathy he/she seemed to project or possess.

The results of this study tended to support the negative or inconclusive results of studies presented by Mitchell, Bozarth, and Krauft (1977) and Parloff, Waskow, and Wolfe (1978). These studies considered a number of questions. (a) Are the core condition variables of empathy, unconditional positive regard, and

congruence necessary and sufficient to promote positive client change? (b) Are the core conditions appropriate for a variety of problems and settings? (c) Are the core conditions appropriate for use by counselors or therapists with varied theoretical backgrounds? and (d) Who should assess the therapeutic relationship and its effects on positive change. The lack of any significant results may indicate the these questions directly or indirectly influenced this study. After studying the results, a number of pertinent questions came to light that were not addressed in the present study. They include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) Are the core conditions somewhat innate or learned? (b) Do the stages of human development help determine how effectively they might be learned and practiced? and (c) Are there methods that are more appropriate or effective in facilitating such learning?

Student development researchers and practitioners such as Delworth, Sherwood, and Casaburri (1974) have emphasized that counseling is the primary role or function for the RA. Upcraft and Pilato (1982) stated that the development and training of interpersonal or counseling skills is the most critical part of their training program for RAs. Some programs such as Human Relations Training (Carkhuff, 1969) and Microcounseling Training (Ivey, Normington, Miller, Morrill, & Haase, 1968) deal solely with the counseling or interpersonal skills. Blimling and Miltenberger (1981) stated that many individuals expect to become counselors in the job as an RA. Instead, the authors contend that the RAs should view themselves as good, skilled listeners, helpers, or facilitators. As Shelton and Corazzini (1976) stated, residence hall workers often fail to clearly define their own roles as RAs. An RA may act in a very therapeutic manner, but the RA is not paid or trained to be therapist. These last comments seem to indicate that perhaps too much emphasis is placed on counseling or counseling

skills. The two studies presented below also indicate a potential overemphasis on counseling.

Forsyth (1983) investigated how students, RAs, and administrators view or rate eight job roles or functions for RAs. All three groups were asked to rank the eight roles in order of importance from one to eight. The results indicated that all three groups agreed that promoting an environment conducive to study was the most important RA role. The RAs then chose counselor and leader second and third respectively. The students, however, rated these two choices fifth and sixth, respectively. The students, however, ranked friend and source of information as second and third, respectively. These results seem to question whether students prefer a counselor/helper or a friend who knows how to care for others.

Another study of RAs roles was conducted by Dameron, Wolf, and Aguren (1980). Again, RAs were asked to rank various RA job roles or functions. The results indicated that 86% of the RAs perceived their primary function as an enforcer of rules. Only 41% recognized any responsibility for acting as a helper, which was viewed as a secondary function. The stunning fact is that these results were obtained after a 30-hour training program that emphasized helping skills based on Carkhuff's (1969) Human Resources Development Training. As a means of explaining this discrepancy, the authors stated that the institution failed to provide a clear statement or description of the RA job roles and functions prior to the beginning of the training. Thus, it was their contention that the RAs' initial perceptions about job roles were not clarified or eliminated by the training program. These results also seem to question how effective courses or training programs are in teaching attitudes and behaviors, especially if they are to be considered and practiced over an extended period of time.

Hypothesis Four

Hypothesis Four predicted that there would be a positive multiple relationship between RA effectiveness and a combination of the variables of assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence. In essence, this hypothesis investigated the combined effects of Hypotheses Two and Three. Since a multiple regression model was not established at the .05 level of significance, no further discussion will be presented beyond that for Hypotheses Two and Three.

Hypothesis Five

Hypothesis Five predicted that there would be a positive relationship between RA effectiveness as rated by other RAs and RA effectiveness as rated by the student raters. Quite surprisingly, the results indicated that there was no significant correlation between these scores at the .05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis was rejected. The results seem to indicate that RAs are perceived differently by students and other RAs. This may be caused by personal bias on the part of either rater, or it may be that students lack understanding with regard to the actual job functions performed by the RAs (Delworth, Sherwood, & Casaburri, 1974).

The results of this hypothesis indicated that there was no significant correlation between the two rating groups. Based on Tibbits (1977), these results seemed inconsistent. The results seem to support Forsyth's (1983) findings that RAs and students view the RA roles from different perspectives which influenced the varied results.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that research be conducted to determine students' perceptions of such character qualities as assertiveness, empathy, respect, and

genuineness.

2. It is recommended that research be conducted to compare perceptions of administrators, RAs, and students with regard to RA job roles.

3. It is recommended that varied training course content (e.g., helping skills versus administrative skills) be used as treatments when future research investigates their influence on RA effectiveness.

4. It is recommended that research be conducted to determine those conditions under which a peer group (e.g., resident students) becomes influential.

Summary

This was a descriptive study that investigated the relationship between resident assistant effectiveness and the variables of empathy, unconditional positive regard, congruence, and assertiveness. The GRRS was completed by resident students to determine the effectiveness of each RA. The four remaining predictor variables were measured by the CSES and the BLRI. The Pearson Product-Moment Coefficients did not indicate any significant correlations (.05) between Ra effectiveness and each of the predictor variables. Therefore, the results of the study did not support the hypotheses that assertiveness, empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence were potential predictors of RA effectiveness.

Postscript

Based on the recommendations presented above, a copy of this dissertation will be presented to the Director and Associate Director of Residence Life for future research consideration.

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APPENDIX A

The Goodman-Rodgers Rating Scale

Student Evaluation
RESIDENT ASSISTANT QUESTIONNAIRE

You have been selected as part of a sample of students in your residence hall for a study dealing with Resident Assistants. We are hoping that your cooperation and assistance will contribute to improved procedures in the selection and evaluation of residence hall staff.

Please do not confer with anyone while filling out the questionnaire. The questionnaire should take about 10 minutes to complete.

Please answer on the basis of your experience with your present Resident Assistant. Base your answers strictly on your own experience.

Please respond to each item by marking either A, B, C, D or E on the answer sheet for the corresponding item on the questionnaire. Your answers should indicate whether you

A. Strongly Disagree

B. Disagree

C. Neutral or Don't Know

D. Agree

E. Strongly Agree

Please do not place your name on the questionnaire or answer sheet.

My Resident Assistant:

1. Is generally good at handling people.
2. Is normally honest with floor residents.
3. Tends to act like a dictator.
4. Is generally very helpful.
5. Tends to take advantage of his/her position.
6. Is willing to admit mistakes.
7. Is not usually a source of encouragement for residents to achieve higher grades.
8. Is a fine representative of the university.

9. Makes students feel uncomfortable.
10. I would not go to my resident assistant even if I did have a problem.
11. Is usually very responsible.
12. Does not really help the freshmen/upperclassmen adjust to their surroundings.
13. Tends to become conceited.
14. Can handle emergencies well.
15. Generally has the ability to put himself/herself in another's place.
16. Is not very friendly.
17. Usually provides worthwhile assistance to residents with academic problems.
18. Is too bossy.
19. Is usually a good leader.
20. Is deeply concerned about the problems of floor residents.
21. All things considered, my resident assistant normally does a good job.
22. Seldom understands the problems of the students on the floor.
23. Does not normally try to be patient.
24. Is usually not willing to listen to criticism of himself/herself.

PERSONAL DATA

(Please Note Number Change)

31. Age (a=19-20; b=21-22; c=23-24; d=25-26; e=27 and older)
32. Sex (a=male; b=female)
33. Race (a=Black; b=White; c=Hispanic; d=Oriental; e=other)
34. Are you a U. S. citizen? (a=yes; b=no)
35. Classification (a=freshman; b=sophomore; c=junior; d=senior; e=graduate)
36. Classification of students in your residence hall (a=all freshman women; b=all freshman men; c=co-ed; d=mixed classification of men; e=mixed classification of women)
37. Have you had any courses dealing with helping skills? (a=yes; b=no)
38. Your major is (a=sociology, b=psychology; c=education; d=business; e=other)

APPENDIX B

The College Self-Expression Scale

APPENDIX C

The Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory

APPENDIX D

Memorandum Sent to the Resident Directors

March 30, 1987

To: UNCG Resident Directors

From: Dr. Steve Haulman SRH
Mr. Steve Maleski SM

Re: Research study to investigate the prediction of Resident Assistant effectiveness

During the recent March 5th staff meeting, it was stated that Mr. Steve Maleski would be conducting research to investigate certain predictor variables for RA effectiveness. As Steve indicated, your help will be critical in this endeavor. Your help will be fourfold. First, Steve will need you to administer two research instruments to your RA staff during your weekly staff meeting. This will need to be done during the week of April 5-12, 1987. Second, you will need to insure that select resident students are given the appropriate research packets. Students will then be instructed to return the completed questionaires to your office/apartment. Finally, you will need to return all the instruments (both student and RA) to the Residence Life Office by Monday afternoon, April 13, 1987.

The instruments for the RAs and the packets for the selected students will be placed in your boxes on Friday morning, April 3, 1987. You will also receive further instructions at that time.

Your time and cooperation in this matter are greatly appreciated. Thank you.

APPENDIX E

Memorandum Sent to the Resident Assistants

March 30, 1987

To: UNCG Resident Assistants

From: Dr. Steve Haulman SRH
Mr. Steve Maleski SM

RE: Research study to investigate the prediction of Resident Assistant Effectiveness

The Residence Life Office has agreed to assist Mr. Steve Maleski in conducting a research study that will investigate certain criteria that can aid in the evaluation and selection of effective Resident Assistants here at UNCG. To satisfactorily complete this research, Steve will need your assistance. You can help by completing two questionaires during your normally scheduled staff meeting during the week of April 5-12, 1987. Each questionaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. At your convenience, you will also be asked to complete a rating scale on each of the other RAs in your building during that same week. The RAs in the high-rise buildings will only be required to evaluate half of the building staff. All questionaires will need to be returned to your Resident Director by Sunday night, April 12, 1987.

Your time and effort in this matter will be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

APPENDIX F

Memorandum Sent to the Resident Students

March 30, 1987

To: Select Resident Students

From: Dr. Steve Haulman SAH
Mr. Steve Maleski SM

Re: Research study to investigate the prediction of Resident Assistant effectiveness

You have been selected to participate in a research study that will be conducted by Mr. Steve Maleski from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. It is the intent of this study to investigate certain variables that will possibly aid in the evaluation and selection of effective Resident Assistants here at UNCG.

You can help by completing a questionaire that will be delivered to you by your Residence Life Staff during the week of April 6, 1987. The questionaire will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. There will be no risk involved on your part for completing the questionaire. You can be assured that your responses will be kept confidential. Although your participation would enhance the study, you are not under any obligation to complete the questionaire.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

APPENDIX G

Instructions for the Test Instruments

INSTRUCTIONS

Relationship Inventory

1. Have the RAs find their four (4) digit number code on the code list and write it in the "Special Code" section, letters K, L, M, and N. They should then fill in the corresponding number circles. There is no need for the RAs to complete any of the other personal data that is requested to the left of the dark blue line (e.g. Name, Birth Date, or Identification Number).

2. Have the RAs read the instructions. They will indicate that the RA should consider a particular individual when completing the questionaire. This person should be someone that is presently living on their particular floor. Once the RA has this person in mind he/she should complete the questionaire

3. The questionaire should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

College Self-Expression Scale

1. As with the Relationship Inventory, the RA should place his/her 4-digit code in the "Special Code" section.

2. The RAs should read the instructions and complete the questionaire on a second NCS answer sheet.

3. This questionaire also includes personal data from the RAs that will be used as independent variables. As the questionaire indicates, these items are to be completed on numbers 61-68.

Resident Assistant Qusetionaire

1. Each RA is to complete a rating scale on each of the other RAs on your staff that is participating in the research study. (Please note that RAs hired during the Spring Semester have not been included in the study.) For double building staffs like Weil-Winfield, the RAs should only rate those RAs in their building (i.e. RAs in Weil should only rate those RAs in Weil). The high-rise staffs should be divided into two groups--floors 2-5 and 6-9. This is only an arbitrary suggestion as an attempt to obtain a fair number of responses without extremely overtaxing the RAs.

2. For these ratings, the RA should write the 4-digit code of the RA that is being rated in the "Special Code" section, letters K, L, M, and N. The RA doing the rating should put his/her code in the Identifiecation Number section, letters A, B, C, and D.

3. These ratings should be completed sometime during the week and not during the staff meeting since the responses may be influenced by the others RAs who are present.

4. A separate NCS answer sheet should be used for each rating. The RAs should not complete items 31-38 since these items will be used to gather personal data on the resident students who will be rating the RAs.

APPENDIX H

Table 3

Table 3

Comparison of Variable Mean Scores Across RA Demographics

Variable	N	GRRS	CSES	Empathy	UPR	Congruence
Age						
19-20	9	80	186	35	41	30
21-22	31	88	182	36	41	33
23-24	5	90	177	42	47	37
25-26	1	86	205	42	47	35
27 +	1	80	227	26	27	22
Gender						
Male	9	87	187	39	47	34
Female	37	86	188	36	41	32
Race						
Black	13	85	192	37	41	32
Cauc.	31	86	186	36	41	32
Hispanic	2	94	166	46	55	37
Other	1	86	205	42	47	25
U.S. Cit.						
Yes	44	86	188	41	41	32
No	3	84	177	43	50	36
Class						
Fresh.	1	76	182	41	56	47
Soph.	5	80	178	31	34	26
Junior	12	84	184	38	42	35
Senior	28	88	190	37	42	32
Classres						
Fresh. (Female)	6	82	182	39	41	34
Coed	6	84	184	37	44	34
Male	5	90	178	28	46	34
Female	29	86	190	36	40	32
Edu 310						
Yes	26	85	189	36	41	32
No	21	87	185	38	42	32
Major						
Soc.	3	82	178	42	49	36
Psyc.	5	82	189	38	44	35
Educ.	10	86	178	37	41	33
Bus.	6	88	188	38	40	30
Other	23	87	192	35	41	31

APPENDIX I

UNCG Resident Assistant Job Description

RESIDENT ASSISTANT

Resident Assistants (RA's) are specially-trained students who serve on the Residence Life Staff. They share in the responsibility for making residence hall living an integral component of the educational process through carrying out the goals and purposes of the residence halls. Resident Assistants help create an environment that meets students' academic needs and provides for personal growth and development. Along with other Residence Life staff members, they strive to create and maintain student self-responsibility within the residential unit. The Resident Assistants' work will deal primarily with small groups within the residence hall, but they will share in the responsibility for coordinating the activities of the total, larger living unit.

Resident Assistants live and work in a residence hall and report directly to the Residence Director in charge of that hall. They are obligated, by virtue of their employment, to support and implement all policies, rules, and regulations of the University and the Department of Residence Life.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.3 during the period of application and initial employment (2.0 thereafter).

2. Is classified a second semester freshman or above at the time the application is made.

3. Is available to work the entire academic year or for the remainder of an academic year if appointed to fill a vacancy.

4. Accepts no other employment without prior written permission from the Area Coordinator.

5. Has lived in a UNC-G residence hall a minimum of one semester prior to employment.

6. Attends the spring retreat for new RA's. If a new RA, enrolls in EDU 310.

7. Is available to attend the staff training workshop held 4-5 days prior to the opening of school for the fall semester.

The following are specific duties and responsibilities of a Resident Assistant:

RESPONSIBILITIES TO RESIDENTS

Resident Assistants assume a leadership role on their floor and share the leadership responsibilities for their building. The RA also assumes responsibility for the administrative functioning of the floor and assists individual or group of students as needed.

A. Developing Floor Atmosphere/Relationship to Residents

1. Develops a sense of community on the floor by encouraging the residents to become acquainted with one another and by encouraging consideration of and concern for others.

2. Sets a good example for residents by following all residence hall policies and modeling the responsible and mature behavior expected of residents.

3. Actively encourages and creates opportunities for resident involvement in decisions concerning floor conditions.

4. Helps maintain an atmosphere conducive to sleeping and studying, as well as socializing.

5. Gets to know the residents of the floor personally, early in the semester, and maintains frequent contact with them.

6. Becomes aware of the needs and interests of the residents and is familiar enough with them to respond accordingly.

7. Knows residents well enough to notice changes in behavior which might indicate emotional, physical or academic difficulties and require support or help.

8. Maintains a positive attitude toward others and accepts others whose lifestyles and attitudes are different.

9. Is visible, available to and approachable by the residents.

B. Responding to Individual Problems

1. Serves as a good listener and helper, while recognizing limits of his/her training and experience as a helper, making referrals when necessary.

2. Has a knowledge of referral options within the University and knows how to refer and offer assistance.

3. Consults with Residence Director, other professional staff or the Counseling Center when further help is warranted and not being sought by the resident.

4. Works to identify and solve problem situations on the floor including roommate conflicts, personal problems and emergencies. Serves as a mediator in those situations when appropriate, and refers to Residence Director or Area Coordinator, if necessary.

5. Treats problems and concerns with complete confidentiality, never discussing personal conversations, counseling situations, resident conflicts or disciplinary action with anyone other than personnel having a professional need to know.

DISCIPLINE

Resident Assistants set examples by their own behavior. They abide by all the policies, rules and regulations. RA's implement policies, rules and regulations as specified in the Application-Contract for Housing and Food Service and the Staff Manual.

1. Informs residents of policies, rules and regulations in a positive manner. Works with the rest of the staff in explaining the rationale behind those policies, rules and regulations to the residents.

2. Is familiar with changes in the policies, rules and regulations and communicates them to the residents.

3. Knows the procedure for constructive change of these policies, rules and regulations.

4. Enforces all Residence Life and University policies and his/her floor and in the building and takes the appropriate disciplinary action when necessary.

5. Intervenes in any situation that is disrupting the floor or disturbing residents when they are not capable or willing to solve the problem among themselves.

6. Is consistent in handling similar situations.

7. Handles all situations objectively without favoritism or bias.

8. Informs the rest of the building staff of any disciplinary action taken, so that good communication and consistency can occur among staff members.

PROGRAMMING

Resident Assistants are expected to promote an atmosphere conducive to individual and group development by encouraging programs for the floors and the building.

1. Coordinates and serves as a resource person for programming activities on the floor.

2. Helps identify programming needs and interests of the residents on the floor.

3. Actively plans and promotes educational, cultural and recreational programming opportunities and activities.

4. Encourages the residents to participate in the planning and implementation of programs and activities by actively soliciting their input and by delegating responsibility.

5. Participates in both planned and spontaneous activities on the floor.

6. Assumes responsibility for at least one educational program per month.

7. Shares in the responsibility for coordinating all other planned activities within the residence hall.

8. Evaluates programming efforts with students and other staff. Completes and turns in program evaluations promptly, as specified.

9. Encourages the residents to participate in all Residence Life and University community events.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE STAFF

The Resident Assistant's role is an important one on the residence hall team. RA's interact frequently with the Residence Director and other RA's in order to guarantee the smooth functioning of their residence hall.

1. Works cooperatively as part of the team of staff members responsible for the building.

2. Supports staff decisions and assists in disciplinary actions.

3. Sets up a schedule of duty hours and time off after consultation with the rest of the staff. Notifies the Residence Director of all overnight absences.

4. Attends weekly in-house or area staff meetings.

5. Checks in daily with the Residence Director and keeps him/her informed of the activities and problems on the floor.

6. Attends at least the minimum number of staff development activities, workshops and programs as scheduled throughout the year.

7. Works with and supports the rest of the staff on specific needs or projects identified by the hall residents.

8. Develops a working relationship with the housekeeping and maintenance staffs.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Resident Assistants have a great responsibility for assisting in the management of their residence hall. Through these duties, they help create greater efficiency and better communication for the residents.

1. Directs requests for maintenance or repairs to the first floor housekeeper and/or the Residence Director.

2. Reports damages, thefts and misuse of property to the Residence Director and assists in solving any problems that may result from such situations.

3. Is responsible for the proper and prudent use of master and building keys.

4. Is familiar with all alarm systems and is aware of building evacuation and other emergency procedures. RA's are expected to respond to alarms and emergency situations as they occur.

5. Helps distribute and collect information from the Office of Residence Life, Area Coordinators, Residence Directors or other University services in a timely manner.

6. Assists with check-in and check-out procedures.

7. Assists with the room reservation process.

8. Assists in selecting Residence Life staff members including interviewing and submitting recommendations.

9. Shares responsibilities for overseeing the election/appointment of residence hall officers and intramural representatives.

10. Assists with room condition reports for the floor and other reports deemed necessary by the Residence Director, Area Coordinator or Office of Residence Life. Turns these in by the designated deadline.

11. Assists in enforcing dining hall policies and confronts and reports any violations.

12. Assists with the opening and closing of the residence hall for breaks, holidays and semester changes. Is prepared to be the last to leave and first to arrive for closing and opening.

13. Performs other duties or responsibilities as deemed necessary by the Residence Director, Area Coordinator, Managers, Assistant Director or Director of Residence Life.