The purpose of this study was to determine the degree of social support within different living groups. It also determined if there were a combination of variables that contribute to social support. The independent variables included interpersonal orientation, sense of identity, adjustment to college, grade point average, gender of subject, and participation in extracurricular activities.

The sample consisted of freshmen who lived in coeducational halls, single sex halls and in off-campus housing. These subjects completed the inventory of Social Support Behavior, the Erwin Identity Scale, the College Freshmen Adjustment Scale and the Interpersonal Orientation Scale. Of the 515 surveys distributed, 305 (50%) were returned.

One-way analysis of variance compared the levels of social support in the three different living groups. Correlation coefficients were used to determine if significant relationships existed between social support and the independent variables. Multiple regression was used to determine which variables were the best predictors of social support.

Results indicated a significant difference in the level of social support experienced by the living groups. Significant
relationships existed between social support and the variables of interpersonal orientation and adjustment to college. The regression equation indicated that these two variables were also the best predictors of social support. A negative correlation existed between social support and grade point average.

Women in single sex residence halls experienced the greatest degree of social support. Interpersonal orientation and adjustment to college were found to be key variables that influence the level of social support within a residence hall setting. The inverse relationship between grades and social support suggested the importance of peer relationships for the student experiencing academic difficulty.
The Occurrence of Social Support among Students Living in Residence Halls

by

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The Occurrence of Social Support among Students Living in Residence Halls

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

**Purpose of the Study**

Understanding the characteristics of communities and the people who live in them is the focus of research in several disciplines. Interactions between individuals and their social environments are addressed in a new field of study called community psychology. This developing specialization studies how groups form, maintain identities and deal with the concerns that confront their membership (Blakely, 1979; Murrell, 1973). This study examines a set of communities found in freshmen residence halls on a university campus.

Initial findings in community psychology come from medical research. These showed that conditions in the social environment have significant influence on the quality of life community members experience. Specifically, conditions in the social environment influence mental health, physical health and coping strategies used by community members. The common denominator connecting these research findings points to the importance of one characteristic within the community: a sense of social support.

Social support can also be labeled as social relations, community integration, social participation or social attachment (Barrera, Sandley & Ramsay, 1981). Others describe social support as the sense of cohesion or affiliation that develops within a community (Moos & Van Dort, 1979). These characteristics of social support are key factors in the theoretical framework of community psychology.
Traditional mental health approaches resolve individual and community problems through the expertise of trained professionals. Instead of complete dependence on this type of intervention, community psychology stresses the use of natural support systems. Greater use is made of self-help groups, paraprofessionals and social support from peers within the community (Silverman, 1980; Barrera & Ainlay, 1983).

Natural helpers within the social environment, such as family members or friends, represent a major source of social support. Other sources of social support originate from individuals who play the role of "community gate keepers." These individuals work in settings where they provide services to the greater community; for example, they may be bartenders or beauticians. However, they have little training in dealing with mental health issues. Social support research suggests that individuals who experience stress turn to these "community gate keepers" or to family and friends. Distressed community members do not turn to members of the helping profession for assistance. This is also true of students enrolled in higher education (Gottlieb, 1983; Wilcox, 1981; Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981).

In addition to its importance during times of high stress, social support also plays a buffering role in the daily routine of community members. The buffering quality of social support is most likely to occur in social environments where group members experience a sense of unity. Several conditions increase this possibility. Openness, flexibility, communication skills, similar personalities, acceptance of the behavior of others, and similar demographic characteristics are identified as being crucial factors in the development of a unified community (Kirshner, Dies & Brown, 1978; Evans & Jarvis, 1980; Stockton & Hulse, 1981).

Living environments or communities with these characteristics are also likely to show an increase in the degree of feedback between members. Social support in the form of feedback is an
additional method of reducing stress that members experience (Gottlieb, 1983).

Research on social support identified consistent outcomes that occur when it does not exist in a community. Moos & Van Dort (1979) report that living environments characterized by a lack of social support have an increase in the number of illnesses and physiological complaints experienced by community members. In addition, these settings show a higher frequency of hostility as expressed through arguments and temper outbursts.

Individuals living in a non-supportive setting were asked to describe themselves and their living environments. Self-descriptions that mentioned loneliness, depression and boredom were frequent. Similar negative statements were used to describe the living environment. Individuals felt that these settings lacked unity and lacked participation from the membership. They also expressed a lack of emotional support from staff members assigned to work with the group (Insel & Moos, 1974).

Numerous studies have explored how social support influences the lives of college students. Married and graduate students depend on social support from their peers to alleviate the stress of their academic demands. Undergraduates also use social support as a means of dealing with stress, especially during final examinations. The amount of social support available during this time influences the degree of academic success students experience (Hirsch, 1979).

Social support also affects the emotional problems college students experience. Mishara (1982) discussed research that suggested how social support decreased the suicidal behaviors of depressed students. To date, these studies represent the major research of social support among college students.
Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to determine the degree of social support experienced by freshmen at Oregon State University. It was composed of two parts: First, it determined if there was a combination of factors that contributed to the level of social support experienced by freshmen living in residence halls; second, it explored whether there was a difference in the levels of social support experienced by freshmen who lived in residence halls and those who lived off-campus.

The relationship between the dependent variable social support and six independent variables was measured. These included the independent continuous variables of interpersonal orientation, adjustment to college, grade point average, and sense of identity. Sense of identity was measured by dividing it into the areas of confidence, sexual identity, and conceptions about body appearance.

Three categorical independent variables were also tested. These were type of residence hall, sex of subject, and participation in extracurricular activities. This last category was divided into dating frequency, attendance at social activities, and participation in intramural athletics.

Significance of the Study

In recent years colleges and universities have placed greater emphasis on student retention. This is due to a decrease in the number of students graduating from high school and to the large number of underclassmen who drop out of higher education (Brigman & Stager, 1980). Several theoretical approaches have been used to explain how retention efforts can be improved.

Person-environment theory represents one explanation to improve student retention. According to this theory, satisfaction with a social environment is contingent upon the degree of "fit" or
congruence that exists between it and those who live there. A positive fit is likely if the student's career objectives can be achieved through specific academic programs at the university. In addition, a positive "fit" also occurs if students are able to develop relationships with "significant others" in the academic community. These significant others can be professors, staff members or peers.

Traditionally, this positive fit characterized the collegiate environment. Cooperation and support were the cornerstones of the academic world. Within the student population this was especially apparent. Students came to institutions of higher education with similar experiences and similar aspirations for the future. Homogeneous student populations made community development and social support attainable objectives (Brubacker & Rudy, 1958).

Modern universities are confronted with a different set of variables. Pluralistic values, changing demographic characteristics and the increased importance of career concerns represent differences found in current college students (Levine, 1980). A sense of community and social support are no longer automatic conditions within higher education. In light of this fact, practitioners within student services have reacted by developing specific programs responding to these issues (DeCoster & Mable, 1980). Here, the ultimate objective is to improve the congruence between person and environment. During the late sixties, an increased emphasis was placed on recruiting minority students to higher education. The diversity that characterized these students created problems for them and for the institutions they attended. However, developmental programs and policy changes evolved, and greater congruence developed between these students and their universities. As a result these students have begun to feel more social support and greater identification with higher education (Chreatham, 1982).

An increase in the number of minority students represents only one of the differences found in modern higher education. Levine
(1980) discussed the increased vocationalism that characterizes students. Because of their emphasis on career objectives, he describes them as part of the "me-generation." Others make similar statements. Stodt (1982) suggested that because of the priority given to material success, students place greater value on competing for grades and receiving marketable degrees than on establishing interpersonal relationships.

This egocentric theme is also present in descriptions of students that take a developmental perspective. Because of their emphasis on self and personal needs, it is possible to describe some students' development as being fixated at a stage called "prolonged adolescence." Instead of resolving the egocentric nature of late adolescence, they remain at a stage of development where self-importance continues to be most important (Buckley, 1982).

Characteristics of modern students are significant factors in this study. They influence the sense of community and the degree of social support that develops within a social environment. The existence of social support is contingent upon students' abilities to establish friendships within the university setting. As long as benefits from friendships exceed the cost of time and energy invested, the resulting sense of social support remains high (Miller, 1982). Residence halls provide a setting where it is possible to study variables, such as the characteristics of students, that contribute to a sense of social support.

University residence halls are integral components of many campuses. Not only are these facilities dominant physical structures, but the quality of the residence hall programs provided in these settings can have a significant influence on students living there. From an administrative perspective, the focus of residence halls can be to house students, to control students or to accomplish educational objectives that cannot be achieved in other settings. The extent to which a housing division implements each of these perspectives influences the services available for students.
Ultimately, it also affects the sense of social support that forms within the residence hall environment (Moos, 1979).

Programs that increase the sense of social support within residence hall settings are priorities among housing professionals. This is demonstrated by a history of innovations, such as coeducational residence halls, or the implementation of living-learning centers (DeCoster & Mable, 1980). Changes in staffing and training patterns also indicate this commitment to community development. For example, housemothers have been replaced by professional hall directors. The quality of training programs for students involved as resident assistants and student government leaders is also evident (Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981).

A number of variables interact to create an environment where students feel a sense of social support. This interaction can include the effects of administrative philosophies and the content of specific programs. Ultimately, the positive outcome from these is apparent when students feel a sense of involvement with the university. Involvement with some type of group experience, such as living in residence halls, increases the congruence that develops between student and university. The positive outcomes associated with university involvement also contribute to a student's sense of social support (Astin, 1975).

Therefore, identifying factors associated with social support can provide additional information about how to develop positive relationships between students and their living environments. This information could also be important to an institution's efforts to improve retention.

Objectives

1. To determine if there is a combination of factors that contribute to the sense of social support experienced by freshmen at Oregon State University.
2. To determine if different types of living environments provide freshmen with different degrees of social support.

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the level of social support experienced by freshmen living in single-sex halls, in co-educational halls or in off-campus housing.

2. There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of interpersonal orientation expressed by freshmen living in residence halls.

3. There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of interpersonal orientation expressed by freshmen living off-campus.

4. There is no relationship between the level of social support and the sense of identity experienced by freshmen living in residence halls.

5. There is no relationship between the level of social support and the sense of identity experienced by freshmen living off-campus.

6. There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of positive adjustment experienced by freshmen living in residence halls.

7. There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of positive adjustment to college experienced by freshmen living off-campus.

8. There is no relationship between grade point average and level of social support among freshmen living in residence halls.

9. There is no relationship between grade point average and level of social support among freshmen living off-campus.
10. There is no relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and social support among freshmen living in residence halls.

11. There is no relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and level of social support among freshmen living off-campus.

**Definition of Terms**

1. Social support. Positive relationships that sustain an individual through crises, and reduce the stress associated with these crises (Leavy, 1983). Social support can be divided into the specific behaviors of material aid, behavioral assistance, intimate interaction, guidance, feedback, and positive interaction (Barrera & Ainlay, 1983).

2. Interpersonal orientation. The extent to which a person is interested in, and reacts to, variations in the behavior of others (Swap & Rubin, 1983).

3. Sense of identity. The extent to which an individual is able to complete developmental stages leading to positive adjustment in the areas of confidence, sexual identity and conceptions about body and appearance (Irwin, 1977).

4. Confidence. This reflects assurance in oneself and one's abilities. Confidence reflects both faith in personal abilities and dependence on necessary outside resources (Erwin, 1977).

5. Sexual identity. Sexual identity is an understanding and acceptance of sexual feelings. An individual with a high level of sexual identity accepts sexual feelings as natural and normal. And this recognition of sexual feelings does not imply sexual activity or the absence of it (Irwin, 1977).
6. Conceptions about body and appearance. Sense of identity also includes correct perceptions and acceptance of personal appearance. Personal appearance and style of dress represent a compromise that includes personal preference, expectations of others and situational requirements (Erwin, 1977).

7. Adjustment to college. This refers to the degree to which a student is able to accomplish social, personal and academic objectives within the college environment. It also includes the degree to which the match between the student and the university is positive (Brazziel, 1978).

8. Community psychology. A developing specialization within the larger field of psychology that studies how groups form, maintain an identity, and deal with the concerns faced by its membership (Blakely, 1979).

Research Question

Are there specific and identifiable factors that cause students to feel a sense of social support within the residence hall environment?

Limitations of the Study

1. All of the students surveyed were freshmen at Oregon State University.

2. All freshmen at Oregon State University are required to live in university-sponsored housing, such as residence halls, cooperatives, fraternities or sororities. Therefore, the off-campus freshmen sample was significantly smaller than the sample living in residence halls.

3. The data gathered for this study were self-report in nature. As a result, it was subject to the honesty and self-awareness of individuals included in the sample.
Describing the characteristics of social environments is a task that has been undertaken by a number of areas within the social sciences. The empirical work in this area has ranged from describing the living environments in residence halls to work environments and even to the family setting. The value of investigating the relationship between individuals and their social environments is important because these interactions have an effect on attitudes, behaviors, and both the social and personal development of individuals (Gottlieb, 1978; Moos, 1974).

The significance of describing social environments is evident in the recent development and growth of a new specialization within psychology called community psychology. This field is concerned with interactions between individuals and social environments (Hirsche, 1979). Murrell (1973) describes the nature of community psychology through the following definition:

The area within the science of psychology that studies the transactions between social system networks, populations and individuals; that develops and evaluates intervention methods which improve person-environment fits; that designs and evaluates new social systems; and from such knowledge and change seeks to enhance the psychosocial opportunities of the individual.

The emphasis that the field of community psychology places on the social environment is a break from traditional helping interventions. The focus is no longer on remediating illness or solving problems, but is on promoting both physical and mental health. Instead of dealing solely with individuals, the field of community psychology stresses the importance of meeting the needs of groups,
and especially groups who are likely to experience predictable problems. Community psychology works to utilize all available resources within a social environment, and not only the professionals in the setting (Gottlieb, 1975).

The work of Cassel (1974) and Cobb (1976) was instrumental in defining issues in this field. These epidemiologists explored the relationship between the quality of life and the degree of stress people experienced. Research since that time has further documented that individuals who establish social support experience better psychological and physical health (Hirsche, 1980). The process of defining specific components of social support is the focus of considerable research since Cassel and Cobb's initial work in the field.

Social support affects the quality of life and controls the degree of stress in a social environment in one of two ways. First, it can act as an antecedent factor. In this case, social support is a consistent characteristic of the environment. When crises occur, these norms prevent the unplanned events from causing personal damage (Hirsche, 1980; Wilcox, 1981; Leavy, 1983; Gottlieb, 1983).

Second, social support can act as a buffering agent. Here social support helps the individual to make the best use of psychological resources. The buffering aspect of social support can have three positive outcomes. It can: (1) temper situations that cause interpersonal difficulties; (2) neutralize problems; or (3) manage emotional reactions associated with stressful events. During the buffering process social support also ensures that unpleasant events are interpreted correctly. Regardless of whether social support is antecedent or buffering in nature, it is effective in alleviating the negative characteristics of a crisis situation (Lin, Ensel, Simeone & Kuo, 1979).

The specific contents of social support can be defined in several ways. It can be viewed as the positive relationship that sustains an individual through crises. Caplan (1974) states that
emotional sustenance is an important part of social support. Social support can also be described as information. According to Cobb (1976), social support provides individuals with the knowledge that they are cared for, valued as people, and involved with a group where communication and mutual obligation are norms. Caplan (1982) defines social support in terms of interpersonal communication skills, such as the ability to provide guidance and feedback.

House summarizes these different explanations of social support into four general categories of emotional, instrumental, informational, and appraisal support (1981). Barrera and Ainlay (1983) develop greater specification in defining social support. They define social support in terms of six behavior. These six behavioral categories include material aid, behavioral assistance, intimate interaction, feedback, positive social interaction and guidance.

In addition to describing the behaviors that constitute social support, it is also important to describe the environments where social support occurs. Self-help groups, professional services, and neighborhood-based helping networks represent three ways in which individuals receive social support. A fourth type of social support is available through the primary social network (Gottlieb, 1983).

Membership in a primary social network or primary group is characterized by sharing a limited number of unique experiences with select individuals. Typically the family is viewed as the definitive primary group (Heap, 1977). However, this concept can be expanded beyond the family system. It can be used to describe any collection of closely knit individuals whose interactions play a major role in the socialization of its members (Peretti, 1980).

This description of a primary group and its socializing properties is characteristic of some groups that develop within residence halls. Students in this environment indicate that living in a residence hall provides them with the opportunity to be involved
with a small group of peers (Astin, 1975; Chickering, 1974). Being part of this small group is very important to students and they describe it in a very positive way. According to them, interactions with peers in a living group are some of the most significant experiences of the college career (Moos, 1979; Dressel & Lehrman, 1965).

The socialization process that occurs within university living groups is also valuable because it provides group members with feedback. Messages from supportive peers communicates positive support that bolsters the level of self-esteem. As a result, peer feedback is the basis of social support that develops with a group setting (Gottlieb, 1983; Lieberman, Pearlin, Managhan & Mullen, 1981).

In groups where feedback between peers increases the level of social support, several important characteristics exist. These cohesive groups are typified by increased communication between members, greater acceptance of differences between peers, and increased abilities to deal with the stress of an academic environment (Kirshner, Dies & Brown, 1978). Non-cohesive groups also share common features.

In a review of literature describing problems that occur in groups, lack of cohesion or lack of social support was listed as a common concern (Weinber, 1981). For example, when a non-supportive atmosphere exists in a residence hall, students are unlikely to approach staff members with their problems. Frequently, university policy receives little support, and resulting disciplinary action is ineffectual (Moos, 1979).

Other predictable problems exist in non-supportive living environments. There is increased physical illness, along with greater stress among individuals in these living groups (Ilgen & Seeley, 1974; Tracy, 1977). These environments are also characterized by more hostile interactions and more negative effects such as boredom, loneliness and depression. Freshmen students in this type of social environment describe it as lacking cohesion,
having little student involvement, offering few social activities and providing limited emotional support from staff members (Bell, LeRoy & Stephenson, 1982).

Non-supportive environments also have a negative effect on an individual's mental health. The most serious lack of support is evident in students who demonstrate suicidal behavior. One method to prevent suicidal behavior is to increase the student's available social support through close interpersonal relationships (Mishara, 1982; Bell, LeRoy & Stephenson, 1982).

Several studies have investigated the importance of social support within the academic realm. Goplerund (1980) documented the value of social support among first-year graduate students. Because of the major lifestyle change that accompanies graduate study, this population was identified as one of the major users of university mental health centers (Halleck, 1976). However, social support available through faculty and peer interactions worked as an effective means of improving personal adjustment and academic performance.

In an investigation of the degree of social support among married students, the value of the buffering effect of peer relationships was important. Married students indicated that some of their chief life stressors included academic pressures, lack of employment opportunities, adjustment to marriage and parenting, and frequent turnover among their neighbors and friends. In light of these pressures, few married students took advantage of services, such as counseling, available on campus. Instead, they consistently relied upon the social support available from their peers (Gottlieb, 1979).

One of the similarities between research projects on the subject of social support is the importance of the interaction between individuals and their social environment. The characteristics of this interaction contribute to the sense of social support individuals encounter. When this occurs, both community psychologists and person-environment theoreticians refer to it as a positive
or congruent "fit." However, the nature of the environment, be it supportive or non-supportive, presents only part of the dynamics within a social environment. Characteristics of individuals within the environment are also important to investigate.

Lewin (1936) was one of the first theoreticians to stress that behavior is a function of the interaction between the environment and the individual. Others have made additional statements about this relationship. Holland (1973) discusses the importance of a congruent fit between the values of the individual and the environment. Positive outcomes from this lead to greater satisfaction, increased achievement and more stability for the individual. The needs-press model presented by Stern (1970) points out that the press, or demands, of the social environment affects the extent to which individuals are able to have their needs met in an environment. Again, consistency between personal and environmental characteristics is a prerequisite for success. The third model of the person-environment theories is labeled the transactional model. Optimal development is possible if conditions in the environment help the individual advance from the perceived self toward the perceived ideal self (Pervin, 1968).

These theoretical frameworks, along with current research, stress that individual personalities affect the degree of social support that develops in a group (Kelley, 1977; Pearlin & Schooler, 1978; Heller, 1979). Several different methods of describing individuals are used. One of these is through multidimensional and unidimensional relationships.

Hirsche (1979) addresses the way in which individual personalities affect the development of social support by describing these two differing relationships. Multidimensional relationships play a key role in the development of social support. Individuals who have the ability to develop these friendships are able to interact with others in several different ways. For example, individuals are able to participate in recreational activities as well as intellectual discussions or mutual problem-solving sessions.
Multidimensional relationships provide a reliable source of social support. Unidimensional relationships occur when individuals share only one common activity. These relationships provide individuals with very little social support.

It is possible for relationships to change from a unidimensional to a multidimensional nature. One of the best predictors of this is the degree to which individuals in the relationship behave in a reciprocal manner. Reciprocity can be defined as the degree of equality that exists within a relationship (Simpson, 1977). A perceived lack of reciprocity in social interactions predicts dissatisfaction with the relationship (Gottlieb, 1983). Access to social support is at least in part dependent upon personality characteristics, such as reciprocity, that demonstrate interest in other people (Leavy, 1983).

Interest in others can be defined in several ways; for example, the terms interpersonal orientation and social interest are both found in the literature. Both terms address the extent to which an individual expresses interest and concern for people. Social interest is identified as a major determinant to positive adjustment and life satisfaction. It includes the ability to identify with and cooperate with others. The positive outcomes of social interest contribute to the degree of social support that develops with a living environment (Crandall, 1980).

Interpersonal orientation originates from the field of social psychology. It is also a useful method for analyzing the interactions that occur between people and their environments (Swap & Rubin, 1983). Individuals with a high degree of interpersonal orientation are responsive to the personal aspects of relationships. This type of person is interested in, and reacts to, variations in the behavior of others. Attention is given to the degree of cooperation, competition, power, dependence and reciprocity that exists in their relationships. Research conducted with college students suggests that those majoring in the behavioral sciences
have the greatest degree of interpersonal orientation (Swap & Brown, 1983).

Individuals who express low levels of interpersonal orientation also have consistent personality traits. These individuals demonstrate lack of concern for the interpersonal aspects of their friendships. Their major concern in dealing with others is to maximize personal gain, regardless of its effect on others. Students majoring in object-related studies, such as engineering, had low scores on an instrument designed to measure degree of interpersonal orientation (Swap & Brown, 1975).

Reciprocity, social interest and interpersonal orientation are similar characteristics that describe how individuals react to others in their social environment. Social exchange theory is one method of explaining why individuals behave in a given way. According to this theory, it is possible to apply both psychological and economic principles to social interactions. Any psychological reward, such as social support from peers, is accompanied by a psychological cost. In the process of achieving rewards, individuals attempt to maximize their positive outcomes and minimize negative results (Simpson, 1978; Berscheid & Walters, 1978).

Social exchange theory can be explained through four basic principles, as follows: (1) Individuals within groups will develop systems that ensure group resources are equitably shared by all members; (2) groups will reward equitable members and punish those who are not; (3) individuals will become distressed when they find themselves participating in inequitable relationships; (4) once involved with an inequitable relationship, individuals will try to restore equality. These inequitable relationships lead to greater stress, and as a result more effort is invested in restoring equity to the relationship (Hatfield, Utne & Traupman, 1979).

Other personal characteristics affect the level of social support that develops within a group living situation. Chickering (1969), in his early research with college students, defined a sense of identity as being very important to the personal relationships
this age group develops. Sense of identity is defined as the extent to which individuals are confident of themselves and their capabilities, have accurate self-perceptions and have accepted their sexual feelings and physical appearance (Erwin, 1982).

Chickering views the evolution of a sense of identity as a developmental process, where students complete predictable stages or developmental vectors. The first three of these vectors are crucial in the process of establishing a sense of identity. The specific content of these three vectors is as follows:

The first deals with developing competencies. Here, the student is faced with establishing skills that increase the ability to perform in the intellectual, social and physical realms of the university. Vector number two deals with managing emotions. Instead of relying on regulations and other forms of external control, the student learns internal control. This is demonstrated by being able to manage sexual and aggressive feelings. The third developmental vector that leads to a sense of identity is the development of autonomy. When the student takes the initiative to solve problems, independent of the encouragement and acknowledgment of significant others, a greater degree of autonomy is attained (Chickering, 1969).

Successful completion of these three vectors contributes to a student's sense of identity. This sense of identity is demonstrated by self-confidence, acceptance of sexual feelings and accurate self-perceptions (Erwin, 1977). According to Chickering's model of student development, identity formation is the most important requisite for successful peer relationships. However, there are three alternative outcomes that can inhibit the development of identity. Ultimately these alternatives also affect interpersonal relationships, and the level of social support that develops within a social environment. These three alternatives have been labeled identity foreclosure, psychosocial moratorium, and negative identity (Chickering, 1969; Bernard, 1982).
Identity foreclosure occurs when an individual accepts an identity prescribed by someone else, such as when status-conscious parents overtly or covertly pressure a student into pursuing a particular career tract. This prevents the student from experimenting with other occupational alternatives. In contrast, the student in a psychosocial moratorium experiments with alternatives to the point of never accepting a final identity. The last roadblock to establishing a sense of identity is the negative identity. Here the student internalizes derogatory labels, and continues to strengthen the identity by exhibiting behaviors that confirm it (Newman & Newman, 1978; Bernard, 1982; Marcia, 1966).

Another factor affecting the level of social support that occurs in a social environment is the individual's personal adjustment to current living conditions. Theoretically, a positive fit between the person and environment will increase the degree of adjustment (Pervin, 1967). Research suggests that social support is a key factor in determining whether an individual will adjust to a new environment (Myers, 1974; Goplerund, 1980). One method of increasing student adjustment to the college environment is through a survival skills workshop. Students who participated in these workshops expressed more social support and better adjustment to the academic environment (Griffore & Griffore, 1983).

Current research on social support describes several differences between the sexes. These studies indicate that women have more social support than men (Lowenthal & Haven, 1968). This occurs for several reasons. Until the completion of puberty women are socialized into androgenous identities where they are reinforced for traditionally feminine, as well as masculine or more competitive, accomplishments. As females develop a final definition of a sense of identity they can feel uncertainty and less control of their lives. But in conjunction with these pressures, the female is more able to discuss these issues with significant others in the social environment. As a result, females
tend to experience a greater sense of social support (Burke & Weir, 1978; Hirsche, 1979).

Additional information about gender differences in the area of social support was obtained from non-college populations. Males describe their work setting as being a major source of social support. In contrast, women indicate less social support from the employment site, and more with familial ties. These findings are consistent with traditional gender roles (Holahan & Moos, 1981).

Social support within residence halls is influenced by whether the hall is single sex or coeducational. Since the concept of coeducational residence halls was first introduced, positive outcomes for both men and women resulted. Several of these advantages increase the level of social support students experience. Coeducational residence halls provide an atmosphere that is friendlier, and that allows male-female relationships to develop at a more casual level. These halls are characterized by more interpersonal communication, increased sensitivity to others, and greater mutual support among students (Brown, 1973; Corbett & Sommer, 1972; Moos & Otto, 1974; Reid, 1974; Schroeder & LeMay, 1973).

The importance of scholastic achievement underlines all university activities. Several studies have emphasized how academic performance has been improved in environments that exhibit a great deal of social support. In situations where student preparation for examinations created a sense of social support, students showed greater academic success (Sarason, 1981; Blanc, DeBuhr & Martin, 1983). Faculty contacts, summer orientation programs, and supplementary group study sessions have the same effect of increasing social support and academic achievement. In retention studies, specific behaviors earlier included in a definition of social support were absent from the social environment of students who dropped out of the university (Kissler, Lara & Cardinal, 1981; Jacobs, Brigman & Friedman, 1982).
The interaction between social support and academic performance is prevalent within residence halls. It has been determined that students living in temporary housing, and lacking an established peer group, received lower grades (Schuh, 1982). Living in residence halls and affiliating with a group of peers has been connected with academic success. Not only do these students earn higher grades, but they are more likely to complete their baccalaureate degree and apply to graduate or professional programs (Astin, 1977; Chickering, 1974).

Participation in extracurricular activities is another means of measuring the level of social support within a residence hall environment. Astin (1977) and Chickering (1974) determined that compared to other student groups, those living in residence halls had a higher level of participation in activities such as intramural athletics or leadership positions. Students indicate practical reasons for this involvement. For example, they see that these activities provide them with the opportunity to develop leadership skills. But they also stress that involvement with peers is another reason to participate in student activities (Gibbs, 1982).

In summary, investigation of the level of social support within freshmen residence halls is significant for several reasons. Person-environment theory suggests that an individual is satisfied with a particular setting if a positive "fit" exists between person and environment. Maximizing the congruence between person and environment is a priority for many higher education institutions. Because of declining enrollments, many universities recognize the importance of maintaining the students who currently attend their institutions. One of the ways of determining student satisfaction or the degree of "fit" between student and institution is through a measure of social support.

Social support is an indication of how community members assist each other through difficult situations. This assistance can take the form of help during crises, or it can consist of
personal interactions that assist community members with routine tasks. For the purposes of this study, social support was defined as the behaviors of guidance, feedback, intimate interaction, material aid, behavioral assistance, and positive social interaction. Several studies have investigated the role played by social support with graduate and married students. Other research reported the effects that social support has on students during stressful times, such as during final examinations. This study examined the role of social support among freshmen living in residence halls.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study investigated the factors that contribute to a sense of social support among freshmen living in residence halls at Oregon State University. This chapter describes the subjects, the research instruments, how the data were collected, and the statistical analysis of the data.

Subjects

Participants in this study were classified as freshmen at the start of the 1983-84 academic year. These students had completed between 0-45 credits. Students living on campus were randomly selected from official occupancy reports maintained by the Department of Housing and Residence programs. A total of 415 surveys were sent to students in the single-sex halls of Wilson and Callahan and the coeducational halls of Poling and Cauthorn.

Traditionally aged freshmen at Oregon State University are required to live in university sponsored housing. Exceptions are made if freshmen live with family members in the Corvallis community. A list of these off-campus freshmen was selected from the Oregon State University student directory. One hundred of these freshmen were randomly selected to receive the survey.

Administration

Four hundred fifteen questionnaires were distributed to the on-campus sample. Each student received a letter explaining the importance of the study, a copy of the instrument, a sharpened No. 2 pencil, and a yellow 3x5 card stressing the importance of completing the survey. In addition, each subject was given twenty-five cents
for turning in the completed survey to the central information desk in each residence hall. Four days after the original distribution, yellow 3x5 reminder cards were sent to students who had not returned their questionnaires.

One hundred surveys were sent to freshmen who lived off-campus. Each subject received an explanatory letter, a self-addressed stamped envelope, the instrument, a golf pencil and a twenty-five-cent incentive to complete the questionnaire. Five days after the original distribution each student who had not responded was sent a follow-up letter.

The overall survey return rate was 59 percent. The on-campus return rate was 62 percent, as compared to a 47 percent return rate from off-campus freshmen. However, 17 of these responses were from older-than-average students and were not included in the study.

The Variables

The dependent variable studied in this project was the sense of social support students experienced from their living environments. Six independent variables were studied to determine their influence on the level of social support within living environments. The continuous variables were interpersonal orientation, adjustment to college, grade point average and sense of identity. Sense of identity was measured by an instrument that assessed this construct through the use of three subscales. These included confidence, sexual identity, and conceptions about body appearance.

The remainder of the independent variables were categorical in nature. They consisted of place of residence, gender of subject, and participation in extracurricular activities. This latter variable was measured by a short form that asked subjects to list the frequency of their dating behavior, participation in intramural athletics, and attendance at social events.
The Instruments

Five instruments provided the data used in this research: the Inventory of Social Support Behavior (ISSB), the Interpersonal Orientation Scale (IOS), the Erwin Identity Scale (EIS), and the College Freshmen Adjustment Scale (CFAS). Information for the categorical variables was provided on a short form with a Likert-type scale constructed by the author. Copies of these instruments are included in the Appendices.

1. The Inventory of Social Support Behavior

This forty-item survey contains questions consistent with the six types of social support behavior described by Barrera and Ainlay (1983). Respondents rate each item's frequency of occurrence during the preceding four weeks.

All items on the scale were constructed with several considerations in mind. Specific behaviors were emphasized in order to reduce the degree of subjective interpretation involved. Wording that would make an item applicable to a specific situation was avoided. For example, items in the survey begin with general phrases such as "provided you," "talked with you," "assisted you," or "taught you" (Barrera, Sandler & Ramsay, 1981).

The ISSB consists of forty items, with a possible score range of from 40 to 200. Each subject scores an item on a scale from one to five, where one refers to a supportive behavior that does not happen. Other options include behaviors that happen once or twice, about once a week, several times a week. A score of five is possible if a behavior in the survey happens about every day (Barrera & Ainley, 1983).

Reliability of the scale was conducted by means of a test-retest procedure. Subject's total scores on the ISSB were significantly correlated. There was a .882 correlation between scores on the first and second administration of the inventory. Test-
retest correlation coefficients for individual items ranged from .441 to .912 (Barrera & Ainley, 1983).

Two measures of the instrument's validity exist. The first was completed with the Arizona Social Support Interview Schedule. Correlations between these two instruments ranged from .322 at the .05 level to .422 at the .01 level. A second validity study was completed with the Family Environment Scale, and the correlation between these instruments was .359 at the .01 level (Barrera & Ainley, 1983).

2. The Interpersonal Orientation Scale

This questionnaire consists of twenty-nine items. Subjects rate the degree to which each item defines their behavior. All questions on the scale measure either reactivity to those behaviors in others that directly affect the subject, or interest in what other people are like. A number of other items related to the communication process are also included on the scale (Swap & Rubin, 1983).

The instrument was tested over a two-year period with over 800 undergraduates. The mean score was 99.73, with a standard deviation of 9.03. Test-retest reliability yielded a coefficient of .79. Females score significantly higher on the scale, with mean scores of 101.93 as compared to average male scores of 97.55. Differences according to academic majors were also noted. Individuals in people-orientated majors scored higher than those majoring in object-orientated fields of study. Responses range on a continuum from very dissimilar to very similar. Possible scores on this instrument can be a low of 29 to a high of 145 (Swap & Rubin, 1983).

3. The Erwin Identity Scale

The EIS was designed to measure the three components that make up Chickering's concept of identity. These three factors are
sexual identity, confidence, and conceptions about body and appearance. The internal consistency coefficients for these factors are, respectively, .75, .80, and .79 (Erwin & Delworth, 1983).

The instrument consists of a total of fifty-nine items. Twenty-four items deal with confidence, nineteen deal with sexual identity and sixteen refer to conceptions about body and appearance. Subjects respond to these items by use of a five-point scale, which describes whether the item is "very true" of the respondent to the opposite "not at all true" of the respondent. Each item is weighted positively or negatively. The total for each subscale is added separately. The range of total scores for each subscale is as follows: 24-120 on Confidence, 19-90 on Sexual Identity, and 16-80 on Conceptions about Body and Appearance. Norms for the entire instrument were developed with a sample of 2,812 students, who were enrolled in psychology classes (Irwin & Delworth, 1983).

4. The College Freshmen Adjustment Scale

The CFAS is a fourteen-item instrument used to identify areas of college which may be difficult for freshmen. The items are answered as either True or False. The nature of the subject's response determines whether one point or no point is scored for an item. Scores on this instrument can range from one to fourteen. The mean score for the norm group of this instrument was 4.55, with a standard deviation of 3.13. A score of 4.55 indicates normal adjustment to the college environment. Higher scores suggest that a freshman is experiencing difficulty in the adjustment process. In contrast, a low score on the CFAS indicates that the freshman is adjusting to the university's academic and social environment (Brazziel, 1978).

The CFAS measures four aspects of adjustment: Match with the college, social, personal, and academic adjustment. The intercorrelations between these four factors are all less than .25. This suggests that the CFAS measures four distinct variables related to
college adjustment (Brazziel, 1978).

5. **Categorical Variables**

Data measuring the categorical variables were reported on a short form constructed by the author. Through the use of a five-point Likert-type scale, subjects were asked to rate their participation in intramurals, social events and dating frequency. Answers could range from "never" to "seven or more times per month." Subjects were also asked to provide their grade point averages, major, age, gender and residence hall.

**Analysis of Data**

Three statistical procedures were used to analyze the data for this study. Analysis of variance was used to determine if there were differences between freshmen living off-campus and those living in residence halls. ANOVA was also used to compare groups according to their living group. In addition, all men and all women were compared. Correlations between degree of social support and the independent variables were made. Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients were used. And multiple regression was used to determine if a combination of the independent variables contributed to the development of a sense of social support.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The first year of college is a time of adjustment for many freshmen. This is especially true for those students who chose to live in residence halls. The level of social support available within this living environment is one factor that influences the success of this adjustment. Behaviors that facilitate social support include feedback, behavioral assistance, guidance, intimate interaction and positive social interaction.

Social support is important for a number of reasons. It buffers the stress associated with the adjustment to college. And it also provides students with the knowledge that others have experienced and overcome the difficulties that characterize the freshmen year. Environmental and personality variables influence the level of social support that freshmen experience. This chapter reports the results of the statistical analysis that describes the relationships between social support and these independent variables.

Subjects for this research were freshmen who lived in single-sex and coeducational residence halls. A comparison group of freshmen, who lived off-campus in housing that was not recognized by the university, was also included in the study. Freshmen at this university are required to live in some type of university-recognized housing, unless they live with their parents. As a result, there were only a limited number of off-campus freshmen to survey for this research. Additional complications occurred because a number of the off-campus freshmen in this study were older-than-average students. These individuals were removed from the sample which left a total of thirty students in the off-campus group.

Analysis of variance was used to test for differences in the level of social support experienced by these two groups. The data
obtained from freshmen living in residence halls were further tested with an analysis of variance technique. This was conducted to determine if differences within the residence hall sample could be attributed to gender or to the different types of residence halls included in the study. The .05 level of significance was the maximum criterion level used with the ANOVA technique.

Correlation coefficients were used to measure the significance of the relationship that existed between social support and each of the independent variables. Pearson product moment correlation coefficients were used with the continuous variables. These were sense of identity, interpersonal orientation, adjustment to college, and grade point average. With the categorical variables, the Spearman rho correlation coefficient was used. Variables classified as categorical in nature were participation in extracurricular activities and gender of subject. The .05 level of significance was used as the maximum criterion level for both types of correlation coefficients.

A research question was included with this study. It asked if there were predictable variables that contributed to a sense of social support within residence halls. In order to answer this question, a multiple regression equation was used. The .05 level of significance was selected to determine if variables were predictive of social support.

Presentation of the Results

HYPOTHESIS 1: There is no significant difference in the level of social support experienced by freshmen living in single-sex halls, in coeducational halls, or in off-campus housing.

Analysis of variance was used to compare the level of social support experienced by subjects living in the different settings investigated in this research. A significant difference, at the .05 level, was found to exist between the living groups, as shown in Table 1.
TABLE 1. Differences in social support in coeducational halls, single-sex halls and in off-campus housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>D.F.</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>F Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10150.6203</td>
<td>2030.1241</td>
<td>2.791</td>
<td>.0176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>218974.3960</td>
<td>727.4897</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>229125.0163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tukey's test for multiple comparison was used to locate the source of difference among the three living groups. Unfortunately, Tukey's test failed to accomplish this because of the high variance in scores for each living group. It is possible to note in Table 2 the differences among the groups by comparing mean social support scores.

TABLE 2. Mean social support scores for freshmen in coeducational, single-sex and off-campus housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living Group</th>
<th>Mean Social Support Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coeducational Hall #1</td>
<td>101.47</td>
<td>30.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coeducational Hall #2</td>
<td>93.69</td>
<td>22.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-sex Male Hall</td>
<td>97.14</td>
<td>28.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-sex Female Hall</td>
<td>107.26</td>
<td>25.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-campus</td>
<td>92.17</td>
<td>28.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The significant differences in the level of social support experienced by these living groups indicate that it is appropriate to reject Hypothesis 1. This difference prompted additional
investigation of the data. Analysis of variance was used to test for gender differences in perceived level of social support among the residence hall groups. The results of this analysis, shown in Table 3, indicate that a gender difference in the level of social support exists and is significant at the .001 level.

### TABLE 3. Gender differences in social support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>D.F.</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>F Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13955.9547</td>
<td>13955.9547</td>
<td>20.485</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>175767.8107</td>
<td>681.2706</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>189723.7654</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 compares social support scores according to gender and type of residence hall.

### TABLE 4. Mean social support scores for men and women in coeducational and single-sex residence halls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>S.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-sex halls</td>
<td>93.69</td>
<td>22.10</td>
<td>107.26</td>
<td>25.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coeducational halls</td>
<td>92.00</td>
<td>25.67</td>
<td>107.73</td>
<td>30.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HYPOTHESIS 2:** There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of interpersonal orientation expressed by freshmen living in residence halls.
Pearson correlation coefficients were used to determine the relationship between the two continuous variables of social support and interpersonal orientation. The coefficient of .255, where $p = .001$, indicates that a significant relationship exists between these two variables, as indicated in Table 5. Therefore, it is possible to reject Hypothesis 2.

HYPOTHESIS 3: There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of interpersonal orientation expressed by freshmen living off-campus.

The data gathered from freshmen living off-campus indicated that no significant relationship existed between the continuous variables of social support and interpersonal orientation. The Pearson coefficient for this relationship was .1945, where $p = .51$. This sample was also tested for gender differences in the relationship between social support and interpersonal orientation, however, none was found. As a result, Hypothesis 3 is retained.

HYPOTHESIS 4: There is no relationship between the level of social support and the sense of identity experienced by freshmen living in residence halls.

For the purpose of this study, sense of identity was measured by the Erwin Identity Scale. This instrument assesses sense of identity through three separate subscores. Identity is measured in terms of confidence, sexual identity, and conceptions about body and appearance. In order to test Hypothesis 4, three subhypotheses that tested the relationship between social support and each of these variables were developed.

HYPOTHESIS 4a. There is no relationship between the level of social support and the sense of confidence experienced by freshmen living in residence halls.

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to test the relationship between these two continuous variables. A coefficient of
TABLE 5. Summary of the correlations (r) and significance levels (p) between social support and the independent variables of Interpersonal Orientation (IO), Confidence (Con), Sexual Identity (SexI), Adjustment to College (AC), and Grade Point Average (GPA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hall</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>IO (r)</th>
<th>Con (r)</th>
<th>SexI (r)</th>
<th>AC (r)</th>
<th>GPA (r)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coeducational Hall #1</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0.2756</td>
<td>0.1500</td>
<td>0.2367</td>
<td>0.1969</td>
<td>-0.2658</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.2842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coeducational Hall #2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-0.2410</td>
<td>0.2785</td>
<td>0.0210</td>
<td>-0.0580</td>
<td>-0.1881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.1689</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-sex male hall</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.1853</td>
<td>0.2426</td>
<td>-0.1055</td>
<td>-0.0062</td>
<td>-0.2667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.1173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-sex female hall</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0.4559</td>
<td>0.0500</td>
<td>0.0487</td>
<td>0.0625</td>
<td>-0.0353</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.2900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.0613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-campus</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.1945</td>
<td>0.5103</td>
<td>0.2909</td>
<td>0.0978</td>
<td>-0.2292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.1120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL for residence halls</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>0.2245</td>
<td>0.0010</td>
<td>0.1130</td>
<td>0.1261</td>
<td>-0.2194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0010</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-0.1332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.
**Significant at the .01 level.
.1136, where \( p = .034 \), shown in Table 5, indicates a significant relationship between social support and confidence level. Therefore, Hypothesis 4a is rejected.

Analysis of variance was used to determine additional information about the differences between social support and confidence. The results suggested that there were no differences in the sample due to gender or due to the type of residence hall where students lived.

HYPOTHESIS 4b: There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of sexual identity among freshmen living in residence halls.

Use of the Pearson correlation coefficient indicated that a significant relationship existed between social support and sexual identity, as shown in Table 5. The results of this correlation indicate an \( r \) value of .1261 that was significant at the .021 level. Therefore, Hypothesis 4b was rejected.

HYPOTHESIS 4c: There is no relationship between the level of social support and conceptions about body and appearance among freshmen living in residence halls.

According to Pearson coefficient, where \( r = -.137 \), and \( p = .413 \), no relationship exists between social support and conceptions about body and appearance. Analysis of variance was used to determine if differences due to gender or type of residence hall existed. None were found to be significant. As a result, Hypothesis 4c was retained.

HYPOTHESIS 5: There is no relationship between the level of social support and the sense of identity experienced by freshmen living off-campus.

Measuring the sense of identity experienced by off-campus freshmen was again assessed with the Erwin Identity Scale. For this sample, correlations between social support and the three variables of confidence, sexual identity and conceptions about body
and appearance were conducted. The only significant relationship was between level of social support and confidence, where a correlation coefficient of .2909 was significant at the .05 level.

**HYPOTHESIS 6:** There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of positive adjustment experienced by freshmen living in residence halls.

Pearson correlation coefficients were used to determine the relationship between the continuous variables of social support and adjustment to college. Freshmen living in residence halls indicated a negative correlation between social support and adjustment to college. The correlation coefficient of -.2194 was significant at the .001 level. This statistic states that a low adjustment score, indicative of a positive adjustment to college, was significantly correlated to social support. In contrast, a positive sense of social support was indicated by a high score. As a result, the significant negative correlation between social support and adjustment to college, as listed in Table 5, makes it possible to reject Hypothesis 6.

**HYPOTHESIS 7:** There is no relationship between the level of social support and the degree of positive adjustment to college experienced by freshmen living off-campus.

Use of Pearson's correlation coefficient indicated no significant relationship between adjustment and social support for this group of freshmen. A correlation of -.2292 that was significant at the .112 level indicates that Hypothesis 7 is retained.

**HYPOTHESIS 8:** There is no relationship between grade point average and level of social support experienced by freshmen living in residence halls.

The relationship between these continuous variables was determined with a Pearson correlation coefficient. A negative correlation, where $r = 0.1332$, significant at the .016 level, was found.
significant relationship between social support and grade point average, it is appropriate to reject Hypothesis 8.

Analysis of variance was used to determine if differences in grade point averages were related to gender or to the type of residence hall where students lived. No significant difference in grade point average existed between men and women. However, a relationship between grade point average and type of living environment was found. An F statistic of .0343 indicates a significant difference among the grade point averages of freshmen living in different types of living environments. Table 6 summarizes the analysis of this test.

TABLE 6. Differences in grade point averages due to living environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>D.F.</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Squares</th>
<th>F Ratio</th>
<th>F Prob.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.7233</td>
<td>.9447</td>
<td>2.443</td>
<td>.0343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>116.3847</td>
<td>.3867</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>121.1080</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tukey's test for multiple comparisons was used to locate the source of difference among all the living groups included in this study. This indicated that freshmen in coeducational residence halls had the lowest grade point averages. In contrast, freshmen living off-campus earned the highest grade point averages of subjects included in this research, as shown in Table 7. No significant differences were found to exist between other groups in this study.
TABLE 7: Mean grade point averages for freshmen in coeducational halls, single-sex halls, and off-campus housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Living Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean GPA</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coeducational Hall #1</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2.724</td>
<td>.6531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coeducational Hall #2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>2.827</td>
<td>.6508</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-sex male hall</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>2.784</td>
<td>.6495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-sex female hall</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2.762</td>
<td>.5974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-campus</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3.134</td>
<td>.5537</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HYPOTHESIS 9: There is no relationship between grade point average and level of social support among freshmen living off-campus.

In order to test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation coefficients were used. A correlation of .091 significant at the .316 level indicates that there is no relationship between these two continuous variables. Therefore, Hypothesis 9 is retained.

HYPOTHESIS 10: There is no relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and the degree of social support experienced by freshmen living in residence halls.

Participation in extracurricular activities includes many different types of events. In order to better address the diversity of this variable, it was divided into participation in intramural sports, attendance at residence hall social functions, and frequency of dating. The categorical data for this hypothesis were analyzed with Spearman Brown correlation coefficients. These results, summarized in Table 8, indicated that a significant relationship was found between social support and frequency of dating, where an r value of .1995 was significant at the .001 level.
HYPOTHESIS 11. There is no relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and the degree of social support experienced by freshmen living off-campus.

Spearman Brown correlation coefficients were used to test the relationships between social support and attendance at residence hall social functions, participation in intramural sports, and frequency of dating. A significant relationship was found between social support and frequency of dating. A correlation coefficient of .3994 was significant at the .017 level. No additional correlations were significant, as indicated in Table 8.

One research question was asked in this study: Are there specific and identifiable variables that cause students to feel a sense of social support within the residence hall environment?

In order to determine an answer for this question, multiple regression techniques were used. This method analyzed the degree of variance in the dependent variable, social support, as a result of the independent, continuous variables researched in this study. Including all of these independent variables in a multiple regression equation accounted for 27.5 percent of the total variance. Of the continuous variables included in the regression
equation, only interpersonal orientation and adjustment to college were significant at the .05 level. These values were .0041 and .0228, respectively.

Categorical variables included in the regression equation revealed no significant results. Consequently, the variables investigated for this study described only part of the factors that contribute to a sense of social support within residence halls. Table 9 presents additional information from the regression equation.

### Table 9. Relationship between social support and continuous variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuous Variables</th>
<th>Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Significance Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence</td>
<td>.388</td>
<td>.6985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual identity</td>
<td>-.128</td>
<td>.8982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptions about body and appearance</td>
<td>-.912</td>
<td>.3630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal orientation</td>
<td>2.898</td>
<td>.0041*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment to college</td>
<td>-2.293</td>
<td>.0228*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade point average</td>
<td>-1.865</td>
<td>.0636</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant at the .05 level.
Summary of the Study

Social support is an important characteristic within a community setting. It can facilitate the development of interpersonal resources needed to alleviate stress. Or in routine situations social support can act as a buffering agent. Here, socially supportive behaviors provide group members with the knowledge that current stress will decrease. Social support also provides individuals with the knowledge that others have successfully dealt with and survived difficult situations (Blakely, 1979; Murrell, 1973). Social support consists of behaviors such as feedback, guidance, behavioral assistance and intimate interaction (Barrera & Ainley, 1983).

Research about social support is becoming increasingly important in the fields of education and community psychology. Social support represents one means of providing services or information to individuals prior to the occurrence of mental health problems. Some of the best sources for social support are community members who have the natural ability to deal with problems experienced by peers (Gottlieb, 1983).

Social support exists in traditional neighborhoods, but it also it prevalent within student communities that form in residence halls. In higher education, students who experience personal difficulties seldom seek out professional counselors. Instead they rely on the assistance of their peers (Gottlieb, 1978; Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981).

The purpose of this study was to determine the degree of social support among freshmen living in residence halls. This information gives an indication of informal helping relationships that
exist in this environment. Another aspect of social support is that it represents one measure of a student's adjustment to college. In the final analysis, many variables interact to influence whether or not a student has a positive experience within higher education. Social support represents a baseline about this adjustment process within the residence hall setting.

Several independent variables were tested in order to describe the relationship that exists between them and the level of social support within the residence hall community. These variables were selected because of their relevance to college students and to the developmental experiences that characterize this stage of life. The independent variables were continuous and categorical in nature. Continuous variables included sense of identity, interpersonal orientation, adjustment to college, and grade point average. The categorical variables included gender of subject, type of residence hall, and participation in extracurricular activities.

Instruments used in this research were the Erwin Identity Scale, the Inventory of Socially Supportive Behavior, the Interpersonal Orientation Scale, and the College Freshmen Adjustment Scale. Data for the categorical variables were gathered by means of a brief form developed by the author.

The sample for this research consisted of three hundred six freshmen students who live in residence halls and in off-campus accommodations. The off-campus housing was not recognized as university sponsored living groups. This part of the sample included only thirty students. Interpretation of the data was conducted in several ways. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the differences in social support between residence hall and off-campus freshmen. Comparisons were also made using ANOVA to test for gender differences and for differences due to the type of residence hall. Further tests for significant relationships were made by using Pearson Brown and Spearman Rho correlation coefficients. Finally, multiple regression was used to determine if there was a predictable
set of independent variables that contribute to a sense of social support among freshmen living in residence halls.

Discussion

The variables tested in this research originate from theory in the disciplines of student development and human development. Person-environment theory, from the field of student development, states that a positive "fit" between person and living environment will increase satisfaction with the living environment.

Social exchange theory originates from the human development field. It proposes that human relationships can be conceptualized in terms of economic as well as psychological principles. According to this theory, individuals enter into relationships with the intent to maximize rewards while they minimize the psychological costs associated with relationships. These theories will both be used in the interpretation of the following research results.

One of the significant findings of this research was that women living in a single-sex residence hall experienced more social support than men living in a single-sex residence hall. These results are consistent with other research that indicates similar findings about gender differences in social support (Leavy, 1983).

Burke and Weir (1978) offer one reason explaining why these gender differences exist within this age group. They state that women experience a great deal of pressure during the college years. Women are socialized into a feminine role, but at the same time expected to be competitive. These conflicting expectations create pressures that cause women to seek out supportive relationships.

The occurrence of the highest degree of social support among women in single-sex residence halls is in contrast to earlier research descriptive of social support within coeducational residence halls. This research described coeducational halls as being
friendlier, having more interpersonal communication, and proving greater mutual support than single-sex halls (Brown, 1973; Corbett & Sommer, 1972; Moos & Otto, 1974; Schroeder & LeMay, 1973).

A number of explanations can be given for the differences between the results of these classic studies and the outcome of this research. A decade has passed since the completion of the earlier research about social support in coeducational residence halls. Since that time perceptions about women and their roles in society have changed. This is apparent not only by the entrance of women into traditionally male-dominated professionals, but also by the success women experience in these fields (Gerdes, Sunday & Imperatrice, 1981).

Changes in the professional aspirations of women were apparent in this sample of freshmen. Out of the total sample of freshmen women living in this single-sex hall, 57 percent indicated that their major was in a traditionally male-dominated field. These majors included electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, computer science, business and medicine. As a result, social support within this living group not only provided peer interaction but it also provided support necessary for academic success in traditionally male-dominated majors.

Whether a residence hall is coeducational or single-sex influences the level of social support in these communities. Another factor that affects the level of social support within a residence hall is the attitudes that students have toward their peers. Swap and Rubin (1983) define this interest and concern for others in the living environment as interpersonal orientation. The relationship between social support and interpersonal orientation was addressed by Crandal (1980). As one of the early researchers in the field of community psychology, Crandal described interpersonal orientation as a crucial variable in the development of social support.

The current study supports Crandal's findings. A strong relationship was found to exist between social support and
interpersonal orientation. These results suggest that the individual who engages in behaviors such as feedback, guidance, and positive social interaction is also likely to be interested in and react to the variations in the behavior of others.

Recent works within student development literature provide descriptions of modern college students (Stodt, 1982; Buckley, 1982; Levine, 1980). According to these findings interpersonal orientation is not characteristic of students. Instead students are described as being part of the "me-generation." Their priorities include academic success, marketable college degrees, and the eventual achievement of a comfortable lifestyle (Levine, 1980). This study conflicts with these findings. In contrast to statements about the egocentric nature of college students, these results suggest that freshmen in this sample demonstrated a high degree of interest and concern for individuals other than themselves.

Another significant relationship found in this study was the high correlation between social support and adjustment to college. Adjustment to college includes measures of personal, academic and social satisfaction that students experience. The instrument used to gather this information also assessed the match that exists between the person and the university. This measure of adjustment to college is an indication of the person-environment "fit" experienced by students.

According to person-environment theory, a positive "fit" is indicative of student satisfaction with a given environment. This study suggested that a strong relationship existed between social support and adjustment to college. Consequently, it seems that a student's perceptions of social support within the residence hall are also reflective of an individual's sense of "fit" with that environment.

Additional analysis of the data also stressed the relevance of interpersonal orientation and adjustment to college. Multiple regression identified these two independent variables as
predictors of social support within a residence hall environment. This relationship is not only statistically significant but is functionally significant as well. The functional relationship between these variables and social support is substantiated by principles from social exchange theory.

Social support is likely to occur within a residence hall environment if group members experience a positive sense of adjustment and if individuals have an orientation to others. Social exchange theory presents an explanation of why individuals behave in this way. According to this model, human interactions can be conceptualized in terms of psychological and economic conditions. A basic drive in relationships is to maximize psychological profits while minimizing psychological costs.

The instruments used to assess these two independent variables allow respondents to rate the occurrence of behavior that facilitates the formation of interpersonal relationships. For example, subjects are asked to rate among other things their interest in knowing "what makes people tick" and to describe the frequency of self-disclosure with others. Students were also asked to indicate if they were outgoing, at ease with people, or involved with activities in their living group.

Consequently, the results of this research indicated that these behaviors influence the level of social support that develops within residence halls. In a social exchange framework, the psychological profits from these interactions are greater than the psychological costs. The end result of these interactions is a positive sense of social support within residence halls. The presence of this social support is important to the student and also to the university.

The importance of the relationship between social support and the variables of interpersonal orientation and adjustment to college is reflected in the importance students place on the residence hall environment. The results of Moos' research (1979) indicated that students described experiences associated with their
living group as being the most significant of the college years. Group living is also important because of the socialization process that group members experience. Here students are exposed to and learn from the values, behaviors and beliefs of other students (Peretti, 1980).

With this information, it is possible to understand how the individual student benefits from a positive "fit" between the person and the residence hall environment. This fit also benefits the university at large, especially in the area of retention. The emphasis on retention is due to a decrease in the number of traditionally aged college students and to the high drop out rates that characterize freshmen classes (Mayhew, 1982). Typically, freshmen who drop out of the university use personal, social, or environmental reasons to justify this decision (Dressel, 1979). The results of this research suggest that a residence hall where social support exists may improve a freshman's likelihood of remaining at the university.

The academic performance of freshmen is a frequent concern for all professionals within higher education. Several researchers have investigated the relationship that exists between social support and academic performance. The results indicate that social support during final examinations or during orientation programs can improve academic performance (Griffore & Griffore, 1983; Hirsche, 1979). The positive effect that social support has on academic performance was also stated in classic research within the field of student services (Astin, 1977; Chickering, 1974). They state that students who live in residence halls earn higher grade point averages because of access to educational resources and to professors.

This study found an inverse relationship between grade point average and level of social support. These results are difficult to interpret because existing research provides conflicting information about academic performance and how residence halls influence it. For example, Schuh (1982) found that freshmen students assigned
to temporary housing earned lower grades. In contrast to this, Heif & Chaill (1982) found that students in temporary housing had grade point averages similar to freshmen with typical room assignments.

The confusion about how residence halls influence grade point averages can be increased by reviewing information about general academic success. A number of variables have been found to increase students' grades, such as declaring a major early in the college career (Chase & Keene, 1981). Experiences prior to college also influence grade point average. Specifically, being from a rural area or earning high grades during high school are indicative of academic success during college (Dawkins & Dawkins, 1980). Levels of reinforcement also have an effect on the grades students earn. This is true of reinforcement from instructors and from parents (Change, Berger & Change, 1981; Mulran & Reitze, 1980).

As a total group these studies suggest that academic success or failure is influenced by a number of factors. Because of this it is difficult to draw conclusions about the academic performance of students living in residence halls. However, it may be possible to understand the relationship between social support and grade point average in this study, by referring to the definition of social support.

By definition, socially supportive behavior consists of intimate interaction, feedback, behavioral assistance, guidance, and positive social interaction. These behaviors provide an individual with the reassurance that others have experienced and overcome similar difficulties (Barrera & Ainley, 1983). With this framework it is possible to interpret the inverse relationship found to exist between social support and grade point average.

The sample of freshmen included in this study had a wide range of grade point averages. Some students experienced more academic success than others. A number of variables contribute to how well students perform academically. However, independent from that information, the results of this study would suggest
the importance of social support within the residence hall setting. Specifically, the student experiencing academic frustrations was able to find supportive relationships within the residence hall setting. It is also possible that these relationships helped to improve the "fit" between the student and the university. The ultimate advantage of this situation is that freshmen remain enrolled at the university.

Social support and the independent variables in this study describe interactions that occur between students in residence halls. This research study also gathered similar data from freshmen living off-campus. Analysis of this data indicated that these students experienced less social support than freshmen living in residence halls. Compared to students living in residence halls, these freshmen may not have been faced with the same degree of adjustment to college. Typically, the off-campus freshmen lived at home, or in a setting where they did not deal with a group living situation.

Another significant difference was found to exist between off-campus students and students in one of the coeducational halls. With this particular comparison, the off-campus students had significantly higher grades than students in this coeducational hall. No other differences in grade point averages were found between the off-campus students and the remainder of the residence hall sample.

The differences between the two samples included in this research were significant. However, it is important to interpret the results from the off-campus sample of freshmen with some caution. Freshmen at Oregon State University are required to live in university sponsored housing, unless they live with parents or other relatives. Consequently, the number of traditionally aged freshmen living off-campus is small and data about this group may not be descriptive of all off-campus students.

Another issue investigated was the relationship that exists between social support and sense of identity. Early research on
sense of identity stated that it is influential in personal relationships that develop between college students (Chickering, 1969). For the purposes of this study, sense of identity was divided into the areas of confidence, sexual identity, and conceptions about body and appearance. A strong relationship was shown to exist between social support and the variables of confidence and sexual identity.

According to the field of community psychology, social support is one of the key variables in the community development process (Gottlieb, 1983). The strong relationship that this study found to exist between confidence and social support suggests that the confidence level of group members also facilitates community development. Confidence is the ability to have faith in self and in the skills of others. It is also the ability to know when it is appropriate to make use of these resources. The self-confident student is also comfortable expressing beliefs and making decisions (Erwin, 1977). These skills related to confidence levels are consistent with the socially supportive behaviors of behavioral assistance, feedback, guidance and positive social interaction.

The field of community psychology approaches problem solving within living environments from the following perspective. Resolution of problems occur when individuals make good use of interpersonal resources and when they are confident in themselves. Solutions to concerns happen independent from the help of professionals. This reliance and confidence in the abilities and insights of self and others is a recurrent theme throughout the social support literature (Gottlieb, 1983; Leavy, 1983; Blimling & Miltenberger, 1981).

The importance of the relationship between confidence level and social support is apparent in a non-supportive environment. As a group, students in this type of environment can be characterized by their lack of involvement. This refers to their limited participation in and attendance at various types of activities (Van Dort & Moos, 1982).
Low levels of confidence are also apparent in non-supportive environments. Mishara (1982) discussed the mental health problems that are typical of students who live in non-supportive environments. He indicates that lack of confidence is a common trait among these individuals.

This research also indicated that a significant relationship existed between social support and sexual identity. Sexual identity, one of the three components of sense of identity, is defined as the clarification and acceptance of an individual's sexual feelings. The student with a high degree of sexual identity recognizes these feelings as normal and feels no guilt because of them (Erwin, 1977).

The relationship that exists between sexual identity and social support suggests that students in residence halls are comfortable discussing sexuality with their peers. This appears to be the case for single sex as well as coeducational residence halls. However, the casual interaction that occurs between men and women in coeducational residence halls provides a non-threatening atmosphere in which students are able to interact with and learn about members of the opposite sex. According to the results of this research, these interactions foster a sense of social support within the halls. At the same time, these peer interactions assist the individual to accept sexual feelings, and to recognize them as a normal part of the maturation process.

In addition, analysis of variance was used with several categorical variables in the general area of participation in extracurricular activities. In order to better describe this variable it was broken into frequency of dating, attendance at social events and participation in intramural athletics. The only significant relationship existed between social support and frequency of dating.

This research found no relationship between social support and the other two parts of extracurricular activities. These findings are in sharp contrast to earlier research. Participation in
intramural athletics and social activities were beneficial in helping students establish supportive relationships (Astin, 1977). Other research states that involvement in extracurricular activities happens because students enjoy the social support connected with relationships that develop in this setting (Gibb, 1982). Additional research is needed to clarify these contradictions about social support and extracurricular activities.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this research suggests that social support is a complex variable. Within a residence hall, variables such as gender of students or type of residence hall influence the degree of social support that evolves. Personality characteristics are also influential. Interpersonal orientation and adjustment to college were found to be the best predictors of the level of social support that occurs in residence halls.

Much of the research in student services relies on a foundation provided by Chickering's classic research on the developmental process experienced by college students. Early research about student development found that personal relationships were affected by a student's sense of identify. This study found a significant relationship between sense of identity and social support. For the college freshmen, dealing with academic competition creates stress and frustration. The presence of social support can buffer these pressures. In terms of dealing with academic frustration, this study indicated an inverse relationship between grades and social support. Many factors affect academic performance. However, one explanation for this relationship was that social support develops to alleviate the frustrations of academic failure.

College freshmen experience many other types of difficulties in addition to academic failure. These individuals seldom contact professional helpers. Instead, they consistently rely on assistance of their peers. The social support that evolves from these
interactions verifies that individuals have the capabilities to deal with and reach resolution for the difficulties they face.

This method of problem resolution is the focus of community psychology. Community psychology works to establish living settings where individuals experience a positive "fit" with the environment. The existence of social support between peers within this setting is greatly desired. Social support facilitates positive interactions between community members. It also provides them with the reassurance that they can successfully resolve difficult issues in their lives.

Suggestions for Further Study

1. Statistical analysis of this data indicated significant differences in the level of social support within this sample. Additional research is needed in order to explain why these differences exist.

2. The results of the regression equation used in this study suggested the need to investigate additional variables that may influence the level of social support in residence halls and in off-campus housing.

3. Replication of this study with equal, matched sample sizes would better describe differences between residence hall and off-campus freshmen.

4. Alternative means of measuring participation in extracurricular activities is needed.
REFERENCES


Dawkins, M., & Dawkins, R. Perceptions and experiences as correlates of academic performance among blacks at a predominantly white university: A research note. College and University, 55, 171-180.


January 27, 1984

Dear Student,

Your cooperation and help is needed. In order to provide better services to you, the university needs information that only you can provide. A questionnaire is enclosed with this letter. Please complete it and return to your residence hall desk this weekend.

We realize that your schedule is busy. Therefore we will provide a 25c incentive, after you return your completed survey to the desk in your residence hall.

Your participation is important because you are one of a small number of students selected to assist with this project. Do not include your name on the survey; all responses will be kept confidential. Each survey is numbered to remind students who have not returned theirs.

This project is being supervised by Dr. Jo Anne Trow, Professor of Education at Oregon State University.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Dann Grindeman
PhD Candidate
Cauthorn Hall, Head Resident
January 30, 1984

Dear Student,

Several days ago you received an important survey in your mailbox. This is just a reminder to return it to the front desk in your residence hall, as soon as possible.

Your participation is so crucial that we are willing to acknowledge it with 25¢, after you return the completed survey to your hall's front desk.

Your response is necessary for the project's success. Please take the time to complete the questionnaire in the next two days.

Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely,

Dann Grindeman
Cauthorn Hall, Head Resident
PhD Candidate
January 27, 1984

Dear Student,

Your cooperation and help is needed. In order to understand you and your needs as a student, the university needs information that only you can provide. Your participation is important because you are one of a small number of students selected to take part in this project.

A questionnaire is enclosed with this letter. Please complete it and return it in the self addressed, stamped envelope. Your responses will remain confidential and no individual scores will be reported.

In order to insure the success of this project, please return the questionnaire by Tuesday, February 7, 1984.

Please relax for a moment and complete the survey. The quarter is enclosed as an incentive and to express our appreciation for your assistance.

Thank you for your help with this project. This research is being supervised by Dr. Jo Anne Trow, Professor of Education at Oregon State University.

Sincerely,

Dann Grindeman
PhD Candidate
February 6, 1984

Dear Student,

Several days ago you received an important survey in the mail. Please take the time to complete the survey. Return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided with the original mailing.

Your participation is very important. Many students have already returned their surveys. But to ensure the success of this project, your responses are needed.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Dann Grindeman
PhD Candidate
INSTRUCTIONS
THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF STATEMENTS DESCRIBES HOW PEOPLE SOMETIMES FEEL ABOUT THEMSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE. PLEASE READ EACH STATEMENT AND RECORD AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE HOW TRUE OR FALSE YOU THINK EACH STATEMENT IS. SOMETIMES PEOPLE TRY TO MAKE THEMSELVES OUT TO BE BETTER THAN THEY REALLY ARE. THEREFORE, THE QUESTIONNAIRE INCLUDES SOME ITEMS TO CHECK ON THIS. THE FIRST THING THAT COMES TO YOUR MIND IS PROBABLY THE BEST RESPONSE. THERE MAY BE ONE OR TWO STATEMENTS THAT DO NOT DIRECTLY APPLY TO YOU. HOWEVER, TRY TO ANSWER THEM AS THEY MIGHT APPLY TO YOU IN A HYPOTHETICAL SITUATION. REMEMBER THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS SO DO NOT SPEND TOO MUCH TIME DECIDING ON A CORRECT ANSWER. RESPOND TO THE STATEMENTS IN ORDER AND DO NOT LEAVE OUT ANY RESPONSES.

FOR EACH STATEMENT ASK YOURSELF: HOW TRUE IS THIS OF ME?

A B C D E

1. I AM AS SURE OF MYSELF AS MOST OTHER PEOPLE SEEM TO BE.
2. I HAVE FOUND ONE OF THE EASIEST WAYS TO MAKE FRIENDS WITH OTHERS IS TO BE THE KIND OF PERSON THEY WOULD LIKE ME TO BE.
3. IT SEEMS LIKE WHEN I TRUST SOMEONE TO WHOM I AM ATTRACTION I GET HURT.
4. I DO NOT HAVE AS STRONG CONTROL OVER MY FEELINGS AS I WOULD LIKE.
5. IT DOES NOT MATTER TO ME THAT I AM NOT AS ATTRACTION AS OTHER PEOPLE.
6. I RARELY EXPRESS MY FEELINGS TO A FRIEND FOR FEAR I WILL GET HURT.
7. WHEN I LOOK IN A MIRROR AT MYSELF, I AM SATISFIED WITH THE PHYSICAL ME I SEE.
8. I USUALLY DO NOT HAVE THE ASSURANCE THAT WHAT I AM DOING IS THE BEST THING.
9. I BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE SHOULD FOLLOW AN ESTABLISHED DRESS CODE IN ORDER TO BE ACCEPTED IN A WORK ENVIRONMENT.
10. I SOMETIMES REGRET MY BEHAVIOR IN INFORMAL SOCIAL SITUATIONS (E.G., PARTIES).
11. MY FEELINGS OFTEN INTERFERE WITH MY INTERACTIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE.
12. IT USUALLY TAKES SO MUCH EFFORT TO MAKE DECISIONS I WISH SOMEBODY ELSE WOULD MAKE DECISIONS FOR ME.
13. I HAVE MANY DOUBTS ABOUT WHAT I AM GOING TO DO WITH MY LIFE.
14. I FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE WHEN I AM SEEN WITH SOMEONE WHO DRESSES OUT OF STYLE.
15. IF I REALY LET GO OF MY FEELINGS, I PROBABLY WOULD NOT DO ANYTHING THAT I WOULD LATER REGRET.
16. WHEN I COMPARE MYSELF TO PEOPLE WHOH I THINK ARE EXTREMELY GOOD LOOKING, I FEEL INFERIOR.
17. IN MOST SITUATIONS, I WOULD NOT HESITATE TO EXPRESS MY BELIEFS TO THOSE WITH OPPOSITE BELIEFS.
18. MOST OF THE TIME I AM COMFORTABLE WITH MY FEELINGS.
19. I BELIEVE THERE IS ONLY ONE RIGHT PERSON FOR ME WITH WHOM I COULD ESTABLISH A CLOSE LOVE RELATIONSHIP.
20. A PERSON SHOULD ADAPT HIS OR HER APPEARANCE TO THE GROUP THAT HAPPENS TO BE WITH HIM OR HER AT THE TIME.
21. I ENJOY THE PEOPLE WHO SHOW WHERE THEY ARE GOING IN LIFE.
22. IF J DID NOT WEAR THE BASIC STYLE OF DRESS THAT OTHER PEOPLE WEAR, I WOULD FEEL LEFT OUT AND EXCLUDED.
23. IF I SHARED MY TRUE FEELINGS WITH A CLOSE FRIEND (MALE OR FEMALE), SHE WOULD PROBABLY THINK LESS OF ME.
24. NO MATTER HOW SAD I FEEL, I USUALLY THINK THINGS WILL GET BETTER.
25. EACH DAY PRESENTS NEW CHALLENGES THAT I CANNOT WAIT TO CONFRONT.
26. I FEEL CONFIDENT THAT I HAVE CHOSSEN OR WILL CHOOSE THE BEST OCCUPATIONAL FIELD FOR ME.
27. I AM CAPABLE OF UNDERSTANDING MOST IDEAS I READ ABOUT.
28. WHEN I AM HURT BY SOMEONE I CARE FOR, I FIND IT HARD TO TRUST OTHERS FOR QUITE A LONG TIME.
29. I OFTEN FEEL INFERIOR WHEN I COMPARE MYSELF TO OTHER PEOPLE.
30. I OFTEN HAVE UNEASY THOUGHTS ABOUT THE WAY I APPEAR TO OTHER PEOPLE.
31. I BELIEVE THERE ARE ONLY A FEW PEOPLE (1, OR 2) IN THE WORLD I COULD BE HAPPY WITH IN A CLOSE LOVE RELATIONSHIP.
32. I DO NOT MIND APPEARING DIFFERENT IN DRESS FROM OTHER PEOPLE BECAUSE THAT IS ME.
33. NO MATTER HOW HARD I TRY, I DO NOT FEEL PREPARED TO ENTER THE WORKING WORLD.
34. Even though it may be contrary to my normal wishes, I usually dress to fit the situation or wishes of others.
35. My confidence is really shaken when I see so many capable people with abilities as good or better than mine.
36. If I seek to be not dressed appropriately for a particular situation, I usually become very anxious and feel out of place.
37. When I am a stranger in a group, I often introduce myself to others.
38. When other people discuss how important it is to be handsome and pretty, I feel badly and wish I were more attractive.
39. I would not change my style of clothes just because my boss indicated that I should dress more like him or her.
40. When I am in a crowd, I feel uncomfortable about the way I look.
41. It is uncomfortable for me to speak out in groups for fear my statement may be incorrect.
42. I realize that most of my feelings and desires are natural and normal.
43. My relationship with people of the opposite sex usually have not lasted as long as I would like.
44. There are certain feelings I have that I do not understand.
45. My feelings often overwhelm me when I try to establish close friendships.
46. I would not pattern my appearance after the dress style expected by my peer group.
47. If a boss or teacher criticizes my work, it is usually because they do not understand me.
48. I frequently have doubts that I can have a successful and happy close love relationship.
49. I usually do not smile because I am uncomfortable with the way my style looks.
50. When I fall in love, I am reasonably sure of my feelings.
51. I still have difficulty making decisions for myself.
52. To satisfy my needs I have to be aggressive or clever.
53. I feel some guilt when I realize how strong my feelings are.
54. I do not understand myself very well.
55. I do not know myself well enough to make a firm occupational choice.
56. It is difficult for me to answer questions like these about myself.
57. I have trouble making decisions when other people disagree with me.
58. Even when I have most of the facts I often postpone making decisions.
59. Other people know what is better for my life than I do.

**Part 2: Instructions**

We are interested in learning about some of the ways that you feel people have helped you or tried to make life more pleasant for you over the last four weeks. Below these instructions you will find a list of activities that other people living in your current social environment might have done for you, or with you in recent weeks. Please read each item carefully and indicate how often these activities happened to you, in your current living setting, during the past four weeks.

**Use the following scale to make your ratings:**

A: Never
B: Once or Twice
C: About Once a Week
D: About Every Day
E: Several Times a Week

1. Was right there with you (physically) in a stressful situation.
2. Provided you with a place where you could get away for awhile.
3. Watched after your possessions when you were away (pets, plants, etc.).
4. Told you what s/he did in a situation that was similar to yours.
5. Did some activity together to help you get your mind off of things.
6. Talked with you about some interests of yours.
7. Let you know that you did something well.
8. Went with you to someone who could take action.
9. Told you that you are OK, just the way you are.
10. Told you that s/he would keep the things you talked about private, just between the two of you.
11. Assisted you in setting a goal for yourself.
12. Made it clear what was expected of you.

**Continue on the next page....**
USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO MAKE YOUR RATINGS:
A: NOT AT ALL  B: ONCE OR TWICE  C: ABOUT ONCE A WEEK  D: SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK  E: ABOUT EVERY DAY

14. EXPRESSED ESTEEM OR RESPECT FOR A COMPETENCY OR PERSONAL QUALITY OF YOURS.
A B C D E
15. GAVE YOU SOME INFORMATION ON HOW TO DO SOMETHING.
A B C D E
16. SUGGESTED SOME ACTION THAT YOU SHOULD TAKE.
A B C D E
17. GAVE YOU OVER $25.
A B C D E
18. COMFORTED YOU BY SHOWING YOU SOME PHYSICAL AFFECTION.
A B C D E
19. GAVE YOU SOME INFORMATION TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND A SITUATION YOU WERE IN.
A B C D E
20. PROVIDED YOU WITH SOME TRANSPORTATION.
A B C D E
21. CHECKED BACK WITH YOU TO SEE IF YOU FOLLOWED THE ADVICE YOU WERE GIVEN.
A B C D E
22. GAVE YOU UNDER $25.
A B C D E
23. HELPED YOU UNDERSTAND WHY YOU DIDN'T DO SOMETHING WELL.
A B C D E
24. LISTENED TO YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR PRIVATE FEELINGS.
A B C D E
25. LOANED OR GAVE YOU SOMETHING (OTHER THAN MONEY) THAT YOU NEEDED.
A B C D E
26. AGREED THAT WHAT YOU WANTED TO DO WAS RIGHT.
A B C D E
27. SAID THINGS THAT MADE YOUR SITUATION CLEARER AND EASIER TO UNDERSTAND.
A B C D E
28. TOLD YOU HOW S/HE FELT IN A SITUATION THAT WAS SIMILAR TO YOURS.
A B C D E
29. LET YOU KNOW THAT S/HE WILL ALWAYS BE AROUND IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE.
A B C D E
30. EXPRESSED INTEREST AND CONCERN IN YOUR WELL BEING.
A B C D E
31. TOLD YOU THAT S/HE FEELS VERY CLOSE TO YOU.
A B C D E
32. TOLD YOU WHY YOU SHOULD SEE FOR ASSISTANCE.
A B C D E
33. TOLD YOU WHAT TO EXPECT IN A SITUATION THAT WAS ABOUT TO HAPPEN.
A B C D E
34. LOANED YOU OVER $25.
A B C D E
35. TAUGHT YOU HOW TO DO SOMETHING.
A B C D E
36. GAVE YOU FEEDBACK ON HOW YOU WERE DOING WITHOUT SAYING IT WAS GOOD OR BAD.
A B C D E
37. JOKED AND KIDDED TO TRY TO CHEER YOU UP.
A B C D E
38. PROVIDED YOU WITH A PLACE TO STAY.
A B C D E
39. PITCHED IN TO HELP YOU DO SOMETHING THAT NEEDED TO GET DONE.
A B C D E
40. LOANED YOU UNDER $25.

PART 3 INSTRUCTIONS
FOR THIS PART OF THE SURVEY, WE ARE INTERESTED IN HOW YOU DESCRIBED YOURSELF. FOLLOWING THESE INSTRUCTIONS YOU WILL FIND A LIST OF STATEMENTS THAT DESCRIBE YOUR REACTIONS TO OTHER STUDENTS LIVING ON YOUR FLOOR. PLEASE READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY AND INDICATE TO WHAT EXTENT EACH STATEMENT DESCRIBES YOUR REACTIONS. USE THE FOLLOWING SCALE TO RATE YOUR RESPONSES:

A: COMPLETELY DISSIMILAR  B: DISSIMILAR  C: NEUTRAL  D: SIMILAR  E: COMPLETELY SIMILAR

PLEASE READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY. MAKE YOUR RATINGS BY CIRCLING THE NUMBER THAT DESCRIBES YOU.

1. I WOULD RATHER THINK ABOUT A PERSONAL PROBLEM BY MYSELF THAN DISCUSS IT WITH OTHERS.
A B C D E
2. I CONSIDER MYSELF A FORGIVING PERSON.
A B C D E
3. OTHER PEOPLE ARE THE SOURCE OF MY GREATEST PLEASURE AND PAIN.
A B C D E
4. I AM INTERESTED IN KNOWING WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK.
A B C D E
5. WHEN I RECEIVE A GIFT, I FIND MYSELF THINKING ABOUT HOW MUCH IT MUST BE WORTH.
A B C D E
6. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD I BUY SOMETHING I SUSPECTED HAD BEEN STOLEN.
A B C D E
7. I AM GREATLY INFLUENCED BY THE MOODS OF THE PEOPLE I AM WITH.
A B C D E
8. SOMETIMES THE MOST CONSIDERATE THING ONE PERSON CAN DO FOR ANOTHER IS TO HIDE A BIT OF THE TRUTH.
A B C D E
9. SOMETIMES SIMPLY TALKING ALOUD ABOUT THINGS THAT BOTHER ME MAKES ME FEEL BETTER—REGARDLESS OF WHO, IF ANYONE, HEARS THESE THOUGHTS.
A B C D E
10. MY FRIENDS AND I SEEM TO SHARE THE SAME MUSICAL INTERESTS.
A B C D E
11. I'M RELUCTANT TO TALK ABOUT MY PERSONAL LIFE WITH PEOPLE I DO NOT KNOW WELL.
A B C D E
12. I GENERALLY VIEW MYSELF AS A PERSON WHO IS NOT TERRIBLY INTERESTED IN WHAT OTHER PEOPLE ARE REALLY LIKE.
A B C D E
13. SOMETIMES I THINK I TAKE THINGS THAT OTHER PEOPLE SAY TO ME TO PERSONALLY.
A B C D E
14. IT'S IMPORTANT FOR ME TO WORK WITH PEOPLE WITH WHO I GET ALONG WELL, EVEN IF THAT MEANS I GET LESS DONE.

(OVER)
USE THE FOLLOWING CODE TO MAKE YOUR RATINGS: A: VERY DISSIMILAR, B: DISSIMILAR, C: NEUTRAL, D: SIMILAR, E: VERY SIMILAR.

A B C D E 15. I OFTEN FIND MYSELF WONDERING WHAT MY PROFESSORS ARE REALLY LIKE.
A B C D E 16. IF I HAD A CHANCE TO SHARE AN APARTMENT WITH SOMEONE, I WOULD WANT TO FIND OUT ABOUT THE PERSON'S FAMILY BACKGROUND, HOBBIES, AND SO FORTH.
A B C D E 17. I WOULD PREFER TO DO POORLY ON AN EXAM THAT IS MACHINE SCORED RATHER THAN DO
    EQUIVOCALLY POORLY ON ONE THAT IS GRADED BY THE INSTRUCTOR.
A B C D E 18. I TRY TO LIKE PEOPLE WHO ARE GOOD LOOKING.
A B C D E 19. WHAT OTHERS THINK ABOUT MY ACTIONS IS OF LITTLE OR NO CONSEQUENCE TO ME.
A B C D E 20. THE MORE PEOPLE TELL ME PERSONAL THINGS ABOUT THEMSELVES, THE MORE INCLINED I FEEL TO REVEAL
    ABOUT MYSELF.
A B C D E 21. WHEN SOMEONE DOES ME A FAVOR I DON'T USUALLY FEEL COMPELLED TO RETURN IT.
A B C D E 22. I AM A TIMID OR SHY PERSON.
A B C D E 23. I AM AN ENERGETIC AND OUTGOING PERSON.
A B C D E 24. I BELIEVE THAT I AM ENROLLED IN THE RIGHT CURRICULUM.
A B C D E 25. I AM OFTEN DEPRESSED.
A B C D E 26. I AM OFTEN LATE AT MEETINGS.
A B C D E 27. I AM OFTEN LATE AT CLASSES.
A B C D E 28. I AM A GOOD CONVERSATIONALIST.
A B C D E 29. I AM A TIMID OR SHY PERSON.
A B C D E 30. I AM AN ENERGETIC AND OUTGOING PERSON.
A B C D E 31. I AM OFTEN LATE AT MEETINGS.
A B C D E 32. I AM OFTEN LATE AT CLASSES.
A B C D E 33. I AM A GOOD CONVERSATIONALIST.
A B C D E 34. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 35. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 36. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 37. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 38. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 39. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
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A B C D E 46. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 47. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 48. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 49. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
A B C D E 50. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.

IN THE SPACE BEFORE EACH ITEM, MARK T (TRUE) IF THE ITEM CHARACTERIZES YOU, F (FALSE) IF NOT.

1. I OFTEN THINK ABOUT WHAT I WOULD SAY IN A SITUATION.
2. I AM A TIMID OR SHY PERSON.
3. I AM AN ENERGETIC AND OUTGOING PERSON.
4. MY COLLEGE ACHIEVEMENTS AND EXPERIENCES HAVE BEEN ABOUT AS I ANTICIPATED.
5. I AM OFTEN LATE AT MEETINGS.
6. I AM OFTEN LATE AT CLASSES.
7. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
8. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
9. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
10. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
11. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
12. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
13. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.
14. I AM OFTEN FEELING SUPERIORITY.

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