PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY BY INCOMING FRESHMAN STUDENTS

By

BARBARA JEAN LAYMAN

Bachelor of Arts
Lincoln Christian College
Lincoln, Illinois
1964

Master of Science
Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana
1965

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Thesis Approved:

Wm P Ewens
Thesis Adviser

Judith E. Dobson

Frank E. Ten Brink

Dan Wesley

N N Durham
Dean of the Graduate College

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

One of the problems facing institutions of higher education today seems to be that of maintaining enrollment. As students perceive their college environment and surroundings, they may find their needs are not being met. This may result in some attrition within a multiversity or even a change of institutions. An institution of higher education should be concerned about the perceptions that students, the community, and constitutents-at-large have regarding its atmosphere, environment, services, and offerings to that population especially if it desires to more effectively meet the needs of its students.

One of the intents of this study was to investigate students' perceptions of their environment at Oklahoma State University; to report the perceptions of incoming freshman students as related to their college environment. The study sought also to determine the relationship between persistence and students' perceptions of their college environment of the persisters and nonpersisters at Oklahoma State University.

Some of the research regarding the persisters and the nonpersisters is reported. The purpose was to present pertinent research related to college environment and the perception students have of that environment as it is related to persistence at Oklahoma State University.

Need for Study

In his study of various influences upon college experiences, Newcomb (1962) refers to Summerskill who feels that the attrition rate (in college) has not changed appreciably in the past 40 years. Newcomb also reports a study in which the investigator "found that less than half of those who enter successfully complete college within four years. Of these who enter [as freshman students], 28 percent withdraw during or at the end of the freshman year" (p. 70). Sanford (1962) points out in his research that the freshman's personality is differentiated.

> The freshman develops when he is confronted with challenges that require new kinds of adaptive responses, and when he is freed from the necessity of maintaining unconscious defensive devices; these happenings result in the enlargement and faculty differentiation of the system of the personality, and set the stage for integration on higher levels. But this does not distinguish the freshman from other people. Everybody has unconscious motives and mechanisms, and repertory of coping devices that he hopes will be adequate to the challenge of life, and everybody can develop further when the necessary conditions are present. The point here is that when it comes to planning the freshman's education, the characteristics that he has in common with this person may be just as important as those that distinguish him from others, and we can no better afford to neglect general human characteristics in our work with freshmen than we can in our dealings with any other group of people (p. 255).

A study providing information regarding the attrition rate of a selected population of incoming freshman students could be easily conducted by simply noting the number of students who would make a choice to remain in the college environment at the end of their first semester as opposed to those who leave sometime during the first semester. That answer alone would be somewhat valuable to the Student Services area but it would, at the same time, ignore many of the factors involved in the importance of perceptions which students have of college environment

and what effect those perceptions have to do with persistence in college.

Previous research demonstrates some of the factors involved, but for the most part the process of perception was not often singled out. Other studies have concerned themselves with several variables but not always as these are related to persistence within a college environment. This study has as its underlying framework to research further the importance of perception regarding the college environment as related to the incoming freshman student. Therefore, it was the general intent of this research to provide a more comprehensive look at the perceptions selected entering freshmen had of their college environment and how this affects persistence at Oklahoma State University.

The United States has taken the lead historically in their educational revolution, starting earlier and advancing further than other nations. Today nearly 20 percent of an individual's average lifetime in the United States is spent in substantial attention to formal education--12.6 years out of 71--and the percentage has risen rapidly over the past century. If all costs of formal education in all institutions are added up and foregone earnings are included, about one-eighth of our nation and productive effort is spent on formal education (Carnegie Commission, 1973, p. 3). This brings into focus the immense importance the United States places upon higher education.

Universities are continually being reminded that the future holds many uncertainities and that they need to become more open and receptive in order to meet the needs of its students. The 1973 Carnegie Commission's Final Report: Priorities For Action predicts that between 1970 and 1980 college enrollment will rise only half again as much as the current figure as compared to the two-for-one increase between 1960 and

1970. Then between 1980 and 1990, they predict a constancy of enrollment with no appreciably increase. Along with this, a change in the complexion of the student body; increased emphasis on equal access adds to the pressing need to feel the pulse beat of the campus.

Values enter into the picture. This is a period of time when students are forced to look seriously and deeply at their environmental situation. The value they place upon the institution, their degree ultimately obtained, their place of residence, the faculty, and the administration along with intrapersonal relationships with their immediate peer group affects decision making on their part as they perceive their environmental surroundings and react to this perception.

What Oklahoma State University students look for when they come to campus affect their continued stay at the campus. If they come with certain perceptions of that college environment to be met and these are not being met, there is a responsibility on the part of all persons involved--students, faculty, and the administration--to be aware of this.

What does a college environment have to do with whether a student remains for a period of time on the college campus? This question and others were considered throughout the study.

A select population, entering freshman students in the 1974 fall class, were concentrated on and this is the population with which the dissertation will be concerned. This sample group's perception of the college environment will be analyzed carefully. Those students who were still enrolled during the last week of classes in the 1974 fall semester and were administered the instrument for a post test (second testing) were noted as being persisters.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between the persisters and nonpersisters and their perceptions of the college environment as measured on the pre test by the seven scales on the CUES.
2. There is no significant relationship between the male persisters and nonpersisters and their perceptions of the college environment as measured on the pre test by the seven scales on the CUES.
3. There is no significant relationship between the female persisters and nonpersisters and their perceptions of the college environment as measured on the pre test by the seven scales on the CUES.
4. There is no significant relationship between the persisters and their perceptions of the college environment on the pre test and post test as measured by the seven scales on the CUES.
5. There is no significant relationship of attendance at orientation session(s) to persistence within a college environment.
6. There is no significant relationship of place of residence to persistence within a college environment.
7. There is no significant relationship of employment on campus, off campus or no employment and persistence within a college environment.
8. There is no significant relationship of full time employment on or off campus and persistence within a college environment.
9. There is no significant relationship of part time employment on

or off campus and persistence within a college environment.

Assumptions

The following are assumptions which this study makes. First, it is assumed within this study that a random sampling of the total population of incoming freshman students was selected. Second, it is assumed that the persisters are those who are enrolled and present at the time of the post test session and that the nonpersisters were not enrolled and/or present at the time of the post test session as will be defined in the following section.

Definition of Terms

Certain important terms and concepts used in this dissertation are defined as follows:

General Terms and Concepts

1. University - refers to the Stillwater campus of Oklahoma State University.
2. Incoming Freshmen - refers to those who designated themselves as such on their enrollment card for fall, 1974.
3. Press - the unique and inevitably private view each person has of the events in which he takes place (Stern, 1960, p. 7).
4. Press of a college environment - represents the student's perception of what he faces and deals with in the college environment. This provides the external situational counterpart of internalized personality needs (Stern, 1960, p. 7).
5. Expectations - the present value of a probability connected with

some future event (Funk and Wagnell, 1959, p. 876).

6. Perceptions - the faculty or power of knowledge of things through the senses, or the process of acquiring such knowledge and its mental product . . . insight or intuitive judgement that implies discernment of (Funk and Wagnell, 1959, p. 1832).
7. CUES - College and University Environment Scales, Second Edition, Form x-2.
8. Persisters - those students in the sample group who continue to be enrolled as students and are present at the time of the post test session.
9. Nonpersisters - those students in the sample who were not enrolled and/or who were not present at the time of the post test session.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study should provide useful information to individuals concerned with the importance perception of a college environment plays upon first semester freshman students, in particular. For example, the results from the present investigation should provide relevant information for: college and university recruiters, the Program and Student Development areas of Student Services, and the Academic Deans of the colleges as they determine the functions and responsibilities of the Student Personnel Departments of the various colleges within the total university. This also includes the total university faculty, staff, and personnel as they strive to provide an environment which will assist in providing perceived needs being better and more effectively met.

Limitations of the Study

The sample for this study was incoming freshmen who, for the most part, had not experienced a college environment previously. Even at the time the results were analyzed, the sample group was not as exposed as they would have been were the study being conducted during their latter years of education at Oklahoma State University. One must bear in mind the purpose was to look at initial perceptions of incoming freshmen to determine the perceptions they had during the 1974 fall semester and also to see what change took place over a 13 week interval among the persister group.

In addition, the sample studied and analyzed may not have been representative of any group other than the population from which it was taken. Therefore, generalization of these findings to other groups will not be justified.

The seven scales included in this survey represented at best a partial overall picture of the characteristics of the institution as a whole, based on the collective perceptions of incoming freshman students as they perceived their college environment. It is hoped that ongoing research will complement this study.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I has introduced the problem studied. This chapter has included a statement of the problem, assumptions, hypotheses, definition of terms as well as the limitation, significance, and organization of the study.

Chapter II will review the literature concerning the hypotheses

tested, theoretical framework for the study, research studies related to the assessment of college environment, and studies using instruments to measure perceptions of college environment.

Chapter II will describe the design and methodology of the study, purpose of the study, selection of the sample, the instrument used in the study, demographic variables, and the statistical procedures.

Chapter IV will contain a statistical analysis of the data, the testing of the hypotheses, the findings and statistical results which will involve the chi square test of relationship treatment, and summary.

Chapter V will present a general summary of the study, a summary of the findings and conclusions, implications, and recommendations regarding future studies in this area.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Since the purpose of the study was to look at the perceptions freshman students have of their environment at Oklahoma State University, it would be helpful to look at other factors and the effects these have had upon other students. There was a need to look at various studies which have involved some of the variables of this study as they were concerned with persistence within a college environment.

Because the intent is to investigate the importance perceptions of college environment have upon students, it seems appropriate to provide a review of literature in two specific areas. The first area of this literature reviews present studies which have been conducted in regard to the assessment of college environment which used the College and University Environment Scale (CUES) instrument. Some of these studies looking at perceptions of college environment were conducted with incoming freshman students and some contained a sampling group composed of other than incoming freshman students. The theoretical framework of this study has been based upon the literature review which indicated and stressed the importance of perceptions and their changing effects upon college students.

The second area of this literature review contains assessment of the college environment in which the studies were conducted using an

instrument other than the CUES. These studies are presented to lend support to the assessment of college environment and the importance of perception upon college students and their persistence within a college environment.

These studies are mentioned to illustrate relevant and pertinent research in the area of college environment and its effect upon studied sample groups at other institutions using populations of freshmen as well as other college student populations. These studies illustrated variables used in this present study as well as other variables which are included in this particular study. However, the theoretical base for the present study will be substantiated.

Theoretical Framework

> College has come to represent the necessary continuation of secondary schooling--a more specialized preparation for the job in which one will find personal satisfaction, security, and prestige. Under these circumstances the college can never become an end in itself but only a means which must be borne as swiftly and painlessly as possible (Stern, 1960, p. 69).

An all too common conception of a college education is that is includes only the narrowly defined academic process involving just the teacher and the student. Many college graduates agree, however, that their education took place as much outside the classroom as within its narrow walls, and was as much a result of all that surrounded them as of the formal lecture or seminar. Some refer to this larger, encompassing classroom as "the climate of the campus" (Eddy, 1959).

Campus climates in the 1960's were characterized by campuses being torn apart. Relations with external groups were seriously damaged. Dissent was an essential aspect of academic life and there was much to

dissent about but the disruption was excessive, according to the 1973 Carnegie Commission report Priorities For Action.

> Today an eerie quietude has descended on the campus. But educators in higher education have not yet made up their collective minds about how they should and will conduct themselves vis-a-vis the political arena, and it remains to be seen whether they will want to make up their minds and be able to do so in a manner acceptable to the public-at-large. The public has not yet renewed its full faith in higher education. Once bitten, they are still shy. New confrontations on campus and off are just as possible in the future as the potentialities for such future confrontations are being blindly ignored in the present. The 'advocacy culture,' or cultures, so well developed on so many campuses, almost certainly will confront the 'bedrock' culture of so much of the surrounding society on new, just as it has on old, occasions (1973, p. 4).

A university is many things--courses, professors, books, tests, lectures, rules and regulations, extracurricular activities, attitudes, perceptions, and expectations--to mention but a few. The university environment is the stimulus, but it is a complex stimulus, consisting of all of the above mentioned and many other features and conditions which impinge upon the awareness of students. Regardless of the assorted physical facts such as money or size, the environment, in a psychological sense, is what it is perceived to be by the people who live in it. Even if one grants the possibility of self-deception on a large scale, the perceived reality, whatever it is, influences one's behavior. Realistically, what people think is true is in fact true for them ("Scott-Parker-Wentz Evaluation," 1973, p. 1).

Eddy (1959) in a study in which he was looking at environment states ". . . we found that particular aspects of the environment have the power either to reinforce or to negate all else that happens . . . . If learning is to be on a high level, we believe that all else must support it" (p. 133). Initially the quality of the environment is established by

the level of expectancy. When a high level of expectancy does not permeate the entire campus, units of the environment proceed quickly and easily to negate the desired expectancy. When the quality of the environment is centered upon, we find the expression environmental press used more frequently to describe the level of that expectancy. Attention began to be given in the area of the college environment and environmental press. Educators began to recognize the importance of pyschological, emotional, and sociological forces which affected their students (Eddy, 1959, p. 133).

> The psychological environment may be defined as 'the complex of stimuli that press upon the individual and to which his behavior constitutes a response.' In a sense, these pressures are unique and private insofar as the view that each of us has of the world must be ultimately and inevitably private. As observers, however, we tend to draw conclusions of our own regarding the meaning of the events in which someone else is participating, and we also tend to organize and classify otherwise discrete events on the basis of seemingly common elements (Stern, 1963, p. 5).

Astin and Holland (1961), in their studies, assumed that the college environment or press is a product of the following attributes of the student body: "the total number of students in the college, the average intelligence of the students, and the personal characteristics of the study body" (p. 308). The appreciation of environmental forces stems from the assessment of personality theory (Stern, 1956) (Stern, 1970).

College students differ from one another as distinctive personalities, and the same has been said of the collectivity of students represented in a study body as well as of the institution to which they belong. The college community may be regarded as a system of pressures, practices, and policies intended to influence the development of students toward

the attainment of institutional objectives. The distinctive atmosphere of a college, and the differences between colleges, may be attributable in part to the different ways in which such systems can be organized--through which the behavior of the individual is shaped (Stern, 1970, p. 4).

Need has come for colleges and universities to identify and study those forces which operate and influence the college student (Thistlewaite, 1959, p. 75). This effort has been greatly facilitated by the development of testing instruments such as the College Characteristics Index by Stern and Pace, the Environmental Assessment Technique by Astin and Holland, College and University Environment Scales by Robert Pace, and Survey of Personal Values by Leonard Gordon.

Pace and Stern laid the groundwork for the idea that college cultures may be seen as a complex of environmental press which may be related to a corresponding complex of personal needs. In the broadest sense, the term need refers to denotable characteristics of individuals, including drives, motives, goals, etc. The term press can similarly be regarded as a general label for stimulus, treatment, or process variables. College students differ. The concept of press offers a way of viewing the environment which is comparable analytically and synthetically to other more familiar ways of dealing with the individual. The press of a college environment represents what must be faced and dealt with by the students (Pace, 1958).

Needs refer to the organizational tendencies which appear to give unity and direction to a person's behavior. Murray (1938) defined them originally as

a force (the physico-chemical nature of which is unknown) in

> the brain region, a force which organizes perception, apperception, intellection, conation, and action in such a way as to transfer in a certain direction an existing, unsatisfying situation (p. 124).

More recently (1951) Murray has referred to a need simply as

> a nonobservable construct or intervening variable, which belongs . . . to the category of disposition concepts. It is a state, in short, that is characterized by the tendency to actions of a certain kind (Stern, 1970, p. 6).

The determination of needs characterizing an individual can only be made from an examination of the interactions in which he engages. Needs, as Lewin and Murray have stated, may be identified as a "taxonomic classification of the characteristic spontaneous behaviors manifested by individuals in their life transactions" (Stern, 1970, p. 7).

In discussing environmental taxonomy, the Sanford volume on the American College represents the current level of sophistication achieved by social scientists in the study of educational processes. Stern advocates that "although it is evident that some progress has been made, taxonomy for characterizing institutional situations seems to be one of the factors which limits further development" (Stern, 1970, p. 4).

A taxonomy is the framework of a model of relationships. It was Kurt Lewin's (1936) contention that

> Every scientific psychology must take into account the whole situation, i.e., the state of both person and environment. This implies that it is necessary to find methods of representing person and environment, in common terms as parts of one situation . . . in other words, our concepts have to represent the interrelationship of conditions (pp. 12-13).

Murray, Lewin, Stern, Pace, and Bloom (in particular) seem to rely very heavily upon the impact of college environment and the press of a university in terms of persistence on a college campus.

Attrition of college students has been a persistent problem for

many institutions. Much of the research indicates that students drop out for multicausal reasons. Students who stay in college for the attainment of a degree may express evaluations of certain aspects of the college environment that are significantly different from students who may be dropped or who may withdraw voluntarily. Differences in attitudes, perceptions, and judgements toward several environmental factors offer some promise of adding information and understanding of factors of college students' environment which may be associated with persistence or attrition (Robinson, 1969).

Relevant literature supports the conclusion that just as many college students fail to persist for nonacademic reasons as for academic ones, and that little is known about these nonacademic variables. Motivational factors cause many dropouts and we do not know which motivational factors are predictive nor how to measure them ("Scott-Parker-Wentz Evaluation," 1973).

A review of the literature indicates that the university environment plays a significant role in shaping the behavior of students. Literature dictates that the university experience does act as an agent for change in the college student, and that there are not one, but many variables in the university which act as that agent ("Scott-Parker-Wentz Evaluation," 1973).

Environmental measures should aid colleges and individuals in making better decisions by helping them understand and recognize their decisions in terms of the tremendous effect every aspect of that environment has upon them as students. Decisions based on college environmental measures can influence and be influenced by various aspects of colleges such as the effects of the college on people, the consequences of the

college's activities, and the economic or physical products of the college (Baird, 1974). These three aspects of colleges, Baird refers to as "output" or "outcome" and advocates that each of these has influences on the others.

Using perceptual terms, behavior is understood as a consequence of two kinds of perceptions: (1) the perceptions one has about the world and (2) those he has about himself. However, not all perceptions existing for an individual are of equal value to him at any particular time. Some perceptions come to have much greater importance and relevance for the individual as a consequence of his experiences. The interactions between the individual personality and the university environment are extremely complex ("Alpha 73," 1973, p. 3).

The concept of environment has become a relevant general category for sorting out many sources of influence within the world of the college student. In the broadest sense, the college or university environment includes every characteristic of the institution which provides potential stimuli for the student ("Alpha 73," 1973, p. 3).

Research Studies Related to the Assessment of College Environment

Certain aspects of the student's interpersonal environment greatly influence his motivation to continue or to drop out of college. People want and need each other, and successes and failures are largely matters of group definition (Newcomb, 1962). The values of the student's parents influence his persistence, but his peer group also has a lot to do with what he does and feels. Different students will react to these pressures in diverse ways.

The following studies will look at the related findings as investigators analyzed college environment, the effect of expectations and perceptions upon students, the sampling of populations used, the instruments which were used, as well as the statistical procedures and treatment involved. These will further be broken down into two divisions:

(a) Studies Using the CUES Instrument

(b) Studies Using Other College Environmental Instruments

Studies Using the CUES Instrument

"Scott-Parker-Wentz Evaluation," 1973, points out that university environments can be looked at in many ways which are important and useful. The concept of effectiveness is relevant to CUES in that the scales are concerned with the educationally and psychologically functional environment of a university.

The concept or press, as applied to the CUES, is a generalized or group concept rather than a uniquely individual one. It refers to the characteristics of an environment perceived by the groups of individuals.

> Students who take CUES are asked to say whether each statement is generally true or false with reference to their college; true when they think the statement is generally characteristic of the college, is a condition that exists, is an event that occurs or might occur, is the way most people feel or act; and false when they think the statement is generally not characteristic of the college. The CUES instrument is, therefore, a device for obtaining a description of the college from the students themselves, who presumably know what the environment is like because they live in it and are part of it. What the students are aware of, and agree with some unanimity of impression to be generally true, defines the prevailing campus atmosphere (Pace, 1969, p. 9).

Sidles (1968) measured student perceptions using the CUES. The theoretical model for his study was an extension of Kelly's fundamental

postulate that "a person's processes are psychologically channelized by the ways in which he anticipates events" (p. 3884-A). Subjects for the study were members of the 1964 and 1966 entering freshman classes. The total in his sample group was 436 students. CUES data for this investigation consisted of "expected" (initial) scores obtained on the second day after the students arrived at college, and the "actual" (final) CUES scores obtained over four months later. The results of this study gave very little support to Kelly's fundamental postulate. The study did, however, present limited evidence that it may be the overall discrepancy between expected and actual college environment which bears some relationship to performance and attrition of college students. Sidles' study is similar in many ways to the present investigative research being conducted.

Centra and Linn (1970) conducted a study in which their purpose was to explore further the relationships between the student-perceived college environment and objective institutional characteristics, and to see what CUES scores could be predicted from data already available. It was also hoped that additional relevant environmental information might be discovered by plotting the deviations of the observed CUES scores about their predicted values, i.e., colleges with CUES scores much higher than predicted would be compared with colleges with a CUES score much lower than predicted to see if systematic differences in institutional characteristics existed between the two groups of colleges. CUES scores for 75 colleges were related to the college mean scores of 1964 entering freshmen on SAT(V) and SAT(M), sex composition of students (S), religious affiliation (R), and size of entering class (N). The study included ten variables in all: the five CUES scales and the five predictor or control

variables (SAT-V, SAT-M, S, R, N). The intercorrelations among these variables were used in a stepwise regression analysis as predictors of each of the five CUES scales. In addition, for each CUES scale the deviation from the regression surface determined by the stepwise regression surface analysis were computed for all 75 colleges.

Raw score deviations from the regression surface determined by the stepwise regression analysis resulted in systematic differences among colleges on the Scholarship and Practicality scales. Zero-order correlations among the five selected predictor variables and the five CUES scores were generally consistent with previous results and expectations. Multiple correlation was high for all five CUES scales. Highest was the 0.80 multiple correlation of the Propriety scale with institutional size, sex, and religion suggesting that knowledge of these three institutional characteristics provide much of the same information available from the Propriety scale. Although the multiple correlations were all relatively high, there remains substantial variance on the five CUES, particularly for Scholarship, Awareness, Practicality, and Community, that is not predictable from the set of five initial characteristics. Additional institutional characteristics might substantially reduce the amount of unpredictable variance on some or all of these scales, but it seems likely that some unique nonerror variance of possible value would remain (Centra and Linn, 1970).

Although interpretation of the data in this study can only be tentative, according to Centra and Linn, it appears that college environments measured only through what students perceive as generally characteristic, can be misrepresented. If college environments are to be better understood, researchers should not only be aware of possible differences in

student's phenomenal views, but should also consider assessing the environment through other approaches (p. 108).

Freshmen and first year transfer students were used in a study conducted by Pate (1970). CUES and a questionnaire by the investigator were used. The data were collected by means of mailings. Replies from 200 freshmen and 76 transfers entering the university in fall, 1967, were used. Mean CUES expectation scores on each of the five scales were analyzed and compared using t-tests. Expectations were compared to later perceptions on each of the institutional dimensions assessed by CUES using t-tests for correlated samples. Pearson product-moment correlations were used.

Risch (1970) reports findings based on a study looking at student expectations as measured by CUES five scales and the level of education of parents was used as a basis for the study. It was hypothesized that entering freshmen whose parents had only a high school education differed from entering freshmen whose parents were both college graduates in their expectations. Student expectations were measured by using the CUES. Students were asked to respond to a questionnaire regarding the occupational level of their fathers and 2,586 students completed this.

On the basis of the students' responses to a question asking the occupational level of their fathers, the students were placed into one of the following eight categories: (1) unskilled workers; (2) semi-skilled worker; (3) skilled worker; (4) service worker; (5) office worker, semi-professional; (6) lower professional, manager; (7) high executive or large firm owner; and (8) profession requiring advanced degree (Popham, 1967). A total of 82 students were then given the CUES. F-ratio values for analysis of variance of expectations as measured by

each scale of CUES along with the means and standard deviations by scores on each scale of CUES were used. Findings indicated that it may not be useful to categorize student's expectations on the basis of their parents' levels of education. Significant differences between sexes in their expectations were found. The finding of sex differences in expectations as measured by the Awareness and Community scales is consistent with findings reported by Pace in 1966, except that Pace reported on perceptions of students already in the environment rather than those just entering as Risch (1970) did.

Studies Using Other College Environmental Instruments

Stern's College Characteristics Index (CCI) along with a multivariate self-report questionnaire which was designed to reflect students' perceptions of their environmental press of colleges were the two instruments used in a study conducted by H. Donald Buckley (1971). Samples for the study were drawn from the State University of New York, which provided a random sample of 100 entering freshmen and random sample of 100 upper classmen as well as the entire population of 228 transfer students for that fall of 1967.

New student expectations of the college environment and ways in which they compared with upper classman student perceptions were analyzed. Scores were based upon intellectual climate, non-intellectual climate and impulse control. The results indicated one cannot assume that transfer students, even with previous college experience, begin with different expectations than freshmen. Both tend to exaggerate their expectations of the environment and anticipate a high intellectual and non-intellectual

climate (Buckley, 1971).

Donato (1969) used the College Characteristic Index of Stern and Pace on items of policy, impression, procedure, attitude, and activity. Forty-three students, 30 faculty members, and ten admission officers were randomly selected. His rationale for the study was that various studies had shown that high school students have unrealistic expectations and poor perceptions of college. Whether caused by inaccurate counseling or by poor self-descriptions from the college, these cause student dissatisfaction or failure. This study, to see if admission officer's perceptions of campus climate as presented to the school counselor accurately represent the college environment, asked if: (1) differences existed between the college press as seen by students and faculty and as presented to high school counselors by admission officers differed greatly from that of students and faculty, on both non-intellectual and intellectual items. The admission officers tended to stress the colleges and their positive attributes. Donato recommends that future studies could examine the officer's personality, academic training, length of service, and whether campus experience narrows perceptual differences (Donato, 1969).

Dollar (1970) has done a study using the Survey of Interpersonal Values. The premise of his study was that a student's own values in interpersonal relationships cause him to respond favorably to certain pressures and to reject others. If the environmental press is compatible with his values, this factor may help hold him; incompatibility, however, may lead to rejection and withdrawal. As a result of using the SIV in a university counseling bureau and doing follow-up of clients, Dollar suspected that low value for recognition and high value for independence

might be related to attrition (p. 200).

Dollar's subjects for the study were 50 pairs of male dropouts and persisters matched on ACT scores collected during the subject's freshman year. The distinction between dropouts and persisters was made near the end of the second semester of the classes' senior year. Results of t-tests of Differences Between Means of Dropouts and Persisters of Interpersonal Value Scales were analyzed. None of the null hypotheses could be rejected; therefore, the conclusion that no significant differences existed between the two groups on the SIV scales was accepted. Dollar (1970) found that SIV scales did not discriminate between persisters and dropouts when academic aptitude was controlled. Dollar still feels the "why" of attrition needs to be explained, and he believes that some explanations lie within the press of the interpersonal environment.

McLeish (1973) used two main approaches to assess the influence of different environmental variables in his study. He used an objective method which sought to quantify the overt, physical, and psychological elements in the environment. He also used a subjective method which sought to establish by means of a questionnaire or an interview, the attitudes toward an evaluation by students of the facilities provided. From various sources including Pace and Stern's CCI, ten items for each of the ten dimensions were collected and modified to form a test instrument appropriate to the nature of the college environments being investigated. Following a trial run with 229 students in six colleges (not included in the analyses) it was decided that the test items did not discriminate between the college environments--the average scores were found to range between 20 and 50 (McLeish, 1973, p. 246).

The ten dimensions used in McLeish's study were: staff image,

concern for individuality, clarity and systems of courses, student energy, intellectual climate, social commitment, humane regulations, student loyalty, group participation, and anxiety level. Ten items for each of these dimensions were collected and modified. The tenth deimension--anxiety level--indicated the general excellence of a college environment as seen from the student viewpoint as a function of a concerned and objective faculty; the concern for individuality shown by the college authorities, the clarity and systematic procedures with which the courses were taught (McLeish, 1973).

McLeish found that the intellectual climate, loyalty to the college, social commitment, group participation, student energy, and anxiety lay at one end of the pole, while a clarity system, humane regulations, staff image, and concern for the individuality are at the other end as measured on the tenth dimension of anxiety. McLeish found the anxiety dimension to contrast two kinds of environment: one end characterized by the competence and humanity of the college staff and the other emphasized effective student response to the environment.

Having obtained scores for each college on these ten dimensions, attention was focused on the 14 product variables. These represented variables where movement of a systematic character was found as shown between pre and post test changes in scores for the variables. The 14 product variables were: radicalism, punitiveness, formalism, naturalism in education, radicalism in education, religious value, utilitarian value, emotional, personal, profession and general satisfaction derived from teaching, toughmindedness in education, anxiety, and examination results (McLeish, 1973).

Stepwise multiple regression was used to determine which of the

environmental dimensions could be related to each of the product dimensions or variables. A probability level of 0.10 was found to be needed to identify a minimal number of predictions in this analysis. The results demonstrated a total change score (pre test to post test) and weighted scores for change toward secular radicalism. However, McLeish cautions that the results do not readily lend themselves to generalizations beyond the data at hand (1973, p. 261).

Conclusions

The significance of these reported studies tend to support and encourage further study to be conducted and pursued particularly in the area of perceptions of college environment. One relevant finding seems to indicate a relationship between what college students expect of their college environment, and its effect upon their continuance or persistence at a university.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

Introduction

Oklahoma State University, founded in 1890 as a land-grant college, is a complex multiversity institution. The fall of 1974 found the Stillwater campus with an approximate 19,200 student enrollment. This was an increase of several hundred over the fall, 1973 enrollment. The Stillwater campus was the institution selected for this study because of the investigator's interest in how incoming freshman students perceive their college environment at Oklahoma State University. During the past few years Oklahoma State University has had a rather high attrition rate in some of its academic discipline areas and colleges. The interest in this area on behalf of the Division of Student Affairs and the Student Services areas was also a major influence to assist them in looking more closely at the perceptions of the incoming freshman population.

Purpose of the Study

The underlying assumption for this study was that if students perceived their environment as positive, they were more likely to remain in that environment than if they perceived it as negative. Further, it was recognized that individuals join a group, enroll in college, etc., in order to have perceived needs met. If these needs are met, the individual is likely to remain in a college environment where these perceived

needs are more likely to be met (Stern, 1970).

The purpose of this study was to concentrate on a select population specifically entering freshman students in the 1974 fall class. This sample group's perception of the college environment during their first semester will be analyzed.

A study which would provide information regarding the attrition rate of the incoming freshman student population would be somewhat valuable to an institution of higher education. However it would, at the same time, eliminate many of the factors involved in the importance of perception of a college environment. Persistence within a college environment is due to many factors, not all of which can be dealt with in this study. Therefore, persistence was analyzed as it was related to the factor of perception of the Oklahoma State University's environment.

In order to have a better understanding of the persisters and the nonpersisters, research was conducted to gain information regarding their likenesses and differences in their perceptions of the Oklahoma State University environment. Previous research demonstrates some of the factors involved, but for the most part, the process of perception and the specific variables used in this study were not often singled out. Therefore, it was the intent of this research to provide a more comprehensive look at the perceptions of college environment at a college campus and more specifically at Oklahoma State University.

Another concern was to see if there was any change in perceptions of the persisters from the time of their pre test to the time of the post test which involved a 13 week interval. A comparison of the persister and nonpersister perceptions at the time of the pre test was also made. Both persister and nonpersister groups were entering freshmen.

Subjects: Population and Sample

Subjects for the study were selected by means of a random sample of selected English classes in the fall of 1974. Composite listings of freshman English classes were collected from the Oklahoma State University Enrollment Booklet and the Registrar's Office to determine the number of English sections being offered. From these, 12 sections were selected. The number of sections was dependent on the number of students enrolled in each class to fulfill the need of a sample group of approximately 300. The sample group was then checked to determine if it corresponded to the freshman group (total) in terms of an adequate number of both males and females. A total of 282 students were administered the instrument in September, 1974 during the third week of classes.

Method of Data Collection

The Chairman of the English Department, Dr. Clinton Keeler, was contacted initially to solicit the cooperation of the department in the study to be undertaken during the fall, 1974 semester. Following the granting of permission to test the students in the 12 sections, Professor Jack Campbell, who works with the instructors of each of the English sections, was contacted to obtain his cooperation as well as that of the instructors.

Prior to the testing, Professor Campbell personally contacted the freshman English Composition instructors of the selected sections and informed them of the study to be conducted, its purpose, and the fact that the investigator would be contacting them at a later date. The exact date, time, and section to be tested would be given to each

instructor and a confirmation of this was to follow (See Appendix B).

A letter was sent to the instructors of the selected sections during the first full week of classes requesting their participation in this study to be conducted during the third week of the fall semester. The instructors of the 12 sections were notified that their sections had been selected and their subsequent cooperation was obtained. A time was set up in which the investigator would administer the selected instrument herself. One 50-minute class hour was set aside to complete the instrument including the administration of the instructions.

The investigator recognized the fact that each subject came to Oklahoma State having various backgrounds, perceptions of the college environment, various types of exposure to the campus, and having had separate needs to be met. However, the purpose of the study was to determine the initial perception of the college campus regardless of the "starting point" of each individual student.

Identical instructions were read by the investigator to all of the subjects within the selected sample group. Directions for administration were followed also. The identical procedure was followed for both the pre and post testing sessions (Appendix C).

The Instrument Used in the Study

College and University Environment Scales (CUES) is an instrument consisting of 160 statements about college life--features and facilities of the campus, rules and regulations, faculty, curricula, instruction and examinations, student life, extracurricular organizations, and other aspects of the institutional environment that help to define the atmosphere or intellectual-social-cultural climate of the college as students

perceive it (Pace, 1969, p. 9).

The instrument is divided into seven scales which measure the perception that students have of their college environment. In order to: (1) identify the initial perceptions of a random sample of incoming freshman students, (2) to compare these initial perceptions with the end-of-the-semester perceptions, and (3) to determine the perceptions of the persisters and nonpersisters had of their environment at Oklahoma State University, it was proposed to administer the College and University Environment Scales (CUES) during the third week of classes of that same semester commonly known as "Dead Week" at Oklahoma State University.

Purpose for Choosing the CUES

Because the purpose of this study was to determine how incoming freshman students perceived their college environment, an instrument which measures perception was needed. The CUES was selected because of its design. The CUES is an instrument designed to obtain a description of the college from the students themselves, who presumably know what the environment is like because they live in it and are part of it.

The significant purpose of CUES is to measure the collective perceptions of students regarding their college environment. Before elaborating upon this point, a brief history of the CUES second edition is relevant. CUES second edition has the purpose to aid in defining the atmosphere or intellectual-social-cultural climate of the college as students see it. This edition was produced for three basic reasons:

1. So many colleges and universities used the first edition that it became possible to develop new norms based on a larger and more representative number of colleges and universities across the country.

2. It was suspected by the author that some of the original items were probably better than others and he wanted to improve the instrument by identifying its best items and eliminate others.

3. The author wanted to provide a basis for future revisions by introducing new items that would give a more balanced content and enable the author to keep abreast of changes and trends in higher education (Pace, 1969, p. 11).

CUES may be administered either to groups or to individuals. The manual recommends that freshmen not be given the instrument unless there is a definite intent to find out something about freshman expectations of environment which was the intent of this particular study. The reported experience is that freshman expectations are unrealistically high.

CUES items are grouped into seven scales. The original five scales from the first edition are: (1) Practicality, (2) Community, (C) Awareness, (4) Propriety, and (5) Scholarship. Two additional scales have been included in the second edition: (6) Campus Morale and (7) Quality of Teacher and Faculty-Student Relationships.

Definition of the Seven Scales

Scale 1. Practicality - these items describe an environment characterized by enterprise, organization, material benefits, and social activities.

Scale 2. Scholarship - these items describe an environment characterized by intellectuality and scholastic discipline.

Scale 3. Community - these items describe a friendly, cohesive, group-oriented campus. The campus is a community. Student life is characterized by togetherness and sharing rather than privacy and cool detachment.

Scale 4. Awareness - these items seem to reflect a concern about the emphasis upon all three sorts of meaning--personal, poetic, and political. An emphasis upon self-understanding, reflectiveness, and identity

suggests the search for personal meaning. What seems to be evident in this sort of environment is a stress on awareness, an awareness of self, of society, and of aesthetic stimuli.

Scale 5. Propriety - these items describe an environment that is polite and considerate. Group standards of decorum are important.

Scale 6. Campus Morale - these items describe an environment characterized by acceptance of social norms, group cohesiveness, friendly assimilation into campus life, and at the same time, a commitment to intellectual pursuits and freedom of expression.

Scale 7. Quality of Teaching and Faculty-Student Relationships - this scale defines an atmosphere in which professors are perceived to be scholarly, to set high standards, to be clear, adaptive, and flexible (Pace, 1969, p. 11).

Scoring of the CUES

The scoring system takes into account every item about which there is a consensus of two-to-one or greater among the respondents. Scoring for a scale is obtained as follows:

a. Add the number of items answered by 66 percent or more of the students in the keyed direction.

b. Subtract the number of items answered by 33 percent or fewer of the students in the keyed direction.

c. Add 20 points to the difference so as to eliminate any possibility of obtaining a negative score (Pace, 1969, pp. 12-13).

The rationale for scoring CUES in the manner described can be explained briefly. First, CUES is regarded as an opinion poll. The percentage of people agreeing or disagreeing with a statement is the commonly accepted manner of reporting opinion poll results. Second, CUES is interested only in what is judged to be characteristic of the environment and, therefore, have to decide how much agreement there needs to be

in order to justify calling something characteristic. Third, the score for a scale is determined by the number of statements that have been judged as characteristic of the environment with characteristic defined as a "level of consensus at least two-to-one or greater" (Pace, 1969, p. 12).

This instrument provides only group scores. Thus the instrument is a giant polling device that summarizes student's opinion with regard to the existence or nonexistence of certain characteristics on the college campus. This poses two closely interrelated issues. One is the sampling of the student body, and the other is the existence of evidence that reasonable consensus exists.

Along with scale scores, this study further looked at the responses on each of the items which composed a scale. An item analysis was made as a result of this investigation.

Norm Group

There has been careful attention given to developing norms based upon a national reference group which is divided into eight subgroups. Data are available in a form which permits an institution to compare itself with what it deems to be an appropriate subgroup. All items describe possible characteristics of a college environment (Mitchell, 1972, pp. 109-110).

A national baseline, or reference group, of 100 institutions was used to obtain a perspective from which to interpret the scores. In the initial CUES manual, the norm group was built around the following categories or stratifications--four geographic areas (Northeast, South, Midwest and Mountain, and Far West); three levels of programs (USOE types

II, III, and IV: that is, B.A. only; B.A., M.A. and first professional; and B.A., M.A., Ph.D, and advanced professional); and public and private control. Thus the number of institutions in each cell was approximately proportionate to a national distribution of enrollments (Pace, 1969).

Pace continues by pointing out that the baseline became the national population of four-year institutions, omitting junior colleges, nonaccredited schools, and other special cases such as military academics. Using the categories of region, level, and form of control, it was determined how many schools out of 100 would fall in each cell of this grid under two different conditions: when representative of institutions and when representative of enrollments (p. 14).

An objective was to select a national assortment of colleges and universities that would reflect a broad cross section of American higher education--from all parts of the country, large and small, public and private--and would at the same time include representative institutions for each of several categories or types that are known to differ substantially from one another. From analyses made previously of CUES scores of various types of institutions, it was decided that eight general types of categories of institutions must be represented in a national reference group. It was arbitrarily decided that for a total norm group of 100 institutions, the sample should have at least ten institutions in each category. The eight categories were: ten highly selective liberal arts colleges, ten highly selective universities public and private, 20 general liberal arts colleges, 20 general public and private universities, ten state colleges and other universities, ten teacher colleges and others with major emphasis on teacher education, ten strongly denominational liberal arts colleges and ten colleges and universities

emphasizing engineering and the sciences (Pace, 1969).

Reliability

The reliability estimates, based on Cronbach's coefficient alpha were used for the second edition. These reliabilities ranged from 0.89 to 0.94 and, thus, provided evidence of a high degree of internal consistency for all of the scales. The standard error of the mean score for each of the five scales is as follows: Practicality, 0.74; Community, 0.76; Awareness, 0.87; Propriety, 0.69; and Scholarship, 0.81. Using two standard errors as the approximate range defining the limits of the 0.05 level of confidence, it was determined that the unbiased true mean would be within 1.5 points of the obtained mean of the various scales. Estimating the reliability of a single score at a single institution, however, presents a different kind of problem and requires a different method for its solution (Pace, 1969, p. 42).

CUES scores are based on the logic of consensus not the logic of variance. The problem for the single institution is to estimate the stability of its own consensus score. This stability is based upon two conditions: (1) size of the sample on which it is based and (2) the number of items falling close to the 66/33 borderline of being counted or not counted in the score. Test-retest comparisons made from comparable samples of reporters over a one- or two-year period or comparisons of scores from different groups judged to be qualified reporters (Upperclasmen) were tabulated and summarized for 25 different colleges and universities. With five scale scores for each of the 25 institutions there were 125 comparisons. Of this number, 80 percent differed by three points or less and 90 percent differed by four points or less (Pace, 1969,

pp. 43, 45).

Validity

Validity data consists of correlations between CUES scores and various characteristics of students and institutions. The correlations are only those significantly greater than chance at or beyond the 0.01 level of confidence (Pace, 1969, p. 46). Correlations between CUES and freshman input factors developed by Astin (based on a reference group of 100 colleges and universities) are as follows:

Freshman Input Factors	1	2	3	4	5
Intellectuality	-.62	-.18	.28	-.33	.60
Estheticism	-.45	.07	.56	.18	.27
Status	-.38	.16	.53	.28	.25
Pragmatism	.14	-.52	-.29	-.45	.07
Masculinity	-.02	-.28	-.12	-.57	.12

(Note: Coefficients underscored are significant at $p < 0.01$, Pace, 1969, p. 47).

In assessing the significance of the validity data that has been presented, Pace posed the following questions as propositions which need to be considered:

1. To what extent are the characteristics of students, programs, and campus atmosphere generally congruent with one another?

2. To what extent are the attitudes and behavior of students generally congruent with the atmosphere of their campus?

3. To what extent are the dimensions of college environments identified by different studies and different methods,

> generally similar to those identified by CUES? (Pace, 1969, pp. 51, 53).

Characteristics of students are generally congruent with characteristics of the school they attend. Although student characteristics by no means account fully for the environmental differences between colleges, there is obviously some selective matching between students and colleges (Pace, 1969, p. 53).

The behavior of students and various attitudes and values held by them in college are generally congruent with the environmental press of their campus also. The overall network of correlations between CUES scores and other data can be characterized as broadly supportive of associations one might reasonably expect. The conclusion from such associations is that campus atmosphere, as measured by the CUES, is a concept buttressed by a good deal of concurrent validity (Pace, 1969, p. 53).

Whether the environment is characterized directly by the collective perceptions of the students who live in it or whether it is inferred from student behavior--student characteristics, emphasis in college curricula, or other features--the results are generally congruent according to Pace, 1969. In general, scores on CUES correlate with other relevant variables to about the same degree as scores on the SAT correlate with college grades--mainly, from the low 0.30's to the high 0.60's (p. 54).

The Demographic Variables

In addition to the criterion instrument, CUES, the investigator analyzed three separate demographic variables:

1. Residence or living group
    a. Residence hall on campus

b. Greek housing

c. Other

2. Orientation

a. Attended orientation session(s)

b. Did not attend any orientation session

3. Employment

a. Employment on campus full time

b. Employment on campus part time

c. Employment off campus full time

d. Employment off campus part time

e. No employment

Definition of Terms as Variables

1. Residence Hall Housing - includes on campus housing for single student.
2. Greek Housing - includes all on or off campus housing for members of fraternities or sororieties.
3. Other Housing - includes all off campus housing with the exception of Greek Housing.
4. Orientation - refers to any planned and/or organized introductory session(s) at Oklahoma State for new incoming students.
5. Employment - refers to any position a student holds during the academic school year in which he or she is employed and receives payment of some sort for services performed.
6. Full Time Employment - refers to any employment which requires more than 20 hours of employment during a week's interval (a week refers to any consecutive seven day period).

7. Part Time Employment - refers to any employment which requires up to 20 hours of employment during a week's interval (a week) refers to any consecutive seven days period).

Procedures and Statistical Treatment

Scores on the CUES were obtained for the two groups--Persisters and Nonpersisters. For each subject other information gathered was: the response to ten "Local Option Questions" which contained the demographic variables used in this study as well as sex and the date of the testing session on which the instrument was administered (Appendix D). An item frequency response and "Local Option Questions" frequency responses were also obtained.

The procedure followed was to collect the data from the CUES, the criterion instrument, and the demographic variables from the "Local Option Questions" self-report questionnaire. From these a chi square statistical test of relationships was used. Two-by-two, two-by-three, and two-by-four frequency tables were set up in order to analyze the data received more closely. As reported earlier in Chapter I, the significance level upon which the data would be tested and determined to be statistically significant was the 0.05 level of confidence.

> Chi square is used with data in the form of frequencies, or data that can be readily transformed into frequencies. One important feature of chi square is its additive property, which makes possible the combination of several statistics or other values in the same test. The fundamental nature of chi square can be very simply, if not completely, explained on the basis of what is already known about Z, the standard score or measure (Guilford, 1973, p. 195).

The chi square distribution is used in tests of significance in much the same way the normal t or F distributions are used. The null

hypothesis is assumed. This hypothesis states that no actual differences exist between the observed and expected frequencies. A chi square is calculated (Ferguson, 1966, p. 176).

> The hypothesis being tested is usually that the two groups differ with respect to some characteristic and therefore with respect to the relative frequency with which group members fall in the various categories with the proportion of cases from one group with the proportion of cases from the other group (Siegel, 1956, p. 104).

The analysis of data was run using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Fastabs Program at the Oklahoma State University Computer Center. The SPSS program is an integrated system of computer program for the analysis of social science data. It is a system designed to provide the social scientist with a unified and comprehensive package enabling him to perform many different types of data analysis in a simple and convenient manner (Bent, Hull, and Nie, 1970, p. 129).

Subprogram Fastabs is described as: (1) significantly faster, (2) it can handle a larger number of tables, (3) it requires a slightly greater amount of card preparation, and (4) it can only process variables which are numberically coded and integer in form. In addition to the usual descriptive statistics, simple frequency distribution, and cross-tabulations, SPSS contains procedures for simple correlation (for both ordinal and interval data), partial correlations, multiple regression, factor analysis, and Guttman scaling. SPSS enables the social scientist to perform his analyses through the use of natural language control statements and requires no programming experience on the part of the user (Bent, Hull and Nie, 1970, p. 1).

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Introduction

This study was conducted to answer the following questions: (1) are there significant relationships which exist between the perceptions of a college environment and persistence within that environment, (2) are there differences that exist in the perceptions of a college environment between those who persist within their college environment and those who do not, and (3) what effect does attendance at an orientation session(s), place of residence, and employment have upon persistence within a college environment?

There were two comparison groups established: persisters and non-persisters. The subjects being considered were a sample of the incoming freshman students on the Oklahoma State Stillwater campus during the fall, 1974 semester. The hypotheses dealt with involved the seven scales of the College and University Environment Scale for hypotheses one through four. The perceptions of the environment at Oklahoma State University by the two groups and the relationship of perception and persistence were: Practicality, Scholarship, Community, Awareness, Propriety, Campus Morale and Quality of Teaching and Faculty-Student Relationship. A description of these seven scales was explained in Chapter III. The purpose of CUES is to determine the perceptions students have of the characteristics of their college environment as presented within the

seven scales.

Information from the self-report questionnaire, "Local Option Questions" was gathered for both groups--persisters and nonpersisters (see Appendix A). The results of this study were analyzed according to the procedure outlined in Chapter III.

The data for this study were collected from September of 1974 through December of 1974 and were obtained by a random selection of incoming freshman students. These students were tested in their Freshmen Composition English 1113 class sections. The total sample consisted of 282 students. Of that number 181 were classified as persisters, being those students who were enrolled and present at the date of the second testing session in December, 1974. One hundred and one were classified as nonpersisters, being those students who were not enrolled and/or present at the time of the post testing session.

This chapter will present the results in tables and will discuss these results as they relate to the hypotheses. The final section of this chapter will present a summary of the analysis of data.

Results of the Analysis of Data

College and University Scales

Hypothesis 1 states that there will be no significant relationship between the persisters and nonpersisters and their perceptions of the college environment as measured on the seven scales of the CUES. Table I presents the results of the data collected for each of the seven scales on the pre test for both the persisters and nonpersisters. The table is a composite of the analysis of the chi square test obtained from the

statistical procedures applied to each of the scales of the CUES.

TABLE I

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PERSISTERS AND NONPERSISTERS ON EACH OF THE SEVEN SCALES OF THE CUES PRETEST

(N = Persisters-181; Nonpersisters-101)

Scale	df	Chi Square
Practicality	3	1.84
Scholarship	3	3.58
Community	3	.54
Awareness	3	7.49
Propriety	2	.04
Campus Morale	3	2.40
Quality of Teaching	3	7.60

0.05 critical chi square value: 7.815

The significance of the relationship is reported. If the chi square exceeds the critical value tested for the sample, then this indicates a significant relationship existed between the two groups as measured on the seven scales of the CUES. The chi square for this analysis ranges from a low of 0.04 on the Propriety Scale to a high of 7.60 on the Quality of Teaching Scale. There were none that indicated a significant

relationship existed.

Thus Hypothesis 1 is accepted; there is no significance relationship between the persisters and nonpersisters and their perceptions of the college environment as assessed by the seven scales of the CUES. The Quality of Teaching Scale was the highest relationship of the seven scales although it was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

The data for Hypothesis 2 is reported in Table II. This hypothesis stated there would be no significant relationship between the male persisters and nonpersisters and their perceptions of the college environment as assessed on the seven scales of the CUES. The hypothesis was accepted for all of the scales. This indicates that the male persisters and nonpersisters do not differ significantly in their perceptions of the environment at Oklahoma State University. The chi square relationships range from a low of 0.07 on the Propriety Scale to a high of 3.05 on the Practicality Scale. None of the scales feel close to the critical value of 0.05.

TABLE II

CHI SQUARE DATA FOR THE MALE PERSISTERS AND NONPERSISTERS ON EACH OF THE SEVEN SCALES OF THE CUES

(N = Persisters-101; Nonpersisters-62)

Scale	df	Chi Square
Practicality	3	3.05
Scholarship	3	1.07

TABLE II (CONTINUED)

Scale	df	Chi Square
Community	3	.81
Awareness	3	2.20
Propriety	2	.07
Campus Morale	3	2.07
Quality of Teaching	2	2.79

0.05 critical chi square value: 7.815

The results of the analyses of the data on the seven scales of the CUES for the female persisters and nonpersisters are presented in Table III. Hypothesis 3 states there will be no significant relationship between the female persisters and nonpersisters and their perceptions of the college environment as assessed by the seven scales of the CUES. There were not significant relationships found to exist between the persister and nonpersister females; however, the Awareness and Quality of Teaching Scales were found to have the highest correlations of the seven scales although they were not statistically significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was accepted for each of the seven scales.

The chi square range from a low of 0.08 for the Propriety Scale which it will be remembered was the lowest chi square also for Hypotheses 1 and 2, to a high of 7.45 for the Awareness Scale which would seem to indicate the females were more concerned with the perceptions they have of the personal, poetic, and political meanings of the campus than the

males who appeared to be concerned with the teaching quality, scholastic, and intellectual aspects of the college environment.

TABLE III

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP DATA FOR THE FEMALE PERSISTERS AND NONPERSISTERS ON EACH OF THE SEVEN SCALES OF THE CUES

(N = Persisters-80; Nonpersisters-39)

Scale	df	Chi Square
Practicality	2	.17
Scholarship	3	3.12
Community	3	.42
Awareness	3	7.45
Propriety	2	.08
Campus Morale	3	1.45
Quality of Teaching	3	6.09

0.05 critical chi square value: 7.815 (3df); 5.911 (2df)

Table IV represents the data for Hypothesis 4. The null hypothesis stated there would be no significant relationship between the persisters and their perceptions of the college environment on the pre and post tests as assessed by the seven scales of the CUES. There were significant relationships found to exist between the pre and post tests on the Awareness

and the Scholarship Scales for the persisters. A third scale, Campus Morale, was the next highest chi square relationship although it was not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of confidence. The hypothesis was rejected for two scales, Awareness and Scholarship; however, the hypothesis was accepted for the other five scales.

TABLE IV

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP DATA OF THE PERSISTER PRE AND POST TESTS FOR EACH OF THE SEVEN SCALES OF THE CUES

(N = 181)

Scale	df	Chi Square
Practicality	3	5.07
Scholarship	3	8.07*
Community	3	1.94
Awareness	3	9.23*
Propriety	3	2.45
Campus Morale	3	6.89
Quality of Teaching	3	3.76

*Significant at the 0.05 level

The perceptions the persisters had at the time of the pre test differed from their perceptions at the time of the post test. This may be

due to several factors: (1) they have persisted within the college environment for a longer percent of time and have altered their perceptions from their initial testing, and (2) the considerable number of statistically significant items on Hypothesis 4 would indicate they had a greater reaction to that perception as assessed by the 22 significant items which will be discussed later when a further analysis of the data was made for Hypothesis 4.

Demographic Variables

Beginning with Hypothesis 5, the study became concerned with the relationship between the demographic variables discussed in Chapter III and persistence in the college environment. The data for these hypotheses were by means of the self-report questionnaire in which the subjects were asked to respond to at the time of the pre test in September, 1974. An analysis of these data will be discussed in the remainder of this chapter utilizing the procedures which were also discussed in Chapter III.

Table V contains the analysis of the data for Hypothesis 5 which stated there would be no significant relationship of attendance at an orientation session(s) to persistence within a college environment. The information for this hypothesis was obtained from "Local Option Questions" B and C which dealt with persister and nonpersister group's attendance at orientation session(s). As a result of significant relationships existing, Hypothesis 5 was rejected for that variable. The chi square of 16.136 for this analysis fell well within the accepted critical value for the 0.01 level of significance. The analysis was based upon the options of: (1) attended Alpha '74, (2) attended Arts and Science, (3)

attended both, or (4) did not attend.

TABLE V

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP DATA FOR ORIENTATION SESSION(S) ATTENDANCE ON THE PRE TEST FOR THE PERSISTERS AND NONPERSISTERS

(N = Persisters-179; Nonpersisters-101)

Options	df	Persisters	Nonpersisters
1. Alpha '74	3	35	11
2. Arts and Science	3	38	33
3. Both	3	57	16
4. Not Attended	3	49	41

Chi Square: 16.136** (**Significant at the 0.01 level)

Hypothesis 6 stated there would be no relationship of place of residence to persistence within a college environment. Table VI presents the data for Hypothesis 6. Both persisters and nonpersisters were asked to respond to their place of residence which included: (1) residence hall, (2) Greek housing, or (3) other. These options were taken from "Local Option Question" A. A significant relationship was found to exist between the place of residence for persisters and nonpersisters. The chi square value of 8.89 fell within the critical value of 0.05 accepted for this particular study; therefore, Hypothesis 6 was rejected.

TABLE VI

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP DATA FOR PLACE OF RESIDENCE OF PERSISTERS AND NONPERSISTERS

Options	df	Persisters	Nonpersisters
1. Residence hall	2	138	72
2. Greek housing	2	27	8
3. Other	2	16	20

Chi Square: 8.89* (* Significant at the 0.05 level)

Table VII contains an analyses of the data which were obtained from "Local Option Question" H. Table VII represents the data for Hypotheses 7, 8, and 9. Table VII-C presents the data for Hypothesis 7 which stated there would be no relationship of employment on campus, off campus or no employment and persistence within a college environment. The options persisters and nonpersisters were asked to respond to were: (1) employment on campus, (2) employment off campus, or (3) no employment. The hypothesis was accepted as no significant relationship was found to exist for Hypothesis 7. It is interesting to note that only a small percentage of the total group of persisters and nonpersisters are employed while attending Oklahoma State from the sample. Table VII also contains information related to the percentage of both groups who are employed either full time or part time on campus or off campus and those who are not employed. This would seem to indicate that few incoming freshman students are employed.

TABLE VII

CHI SQUARE AND FISHER'S EXACT TEST DATA FOR EMPLOYMENT
FULL TIME AND PART TIME ON CAMPUS
AND OFF CAMPUS OR NO EMPLOYMENT

Options	Persisters N	Persisters %	Nonpersisters N	Nonpersisters %
A. Full Time				
(1) On Campus	2	1.11	1	.99
(2) Off Campus	4	2.21	2	1.98
Fisher's Exact: 0.774 (* 0.05 critical value: 3.00)				
B. Part Time				
(1) On Campus	6	7.74	2	8.91
(2) Off Campus	16	8.84	9	8.91
Chi Square: 0.02 (* 0.05 critical value: 3.841)				
C. Employment				
(1) On Campus	16	8.85	10	9.90
(2) Off Campus	20	11.05	11	21.94
(3) Not Employed	140	77.35	78	77.23
Chi Square: 0.07 (* 0.05 critical value: 3.841)				

The results of the Fisher's Exact Test are presented in Table VII-A. The Fisher's Exact Test is appropriate when a small number of responses are obtained for each cell within a chi square frequency table. The data from Table VII-A is in regard to Hypothesis 8 which states there is no

relationship of full time employment on or off campus and persistence within a college environment for the persisters and nonpersisters. The options for Hypothesis 8 were: full time employment on campus or off campus. There was no significant relationship found to exist between the two groups; therefore, Hypothesis 8 was accepted.

Hypothesis 9 stated there would be no relationship of part time employment on or off campus and persistence within a college environment. Table VII-B presents the chi square test results. There were no significant relationships found to exist between the persister and nonpersister groups; therefore, Hypothesis 9 was accepted.

An analyses of each of the items which compose the seven scales were calculated to further analyze the data in an attempt to determine significant relationships between the persisters and nonpersisters as they responded to each of the items which measured the perceptions of each group as assessed on the CUES. Table VIII presents the data for the select items which were found to be statistically significant on the CUES based upon a further analysis for Hypothesis 1. In this table, the individual scales and items are listed along with the number of persisters and nonpersisters who responded on these particular items. The chi square for the significant items ranged from a low of 3.72 on Item 22 for the Community and Campus Morale Scales to a high of 5.31 on Item 17 of the Scholarship Scale. It can be seen that the Practicality Scale had the greatest number of significant items for any of the scales, three out of 20, for Hypothesis 1 when analyzed further. The following Table VIII presents these findings in detail.

TABLE VIII

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PERSISTERS AND NONPERSISTERS AND SELECT ITEMS ON THE CUES

Scale	Items	Persisters	Nonpersisters	Chi Square
Practicality	4	181	101	3.88*
	5	181	101	4.11*
	51	179	101	4.64*
Scholarship	13	181	101	3.78*
	17	180	101	5.31*
Community	22	180	101	3.72*
Propriety	48	178	100	4.42*
	94	180	100	4.40*
Campus Morale	22	180	101	3.72*

* Significant at the 0.05 level

When an analysis of each of the item on the seven scales for Hypothesis 2 was calculated to further analyze the data in an attempt to determine significant relationships between the male persisters and nonpersisters, the Practicality Scale again contained the largest number of significant items as well as the highest chi square which was 8.37 on Item 51. The data for this analysis for Hypothesis 2 is presented in Table IX. It should be noted by the reader that Items 4 and 51 on the Practicality Scale were both found to be statistically significant items on Hypothesis 1 as well as for Hypothesis 2. The range of critical value

for the chi squares was from a low of 3.88 for Item 15 of the Scholarship and Quality of Teaching Scales to a high chi square of 8.37 for Item 51 of the Practicality Scale.

TABLE IX

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP OF MALE PERSISTERS AND NONPERSISTERS AND SELECT ITEMS OF THE CUES

Scale	Items	Persisters	Nonpersisters	Chi Square
Practicality	4	101	62	5.74*
	51	101	62	8.37**
Scholarship	15	101	62	3.88*
Awareness	32	101	61	4.86*
Campus Morale	83	101	61	4.91*
Quality of Teaching	15	101	62	3.88*

* Significant at the 0.05 level
** Significant at the 0.01 level

Table X represents an analysis of each of the items on the scales for Hypothesis 3 which was calculated to further analyze the data in an attempt to determine significant relationships between the female persisters and nonpersisters as they responded to select item. The highest item relationship (6.10) was Item 65 on the Scholarship and Quality of Teaching Scales. It is also interesting to note that Items 17, 48, and

94 were also found to be statistically significant on Hypothesis 1.

TABLE X

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP OF FEMALE PERSISTERS AND NONPERSISTERS AND SELECT ITEMS OF THE CUES

Scale	Items	Persisters	Nonpersisters	Chi Square
Scholarship	17	80	39	4.30*
	65	78	39	6.10**
Propriety	48	77	39	4.19*
	94	79	39	4.12*
Quality of Teaching	75	78	39	6.10**

* Significant at the 0.05 level
** Significant at the 0.01 level

Table XI represents the analyses of the data for those items which were found to be significant for Hypothesis 4 on the seven scales of the CUES. The Scholarship and Campus Morale Scales had the highest number of significant items ranging from a low chi square of 4.12 for Item 62 of the Scholarship Scale to a high of 25.73 for Item 37 on the Awareness and Campus Morale Scales. As the reader can see, these items are well within the critical significance level of 0.05 accepted for this study.

TABLE XI

CHI SQUARE RELATIONSHIP OF ITEMS WHICH WERE SIGNIFICANT FOR PERSISTERS ON SELECT ITEMS OF THE CUES

Scales	Items	Pre Test	Post Test	Chi Square
Practicality	4	181	181	8.02**
	52	179	181	5.26*
Scholarship	13	181	181	13.17**
	16	181	181	3.93*
	20	180	181	7.77**
	62	180	181	4.12*
	68	176	179	8.69**
Community	22	181	181	6.07**
	26	180	181	5.34*
	28	181	181	5.59*
Awareness	31	181	181	4.06*
	32	180	181	10.19**
	37	179	180	25.73**
	81	179	180	6.17**
Propriety	45	180	181	4.66*
	93	181	181	7.81**
	98	181	181	6.03*
Campus Morale	20	180	181	7.77**
	22	181	181	6.07**
	28	181	181	5.59*
	31	181	181	4.06*
	37	179	180	25.73**

* Significant at the 0.05 level
** Significant at the 0.01 level

Overall View of the Data and Summary

The data that has been presented in this chapter resulted from information obtained from the CUES and the "Local Option Questions." On the CUES, of the seven scales, only two were found to be statistically significant as accepted for this study. These were the Scholarship and Awareness Scales on Hypothesis 4. The persisters were shown as being affected significantly by these two scales between their initial and later perceptions as tested on the pre and post tests of the CUES.

However, five of the seven scales were found to be significantly related to persistence within the Oklahoma State University college environment when a further analysis of the data was conducted for Hypothesis 1 (Table VIII). Even though none of the scales as assessed for Hypothesis 2 were found to be significant, five of the scales were found to contain significant items (Table IX). Three of the seven scales contained significant items. Six of the seven scales contained statistically significant items when a further analysis of the data was conducted.

When a further analysis of the items composing the seven scales on each hypothesis was analyzed, several items were found to be significant. Even though the Quality of Teaching Scale on Hypothesis 1 and the Awareness Scale on Hypothesis 3 were not found to be significant at the 0.05 level, they were significant at the 0.06 level. The Campus Morale Scale was also found to be significant at the 0.08 level for Hypothesis 4. Even though these did not meet the criterion of the 0.05 level of signifiance for this particular study, these scales, nevertheless, appeared to have a higher relationship than the other scales for each of the four hypotheses regarding the seven scales of the CUES.

Finally, the analysis of the data available from the self-report questionnaire, "Local Option Questions," showed that the variables of attendance at orientation session(s) and place of residence indicated a significant relationship to persistence within the college environment at Oklahoma State University existed and that it did affect the persistence of the subjects in this sample. There was a difference between the persister and nonpersister groups as related to these two variables of orientation attendance and place of residence. The employment variable was not found to significantly affect the persistence within a college environment, particularly at Oklahoma State University.

The following chapter will present a general summary of the investigation, findings and conclusions, and the implications of this study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter gives a general summary of the investigation conducted. The summary is followed by important findings of the investigation and conclusions which are based on these findings. A final section will be devoted to recommendations for further study and research.

General Summary of the Investigation

This study was constructed upon the conceptual framework that the persister group's perception is different from the nonpersister group's perception of the Oklahoma State University campus. This conceptual framework was prompted by a review of several studies on the perceptions of persisters and nonpersisters. In an attempt to identify these differences and to further investigate some differences already identified, two comparison groups were established. These groups--persisters and nonpersisters--consisted of incoming freshman students during the fall, 1974 semester.

The criterion instrument used for the research was the College and University Environment Scales (CUES). The demographic variables were obtained from a self-report questionnaire entitled "Local Option Questions." Both groups were administered the CUES and the "Local Option Questions." Analyses were made on both the pre and post test and additional analyses were conducted on the 20 items composing each of the

seven scales. This was an attempt to obtain further information regarding the criterion instrument as well as determine whether items appeared to be responded to significantly different for the persisters and nonpersisters.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of persistence within a college environment to the criterion instrument, the CUES, and the demographic variables of: (1) orientation session(s), (2) place of residence, and (3) employment. It is hoped that the results of this study will contribute to the research concerning this important aspect of student personnel and the student services' area in institutions of higher education and more specifically for Oklahoma State University.

Findings and Conclusions

Summary of Hypotheses Testing

The first portion of this section will deal with the acceptance or rejection of the hypotheses presented in Chapter I. The first four hypotheses dealt with the CUES which was the criterion instrument. These hypotheses and the findings are as follows:

There will be no relationship between the persisters and nonpersisters

(1) and their perceptions of the college environment

FINDING: The hypothesis was accepted for all seven scales of the CUES.

(2) of males and their perceptions of the college environment

FINDING: The hypothesis was accepted for all seven scales of the CUES.

(3) of females and their perceptions of the college environment

FINDING: The hypothesis was accepted for all seven scales of the CUES.

(4) and their perceptions of the college environment on the pre and post test

FINDING: The hypothesis was rejected for the Scholarship Scale and the Awareness Scale. The hypothesis was accepted for the other five scales.

Beginning with Hypothesis 5, the study concerned itself with the demographic variables obtained from the "Local Option Questions" self-report questionnaire. This information, it will be recalled by the reader, was available for both groups--persisters and nonpersisters (Appendix D). Hypotheses 5 through 9 contain information regarding these demographic variables. These hypotheses and the findings are as follows:

There will be no significant relationship of

(5) attendance at an orientation session(s) to persistence within a college environment

FINDING: The hypothesis was rejected for the orientation session(s) which included Alpha '74, Arts and Science, both, or no attendance.

(6) place of residence to persistence within a college environment

FINDING: The hypothesis was rejected for the place of residence options of residence hall, Greek housing, and other.

(7) employment on campus, off campus or no employment and persistence within a college environment

FINDING: The hypothesis was accepted for the employment

options of on campus, off campus or no employment.

(8) full time employment on or off campus and persistence within a college environment

FINDING: The hypothesis was accepted for both options.

Conclusions and Discussion

Perhaps the most enlightening finding about the persister and nonpersister groups that this research produced was in the area of their demographic variables (Tables V and VI). The study of these students provided the information that the relationship between their attendance at an orientation session or sessions and place of residence with persistence within the college environment at Oklahoma State University during the fall, 1974 semester was significant. Each of these relationships of the groups on these demographic variables was shown to be significant using the chi square test of relationship. In using this statistical technique to determine if this relationship occurred by chance, it was found that the probabilities were $p < 0.01$ for the orientation session(s) attendance and $p < 0.002$ for place of residence.

Thus the conclusion presents itself that there is a significant relationship between attendance at orientation session(s) and persistence. In many instances Alpha '74 and/or Arts and Science sessions for incoming freshman students were attended by both persisters and nonpersisters. Whether the impact of Alpha '74 or Arts and Science session(s) was a significant factor in whether a student remained at Oklahoma State, at least during the fall, 1974 semester, or whether a student left the Stillwater campus environment cannot be concluded. However, this is

something which may have affected persistence even though the investigator cannot say this effect was significant due to the lack of prior information regarding the persisters and nonpersisters prior to their coming onto the Oklahoma State University campus for the first time.

The orientation session or sessions are designed to present a positive, warm feeling to its constituents and participants that Oklahoma State cares for its students. The theme for the school year of '74-75 is "Emphasis People" which is communicated, or at least an attempt is made to communicate this, to students who are entering Oklahoma State for the first time ("Alpha '73," 1973).

In the "Alpha: '74 Program Report and Evaluation" the following description is given:

> The ALPHA program is a four-day voluntary program that originated in 1973 to assist the entering student to understand his role and responsibility in the learning process and in the university community (1974, p. 1).

A program booklet was provided to each participant which included a complete schedule for the program that ran from August 22-25, 1974, which states: "The following voluntary programs are designed to provide opportunities for you to find your way around the O.S.U. campus, investigate extracurricular activities, and meet other students" (1974, p. 3).

"Muse," a publication of the Oklahoma State University College of Arts and Sciences has the following description of the objectives of A & S 111 Freshman Orientation class which is required for all incoming freshman students who: (1) have declared Arts and Sciences as their major or (2) are undeclared Arts and Sciences majors:

(1) to help you increase your understanding of the University, its objectives, and expectations;

(2) to increase self-understanding;

(3) to help you improve your academic skills;

(4) to disseminate information about the University as a community of people;

(5) to promote understanding of the concept of self-orientation;

(6) to obtain information from you.

> The A & S 1111 course is intended, specifically, to help you be effective as a student in the College of Arts and Sciences at Oklahoma State University. The course will acquaint you with the University, its objectives, organization, and expectations, and help you to see how things fit together. The course will also help you use the University's facilities and services to attain your educational and vocational objectives. As you understand the University and how it works, you will be better able to use it to accomplish your objectives.
>
> Beyond this the course is intended to help you clarify some of your personal goals and objectives so that they may be more easily attainable. It will provide opportunities for you to reflect on where you have been in life and where you want to be and where you want to get (1974, p. 2).

Another possible explanation is that these students who receive an introduction to college life tend to persist in that same environment for a longer period of time due to their initial perception of that campus and its living environment.

The place of residence also was established, in this particular study, as having a significant relationship to persistence. As Table IV indicates, more students live in the residence halls than any other place of residence. This may be due to the fact that the University has a policy regarding where unmarried undergraduate freshmen at Oklahoma State may live. Their policy as outlined in the Student Handbook 1974-75 is as follows:

> All unmarried freshman students under the age of 21 are required to live in University Housing. All other students may live in places of their choice. A student is classified as a freshman until he has successfully completed 28 semester

hours. The following exceptions may be made:

a. Freshman students may live with their parents or legal guardian and commute from home.

b. Freshman students who are pledges or members may live in their respective fraternity or sorority houses.

c. Freshman students carrying eight hours (three hours in the summer session) or fewer may, with the approval of their parents and the Office of Single Student Housing, live in places of their choice.

d. Freshman students may, in unusual or hardship cases, with the approval of their parents and the Office of Single Student Housing, live in places of their choice.

e. Veterans (students who have been in the United States Armed Forces whose Form DD214 indicates at least 180 days active duty) (p. 87).

However, the data based on Table V tends to agree with the possibility that those students who persist within their college environment view their place of residence as important to them while attending Oklahoma State University.

Another important finding presented in this study was that a significant relationship existed between the initial and later perceptions the persisters had of their environment as measured on the Scholarship and Awareness Scales. It will be recalled by the reader that the Scholarship Scale characterizes a campus that emphasizes the intellectual and scholastic values whereas the Awareness Scale emphasizes personal, poetical, and political values and meaning on campus.

Thus the conclusion presents itself that students who persist within their college environment are concerned about these matters. This finding is further supported by research conducted by Baird, 1974, referred to earlier in Chapter III as well as the Vice President of Student Service's Office on the Oklahoma State campus in their evaluation of

Alpha '73 and Alpha '74 (1973, p. 3; 1974, p. 19). Also, Centra and Linn, 1970, found that the Scholarship Scale was a significant scale when they analyzed this scale in their conducted research.

In addition to the significant relationships existing on the Scholarship and Awareness Scales for the persister group, the study also noticed a difference in the way the males and females of both groups responded on the Propriety ($p < 0.045$) and Awareness Scale ($p < 0.026$) as presented in Chapter IV which further supported Risch's research that sex differences do occur in their expectations of the college environment (Risch, 1970). Pate (1970) also discovered differences existed between the expectation and perception of freshman and first year transfer students. Although Pate's study does not contain the identical variables as the current study, there does tend to be evidence to support a difference in the perceptions of incoming freshman students from other students.

Another factor revealed in this research was the large percentage of incoming freshman students who are not employed either on or off campus during the fall, 1974 semester. As a result of this finding, it appeared that employment is not a factor with those subjects as it affected persistence.

Although not a part of the hypothesis testing, a further analysis of data on the scale items was run for each hypothesis on each of the seven scales. It was interesting to note the number of significant items which appeared on each hypothesis. A total of 22 different items were found to be statistically significant ranging from a low of 0.054 to a high of 101 probability level. See Appendix D for a list of the 22 significant items.

Implications

The results of this study hold implications for student personnel workers and specifically those involved in the Student Services and Student Affairs' areas. Persistence within a college environment is affected by the perceptions its students have of that campus. Even though changes may occur between the initial and later perceptions of those who persist, those perceptions students have of their campus environment do affect whether they persist within that environment or not. The factors of intellectual, scholastic, personal, poetic, and political values as well as personal meaning, in this particular study, significantly affect that persistence.

It is possible that students who came with this initial perception of their college environment and who were not disillusioned or did not discover that this did not exist, would continue to persist in that same environment. Therefore, the student personnel workers need to be aware and realize that the sooner they discover the needs and concerns of their students to persist in that learning environment by more effectively meeting the students' perceptions.

Also, the more a university realizes its students' needs to perceive that the campus and living environment is warm, friendly, personable, and intellectually stimulating--the more likely it will be able to influence the developmental process of the incoming freshmen in his collegiate life. The university should be concerned about the personal identity its students feel towards their environment specifically the incoming student population.

As further research with the CUES has documented and demonstrated,

the perceptions of students will change as they proceed in their academic community (Mitchell, 1972). However, incoming freshman students are more likely to change that initial perception and chose not to persist at an earlier developmental stage than the upperclassmen. As pointed out earlier, it is possible that students who do not persist find their personal and academic perceived needs not being met. It is necessary that the student personnel worker be certain that nonpersistence within a college environment resulted from the student's choice, not from a negative environmental press.

There are also implications for further research as a result of this study. It is conceived that this study should be conducted again with a slight amount of modification in the choice of instrument and the techniques of student selection. This would provide for some pre testing of students prior to their coming on the campus as incoming freshman students. Then after the students arrive on campus, these same students can be followed through with at least one more testing although the investigator would highly recommend a total of three testing sessions: (1) prior to the students coming on the Oklahoma State University campus, (2) within the first three weeks of the fall semester, and (3) a later testing during the spring semester of their freshman academic year. From this, valuable information could be obtained which would provide a broader measure of the change in perception of individual students.

In this way, the factors of place of residence, orientation session or sessions, employment, sex, size of home, grade point average, graduating class size, etc. could also be taken into account. In addition to this, testing which involves more than one observation is more readily able to have several statistical procedures utilized rather than the

present investigator's limitation of only one observation plus the handicap of trying to work with group rather than individual perceptions.

Rather than administering the CUES as the criterion instrument, an instrument designed to evaluate personal or individual perceptions rather than group perceptions is recommended. The CUES can only be scored when all responses are taken into account as a group score rather than individual responses being assessed on a basis of individual scores for each person responding.

Also, it was felt that an instrument that requires less test administration time or personally designed by the investigator to obtain specific information he desires would be more desirable.

Concluding Summary

This study should serve as a description of some basic relationships which exist across groups and demographic information. The significant relationships which have been found to exist should lead to further study of the particular measures involved. It would be of particular interest to deal with the findings mentioned earlier. Further research might also center on obtaining data from other Oklahoma colleges. This would then allow for a larger sample size and perhaps more accurate information allowing for the development of a prediction theory.

Certain precautions should be kept in mind while interpreting the results of this study. The impact of the orientation session(s) specifically "ALPHA" upon freshmen after a period of time is not available in this investigation. An ongoing study to follow the persisters throughout their college career is another recommendation this investigator will make. Also, the relationship of residence may be tremendously

significant due to the specification by the university that students who are unmarried and undergraduates enrolled in less than 28 hours must live in university housing.

Another concern has to do with the uncritical generalizations of the findings. This study dealt with a specific population--Oklahoma State University incoming freshman students enrolled in the fall, 1974 semester. No statistical evidence is available to indicate that this population is typical or atypical of any other group of incoming freshmen either locally or nationally.

This study was conducted in an attempt to aid student personnel workers, specifically Student Service and Student Affairs' areas in their work with the incoming freshman population. It is hoped that the results will be useful to those interested in the area of freshman programming, academic advising, student programming and development as well as in all aspects of the college environmental development process. It is hoped that this study will be an aid to those who conduct further studies involving incoming freshman students. Finally, the investigator is excited to note that Oklahoma State University is planning and allocating funding for a new university program for freshman students. It is entitled "O.S.U. ODYSSEY."

> The purpose of the Freshman Program is to serve the unique needs of the freshman student through the coordination of existing resources. These unique needs include problems of transition from high school to college, of relationg academic studies to life and career goals, and the task of attracting freshman students to intellectual life and scholarship. The Freshman Program will serve as a focal point for freshman-year programs and activities by bringing together the wide range of programs and services specifically designed for the Oklahoma State University freshman. Through the coordination of resources, the Freshman Program will strive to provide a freshman experience of challenging classroom instruction and essential support service that is as comprehensive as required

and as individualized as needed.

> The administrative responsibility for the program is shared by the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and Student Services. This organizational re-alignment stresses the importance of discarding the dichotomy of cognitive versus affective development. We are concerned with the development of the freshman student as a total human being (O.S.U. ODYSSEY paper, 1975, p. 1).

Fortunately, the results and findings reported in this investigation along with supported research, will service as an aid in the implementation and further research regarding freshman programming with the emphasis upon the development of the whole person which requires being aware of students as individuals and their individual needs while enrolled and living within their college environment.

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APPENDIX A

LOCAL OPTION QUESTIONS

LOCAL OPTION QUESTIONS

Directions

1. Mark only one response per item.
2. Answer all questions.
3. Mark all responses with a #2 pencil.

A. Residence

1. I live in a hall on campus.
2. I live in a sorority or fraternity house.
3. I live in Married Student Housing.
4. I live in an apartment off campus.
5. I live in a house off campus.
6. I live in an efficiency or room off campus.
7. I commute to campus from home.

B. Orientation

1. I attended Alpha '74.
2. I did not attend Alpha '74.

C. Orientation

1. I attend(ed) Arts and Science or any other college introductory orientation session(s).
2. I did (do) not attend any orientation session(s) of any type.

D. 1. I was on the O.S.U. campus prior to enrolling as a student.
2. I was not on campus any time prior to enrolling as a student.

E. Financial Aids

I am presently receiving financial aid or assistance (other than family) from O.S.U.'s Financial Aids Office.

1. Yes
2. No

F. I am receiving a NSDL (National Student Defense Loan), guaranteed loan, etc.

1. Yes
2. No

G. I am presently receiving a scholarship such as Wentz Scholarship, Regent's Scholarship, DAR (Daughter's of American Revolution), etc. (any scholarship not requiring repayment)

1. Yes
2. No

H. Employment

1. I am presently involved in a Work-Study Program through the Financial Aids Office.
2. I am employed on campus part time (this does not include Work-Study).
3. I am employed on campus full time (this does not include Work-Study).
4. I am employed off campus part time.
5. I am employed off campus full time.
6. I am not employed.

I. I am presently receiving some type of financial assistance such as the G. I. Bill, Social Security benefits, Vocational-Rehabilitation entitlements, family, etc.

1. Yes
2. No

J. Ethnic Origin

1. Oriental
2. American Indian
3. Negro
4. Spanish American
5. All other

APPENDIX B

MEMO TO ENGLISH 1113 INSTRUCTORS

MEMO TO ENGLISH 1113 INSTRUCTORS

To: English Instructors for 1113 Date: August 28, 1974

Re: Testing for Sections From: Ms. Barbara Layman

Attention:

Mr. Jack Campbell, I am sure, has contacted you regarding my coming into your section to administer the College and University Environment CUES during the third week of the semester. I will be attempting to contact you by telephone between now and then, but if I am unable to reach you, I will be in your class section on the following day and time:

This will take the entire hour so you can feel free to leave during the administration of this instrument if you desire.

This is part of a doctoral study I am running and do appreciate very much your cooperation. If this will cause you conflict, you can reach me either at 377-2811 or Ext. 6287 between 10-12 a.m. and 1-2 p.m. every day. Thank you very much for your help in this matter. A post test will be administered during Dead Week and the schedule for testing dates will be given to you at least one week prior to administration.

APPENDIX C

PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS FOR CUES

PRELIMINARY INSTRUCTIONS FOR CUES

The purpose for the study being conducted is to determine your perceptions regarding the campus and its environment here at O.S.U. This study will be a part of a doctoral dissertation and, therefore, your complete cooperation is greatly appreciated. These results will be published later this year and can be found in the O.S.U. Library on the fourth floor.

A Number 2 pencil is being provided for you to use in marking your responses on the answer sheet. Please do not make any marks on the Instruction Booklet marked CUES. There is no time limit involved in this study. Mark the proper response according to your perceptions and not what you think someone is looking for. There may be some statements you are unsure of because you have not experienced these events, etc. but keep in mind the purpose of the conducted study is to look at your "perceptions" of the environment and campus at O.S.U.

When you have completed answering all the questions and statements, return to the examiner all items including the CUES booklet, answer sheet, "Local Option Questions" sheet, and pencils and leave when you are finished. If there are no questions, open the CUES booklet to page 2 and follow along as I read the section marked "Directions."

There are some "Local Option Questions" I will ask you to respond to also. Mark your responses in the proper section marked "Subgroups"; mark your responses as follows:

One = if you are single

Two = if you are married

Three = if you are widowed

Four = if you are divorced

Procede with the statements in the CUES booklet on page 4 when you have finished the "Information," "Subgroups," and "Local Option Questions" sections.

APPENDIX D

FREQUENCY COUNTS FOR LOCAL OPTION QUESTIONS

FREQUENCY COUNTS FOR LOCAL OPTION QUESTIONS

PERSISTERS

Local Option Question A

1 = 138
2 = 27
4 = 4
5 = 8
7 = 4

Local Option Question B

1 = 94
2 = 86

Local Option Question C

1 = 95
2 = 82

Local Option Question D

1 = 160
2 = 21

Local Option Question E

1 = 36
2 = 144

Local Option Question F

1 = 9
2 = 172

Local Option Question G

1 = 33
2 = 146

Local Option Question H

1 = 8
2 = 6
3 = 2
4 = 16
5 = 4
6 = 140

Local Option Question I

1 = 49
2 = 128

Local Option Question J

1 = 3
2 = 10
3 = 4
4 = 7
5 = 149
6 = 1

NONPERSISTERS

Local Option Question A

1 = 72
2 = 8
3 = 1
4 = 5
5 = 6
6 = 1
7 = 7

Local Option Question B

1 = 26
2 = 74

Local Option Question C

1 = 47
2 = 53

Local Option Question D

1 = 79
2 = 20

Local Option Question E

1 = 22
2 = 78

Local Option Question F

1 = 12
2 = 86

Local Option Question G

1 = 19
2 = 81

Local Option Question H

1 = 7
2 = 2
3 = 1
4 = 9
5 = 2
6 = 78

Local Option Question I

1 = 26
2 = 72

Local Option Question J

1 = 2
2 = 2
3 = 6
5 = 88

FEMALES

Local Option Question A

1 = 98
2 = 6
3 = 1
4 = 4
5 = 7
7 = 3

Local Option Question B

1 = 65
2 = 54

Local Option Question C

1 = 67
2 = 52

Local Option Question D

1 = 102
2 = 16

Local Option Question E

1 = 20
2 = 98

Local Option Question F

1 = 11
2 = 108

Local Option Question G

1 = 16
2 = 102

Local Option Question H

1 = 8
2 = 5
3 = 3
4 = 4
5 = 3
6 = 93

Local Option Question I

1 = 36
2 = 80

Local Option Question J

1 = 1
2 = 5
3 = 4
4 = 4
5 = 104

MALES

Local Option Question A

1 = 112
2 = 29
4 = 5
5 = 7
6 = 1
7 = 8

Local Option Question B

1 = 55
2 = 106

Local Option Question C

1 = 78
2 = 83

Local Option Question D

1 = 137
3 = 25

Local Option Question E

1 = 38
2 = 124

Local Option Question F

1 = 18
2 = 150

Local Option Question G

1 = 36
2 = 125

Local Option Question H

1 = 7
2 = 3
4 = 21
5 = 3
6 = 125

Local Option Question I

1 = 29
2 = 120
3 = 1
5 = 1

Local Option Question J

1 = 4
2 = 7
3 = 6
4 = 3
5 = 133

APPENDIX E

SIGNIFICANT CUES ITEMS

SIGNIFICANT CUES ITEMS

1. Frequent tests are given in most courses.
2. Students take a great deal of pride in their personal appearance.
13. Most courses require intensive study and preparation out of class.
15. Class discussions are typically vigorous and intense.
16. A lecture by an outstanding scientist would be poorly attended.
17. Careful reasoning and clear logic are valued most highly in grading student papers, reports, or discussions.
20. Standards set by the professors are not particularly hard to schieve.
26. There is a great deal of borrowing and sharing among the students.
28. Many upperclassmen play an active role in helping new students adjust to campus life.
31. Channels for expressing students' complaints are readily accessible.
32. Students are encouraged to take an active part in social reforms or political programs.
37. A controversial speaker always stirs up a lot of student discussion.
45. Students occasionally plot some sort of escapade or rebellion.
48. Student publications never lampoon dignified people or institutions.
51. The important people at this school expect others to show proper respect for them.
52. Student elections generate a lot of intense campaigning and strong feelings.
62. Most courses are a real intellectual challenge.
65. Courses, examinations, and readings are frequently revised.
68. There is a lot of interest in the philosophy and methods of science.
81. Students are encouraged to criticize administrative policies and teaching practices.
83. Many students here develop a strong sense of responsibility about their role in contemporary social and political life.

93. There always seem to be a lot of little quarrels going on.

94. Students rarely get drunk and disorderly.

98. Dormitory raids, water fights, and other student pranks would be unthinkable.

VITA

Barbara Jean Layman

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE ENVIRONMENT AT OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY BY INCOMING FRESHMAN STUDENTS

Major Field: Student Personnel and Guidance

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Terre Haute, Indiana, April 22, 1942, the daughter of Robert and Beatrice Layman.

Education: Attended grade school and high school in Terre Haute, Indiana. Graduated from Garfield High School; received the Bachelor of Arts degree from Lincoln Christian College with an Education major; received the Master of Science degree from Indiana State University, with a major in Elementary Education, Administration, and Psychology, with a minor in Philosophy; attended Purdue North Central, Purdue University, Indiana University South Bend, and Andrews University majoring in Education and Guidance and Counseling; completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University, with a major in Student Personnel and Guidance with special emphasis in Counseling Psychology, in July, 1975.

Professional Experience: Employed as a Graduate Assistant at Indiana State University in the Teaching Materials Center of the I.S.U. Library; worked as an Editor of Children's Literature at Standard Publishing Company in Cincinnati, Ohio; served as Director of Education and Youth at the First Christian Church in Michigan City, Indiana; taught elementary school in Michigan City and Mishawaka, Indiana; appointed elementary counselor for three schools in Michigan City, Indiana; employed as eighth grade junior high counselor at Elston Junior High in Michigan City, Indiana; served as Head Resident at Wentz Hall at Oklahoma State University; employed as Work-Study at O.S.U. for the School of Occupational and Adult Education and counselor intern at the O.S.U. Counseling Center currently.

Professional Organizations: American Personnel and Guidance Association, American College Personnel Association, Oklahoma Education Association, American Psychological Association, and American Association of University Women.