A STUDY OF FACTORS RELATING TO RESIDENCE
HALL ROOMMATE COMPATIBILITY

by

WILLIAM EARL MURET

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ii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter   Page

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the fall of 1974 several of the residence hall staff at Kansas State University were directed to analyze the method of roommate assignment in the residence halls and make suggestions for improvement or change. At the end of the investigation the committee submitted a written report of its method and findings (Fulkerson, Knopp and Muret, 1974). The Housing Administration did not find the report satisfactory because of the lack of research and a strong base to support the opinions of the committee. It was, however, evident that the committee had touched on some valid points that needed serious consideration.

At that time the researcher of this paper asked permission from the Housing Administration to conduct a study within the residence halls in an attempt to validate the committee's findings. There was indeed a need to reevaluate the current method of roommate assignment because it was based on outdated research. There was a strong feeling that an attempt should be made to find out how the students living in the residence halls felt concerning the factors that were used to match them with their roommates. This

1

in turn would provide the Department of Housing with feed-back on how the current system was working.

Compatibility in this study is being defined as a condition where two roommates may live together for a semester without undue stress causing one or the other to request a new roommate. There are major conditions that might contribute significantly in any residence hall room-mate situation. Five conditions were selected that could be managed for analysis: sex; residence hall type (male, female and coed); academic classification; happiness with the present roommate situation; and the fact that the roommates did or did not mutually select each other. These five conditions when analyzed in relation to the sixteen compatibility factors of the questionnaire used in this study, showed some trends and possible significant findings as to what contributes toward residence hall room-mate compatibility.

There was a distinct lack of previous research in the area of roommate compatibility in residence halls. A great deal of that research needs updating because of the general changes that have taken place on college campuses since the early and mid-sixties. There was also the need to evaluate the present system of roommate assignment at Kansas State University in order to see if it was fulfilling

its goals or if it needed revision. This study was undertaken in the effort to meet those needs.

Roommate compatibility factors were analyzed in the residence hall system at Kansas State University. The study encompassed a random sample of the students which attended the university and lived in the residence halls. The questionnaire for this study (Appendix B) was distributed in late April of 1975. Everyone that answered the questionnaire had lived in a residence hall and with a roommate for at least one semester, and most requests for roommate change had already been granted.

Kansas State University is a Land Grant University with a student body that includes large numbers of students from both rural and urban areas. It should be understood that the results of this study and application of the results may only apply to universities that have similar student bodies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature dealing with conditions and factors that contribute toward roommate compatibility in residence halls indicates that there has been little effort made in conducting research with those conditions and factors that relate to compatibility. Both research efforts and literature appear sparse in this area and for this reason the review of literature shall not be extensive.

Attitudes of Roommates

Research that has been conducted varies widely in the conclusions and the amount of effort invested in the study. Newcomb (1961) conducted a detailed, longitudinal study in a men's residence hall that set forth an idea that under certain conditions the attitudes of individuals toward a wide variety of factors influenced inter-personal relationships to a great extent. He based this on his findings that any two persons between whom a relationship of attraction exists, live in a world of common objects, some of which are so important to them that both persons develop similar attitudes toward them. This lends itself toward the idea that persons' attitudes as well as their

background can be influential in how they will get along
with roommates.

Another aspect of the question of attitude and
attractions was brought up by Friednan and Sherrill (1968).
Their data tended to point out that individuals will
accept a larger number of options in interpersonal rela-
tions than they would voluntarily choose. Pierce (1970)
stated that roommates got along with each other according
to their needs. Both of these ideas lend themselves to
the possible changing of attitudes to meet the situation.
This suggests that roommate assignment need not be accur-
ate in the attempt to pair compatible people because they
will adjust to the problems and situations. There are,
however, certain factors and conditions that have been
found to be important and must be considered in the remain-
der of this survey.

Grades and Achievement Influence

The issue of residence halls and related academic
achievement can be divided into two separate camps. Grosz
and Brandt (1969) conducted research that pointed out an
important issue with two ideas. They stated that entering
freshmen tended to achieve equally well regardless of their
residence. In the same study, Grosz and Brandt also found

that academic ability was of greater importance than a student's residence. Ferber (1962), however, indicated that a close relationship between residence halls and academic experience was highly desirable and evident.

The second of these ideas lent itself to the way roommates influenced each other in how they studied, maintained grades and got along. It has even been found that roommates which were highly dissatisfied with each other had lower grade point averages (Pace, 1970). If this is the case, it would be beneficial to pair roommates according to their level of achievement. Hall and Willerman (1963) found that the ability to achieve high grades greatly influenced the roommates in getting along. There was a positive influence toward one another when high grade achievers were paired and a negative influence towards each other when low grade achievers were paired. It also appeared that high ability students seemed to have better success when living in close proximity with other high ability students (DeCoster, 1966).

The homogeneous assignment of students by ability is still an area that has no definite answers. DeCoster (1968) found that homogeneous assignment of advanced students seemed to have a positive effect on grades and compatibility. Blai (1972) saw it from a different view. He

felt that above average academic achievers should be assigned as roommates for average and below average achievers in order to raise the academic performance of the total group.

Finally, in relating to grade point average to compatibility Gehring (1970) found there was no difference in how roommates got along when randomly assigned by grade point average.

Background Factors

The question of roommates' major area of study or related coursework was sharply divided. There were those that have supported the idea that the major area of study has strong influence on how roommates get along. Volkwein (1966) felt that one's proposed major was very important to consider when matching freshmen. Nudd (1965) believed that academic major will influence roommate satisfaction and Hall and Willerman (1963) also felt that sharing coursework had a positive effect on the achievement of roommates. Broxton (1962) and Grosz and Brandt (1969) pointed to the opposite direction and said that a roommate's major area of study did not significantly effect the compatibility and achievement of the pair.

Another factor that influences the compatibility of roommates was that of hometown size and size of high school.

Nudd (1965) believed that hometown size was important in satisfaction between roommates. Volkwein (1966) found the size of high school was an important factor. Another idea, however, pointed out that size of the student's high school was unimportant in the compatibility of roommates (Gehring, 1970).

In further review of the literature five other background type factors that affected the compatibility of roommates were found. Similar age of roommates was found important by Volkwein (1966) and Nudd (1965). The academic classification of roommates also had positive or negative effects depending on their similarity (Nudd, 1965). Broxton (1962) found that satisfied roommates were significantly more similar in relation to the education level of their respective fathers than dissatisfied roommates. Yet Gehring (1970) determined in a separate study that a father's educational background was of no significance in roommate relation. Nudd (1965) found that dissatisfied roommates tended to differ in valuing of economic factors more than satisfied roommates. Lozier (1970) also found socio-economic background to be significant in roommate compatibility. The final background type factor is one's religious convictions and church experience. In separate studies both Broxton (1962) and Nudd (1965) found that a person's valuing of

religion was significant in relation to getting along with a roommate. Gehring (1970) found that church attendance had no significant influence in the compatibility of room-mates.

Behavioral Factors

There are several factors that were not necessarily related to one's background found to contribute in a posi-tive or negative way to roommate compatibility. These fac-tors do relate to behavior of the individual roommates. The first concerned smoking habits. Broxton (1962) found that satisfied roommates were significantly similar in their smoking habits, Gehring (1970) found, however, that smoking habits made no significant difference in the com-patibility or roommates. Broxton (1962) also found that drinking habits were much the same among satisfied room-mates.

Satisfied roommates were significantly more similar than dissatisfied roommates in relation to study habits as found by Broxton (1962) and Hall and Willerman (1963). Broxton (1962), in the same study, also found similarity in sleeping habits to be significant with satisfied room-mates.

Another factor that appeared to be important was researched in three separate studies (Hall and Willerman, 1963; Nudd, 1965; and Lozier, 1970). That factor was a similar amount of participation in extracurricular activities and formal organizations. They found that satisfied roommates were very much alike in the time spent and type of activities in which they participated in outside of academics.

Summary

From this review it is difficult to determine any one item or group of items that ideally must be considered for assigning roommates. Most items that influence roommate compatibility came from the area of background type. Even these items cannot be pointed to as the solution to roommate pairing, because with almost every item there was a split between the researchers as to whether or not it was a meaningful or significant item. Other items that were included in this review deal with behavioral factors. The opinions of the researchers toward behavior factors was also split and in addition the research that has been conducted with behavioral items as pairing factors is limited.

A great deal of research is needed in the area of roommate compatibility factors in order to verify the limited amount of research that has already been conducted. There is a further need to study at greater depth those factors that deal with a behavioral aspect so that housing directors may know if more emphasis should be placed in this area when assigning roommates.

At present, one can only hope to use the right combination of factors in an attempt to match roommates. DeCoster (1966) helped to avert the hopelessness of the situation when he said that even if one cannot arrange the most compatible environment for roommates, possibly the least desirable situations can be avoided.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF STUDY

Purpose

In this study there were two main objectives that developed throughout the project. The first objective was that of determining what opinions the students had regarding factors that were used to match them with their roommates. The second objective was that of determining, by the residents' answers, what significance five major conditions might have in compatibility relationship of the roommates. The five conditions were: roommate happiness situation; mutual roommate selection; sex; academic classification; and residence hall type.

Subjects

The subjects for this study were a random sample of the residents in the Kansas State University Residence Hall System. A total of 613 residents were chosen, at random, to answer the questionnaire. This provided a sample size of well over ten percent of the total residence hall population, which was 4,135 at the time of the study.

Procedure

A questionnaire was developed (Appendix B) to determine the feelings of the residents toward the various

conditions which they experienced in the residence halls.

Development of the instrument. The first step in the development of the questionnaire was to determine the rationale of the present system. This was determined by reviewing the earlier study that was made by the staff committee (Fulkerson, Knopp and Muret, 1974). By determining the order of importance of the factors analyzed by the computer, one could see the most important items in matching roommates in the present system.

The present system of roommate assignment at KSU is based on ten factors, which in order of priority are: academic classification; curriculum; grouping with one's own curriculum; GPA; hometown size; high school size; smoking; study with record player or radio; retirement time; and rising time. When each person has turned in a contract they have also completed a questionnaire that asked them some point about each of the ten factors. The responses to these questions are then used to match students who did not mutually select each other.

The next step in the process was to survey the existing literature to determine what other factors might be considered important by those who had already conducted research. There were several factors that were considered important by researchers which were not used at KSU. Those

factors that appeared most often and could be asked of the
students without violating their personal rights, were
incorporated in the questionnaire along with the factors
presently used at KSU.

At this point sixteen items were designated as con-
tributing factors toward roommate compatibility. In order
to determine how important the residents felt these items
were, a Likert-type scale was employed to which the sub-
jects responded with the numbers 1 through 5. Number 1
was the response, strongly agree; number 2 was agree; num-
ber 3 was disagree; number 4 was strongly disagree; and
number 5 was cannot judge/no opinion. The cannot judge/no
opinion option was placed at the end of the scale in order
to remove any halo effect that might be caused by placing
that particular option between the agree and disagree
options. When wording the sixteen compatibility factors,
negative phrasing and positive phrasing was utilized. This
was done in the hopes of eliminating a halo-effect type of
response from the residents. The wording variation and the
Likert-scale responses caused little confusion for the
respondents as all questions were consistent in how they
were answered.

Administration of the instrument. After the question-
naire was developed it was administered to a pilot sample

in order to determine what difficulties the actual sample
might have with answering the questions. The question-
naire was adjusted as needed by the indications of the
pilot.

Floor plans for each of the residence halls at KSU
were secured and five rooms on each corridor of each floor
in the larger halls were selected at random. In the
smaller halls only three rooms per corridor were selected
due to the smaller number of residents. After the rooms
had been selected either the letter A or the letter B was
assigned to each room. The manner in which the question-
naires would be distributed was set. If a room was desig-
nated as an "A" room, then the person in that room that
was first in alphabetical order, by last name, was given
a questionnaire. If a room was designated as a "B" room,
then the resident that was second in alphabetical order,
by last name, received the questionnaire.

The staff in the residence halls were asked to hand
out the questionnaires and the cover letters (Appendix A)
instructed the residents to return the questionnaires to
their staff. The identity of the respondents remained
unknown. By using this method of administration there was
an excellent return of the questionnaire. There was a
total of 613 questionnaires distributed, and 532 were

returned; this was 86.7 percent of the total number of questionnaires distributed and 12.8 percent of the total residence hall population.

Analysis

The questionnaire was analyzed in three different ways. The first analysis was a simple frequency count computation of the answers on the questionnaire by means of a computer. This indicated how many residents answered each question, what that number's percentage of the whole was, and how many questions were left unanswered.

The second analysis was a chi-square computation of the data in relation to the five major conditions when compared to the sixteen factors that were considered to be important in matching compatible roommates. This analysis measured significant findings in the comparisons.

The final analysis was a computer computation to determine the expectancy tables for the significant factors that showed up in the initial chi-square analysis. By using the expectancy tables from this analysis one could better determine the validity of the significant factors and what trends or tendencies they represented. From this final analysis only those significant chi-square that had an expectancy level above five were used. Those significant

chi-square findings that had cells with an expectancy level below five could not be judged as reliable due to the extremely low number.

CHAPTER IV

REPORT OF DATA

The findings of this study were analyzed in three
major phases. First there was a computer analysis to
establish the number of residents who responded to each
question and the percentage of the total. The next step
was a chi-square analysis of the data to determine what
significant findings there might be in the comparison of
the five major conditions and the sixteen compatibility
factors. Finally an expectancy count was computed for the
chi-square to further determine the validity of the signi-
ficant factors and each cell was analyzed to determine its
contribution to the chi-square.

Frequency Count Data

The first ten questions of the survey were primarily
to establish what kind of sample answered the questions.
In these first ten questions it was also possible to estab-
lish the five conditions that were to be compared to the
other sixteen factors.

The results of the analysis showed that in general,
the survey touched a representative number of the different
types of students that live in the residence halls. A
total of 532 residents responded to the survey. By noting

Table 1, one can determine the sample's representativeness. Slightly over half of the respondents were female, but there are more females that live in the residence halls than males. Freshmen make up the largest part of the sample, but they are the largest academic classification in the halls. The input from the different types of halls was extremely close. Almost a third of the respondents were from either a female, male, or coed hall. The survey was also very even in the number of respondents that did and did not mutually select their own roommates. One should also note that the sample touched representatives of all the colleges and this, in a general way, is representative of the fields of study of the hall's residents.

The single most interesting piece of data in the first ten questions is the response to the tenth question. A rather large majority of the residents felt satisfied with their present roommate situation. There were, however, over 200 people who did not select their present roommate situation.

When noting the results of questions eleven through twenty-six (Table 2) one can see that there were several questions that had a large percentage of the respondents grouped at one end of the Likert-scale. Those questions that had a large number of responses at one end of the

THIS BOOK CONTAINS NUMEROUS PAGES WITH DIAGRAMS THAT ARE CROOKED COMPARED TO THE REST OF THE INFORMATION ON THE PAGE.

THIS IS AS RECEIVED FROM CUSTOMER.

Table 1

Frequency Count Data for Answers to Questions
1-10 of Roommate Questionnaire

Question Number	Number of Responses			Percentage of Total Response		
1						
Female	294			55.3		
Male	238			44.7		
2						
Freshman	229			43		
Sophomore	125			23.5		
Junior	98			18.4		
Senior	66			12.4		
Grad. or Special	14			2.6		
3						
Freshmen	413			77.6		
Transfer	102			19.2		
Grad. or Special	10			1.9		
4						
1-2	271			50.9		
3-4	151			28.4		
5-6	71			13.3		
7-8	29			5.5		
9 & Above	9			1.7		
5						
Agriculture	77			14.5		
Arch. & Design	41			7.7		
Arts & Sciences	196			36.5		
Business	44			8.3		
Education	32			6		
Engineering	55			10.3		
Graduate	8			1.5		
Home Economics	69			13.0		
Vet Medicine	3			.6		
6						
Coed	174			32.7		
Female	188			35.3		
Male	167			31.4		
7						
Coed	79			14.8		
Female	103			19.4		
Male	105			19.7		
None	254			47.7		
8						
Yes	241			45.3		
No	287			53.9		
9	Choice					
	1st	2nd	3rd			
Freshmen	135	182	166	25.4	34.2	31.2
Upper	336	148	4	63.2	27.8	.8
Grad.	21	150	313	3.9	28.2	58.8
10						
Yes	444			83.5		
No	75			14.1		

Table 2

Frequency Count Data for Answers to Questions
11-26 of Roommate Questionnaire

Question Number	Frequency Count Data									
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Opinion		Missing Cases
11	61	11.5	187	35.2	190	35.7	44	8.3	47	8.8	3
12	27	5.1	106	19.9	249	46.8	69	13	80	15	1
13	16	3	74	13.9	217	40.8	135	25.4	90	16.9	0
14	20	3.8	89	16.7	258	48.5	69	13	95	17.9	1
15	343	64.5	149	28	20	3.8	11	2.1	9	1.7	0
16	21	3.9	50	9.4	211	39.7	204	38.3	45	8.5	1
17	10	1.9	30	5.6	199	37.4	153	28.8	137	25.8	3
18	333	62.6	171	32.1	11	2.1	7	1.3	10	1.9	0
19	36	6.8	17	3.2	98	18.4	352	66.2	29	5.5	0
20	84	15.8	241	45.3	129	24.2	20	3.8	58	10.9	0
21	10	1.9	36	6.8	241	45.3	172	32.2	72	13.5	1
22	12	2.3	35	6.6	238	44.7	201	38.8	45	8.5	1
23	32	6	162	30.5	183	34.4	74	13.9	81	15.2	0
24	13	2.4	52	9.8	234	44	117	22	116	21.8	0
25	47	8.8	141	26.5	155	29.1	70	13.2	117	22	2
26	14	2.6	64	12	169	31.8	69	13	213	40	3

The first number in each cell is the actual number that answered with the particular response and the second number is that response's percentage of the whole.

scale had a grouping of at least sixty percent of the respondents. This shows that a large number of the residents were responding in a similar way, and upon further examination these results might prove meaningful.

Two questions that showed a large grouping of responses toward one end of the scale were non-behavioral type questions number thirteen and fourteen. Number thirteen showed that 66.2 percent of the respondents agree or strongly agree that roommates should have similar grade point averages or class rank. Number fourteen showed that 61.5 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that roommates should be from high schools of similar size.

The remainder of the questions that showed large groupings on the scale were of a behavioral or attitude type. Question fifteen showed that 92.5 percent agreed or strongly agreed that roommates should have similar attitudes toward the use of tobacco. Question sixteen reported that 78 percent agreed or strongly agreed that the bedtimes of roommates should be similar. In question seventeen 66.2 percent agreed or strongly agreed that there should be similar attitudes between roommates toward coed residence hall living. The largest grouping was shown in question eighteen where 94.7 percent agreed or strongly agreed that there should be similar attitudes toward visitation

privileges and their use. In question nineteen 84.6 per-
cent agreed or strongly agreed that roommates should be
similar in attitudes toward the use of drugs. Question
twenty showed 61.1 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed
that the time roommates get up in the morning should be
similar or the same. Question twenty-one showed that 77.6
percent agreed or strongly agreed that roommates should
have similar study habits. In question twenty-two 83.5
percent agreed or strongly agreed that the use of cereal
malt beverages should be considered important when match-
ing roommates. In the last of these large groupings, ques-
tion twenty-four showed that 66 percent agreed or strongly
agreed that roommates should have similar attitudes toward
racial concerns.

One should notice that nine of the eleven questions
involved behavioral or attitude type factors. Only two of
the questions, number thirteen and fourteen, involved non-
behavioral factors. Question fourteen is even answered in
such a way as to say that the students disagree with the
idea that high school size is an important factor to be
considered when matching roommates. These percentage find-
ings tend to guide one to the belief that behavioral and
attitude factors are important in matching roommates, and
should be considered when trying to achieve compatibility.

The use of tobacco, drugs, cereal malt beverages
and visitation privileges all ranked high in number of peo-
ple that believe they are important factors. The lowest
percentage of these four factors was 83.5 percent that
agreed or strongly agreed with their importance. From
this, one can see a strong trend among the residents them-
selves that certain behavioral and attitudes factors are
at a high enough level of importance to be considered when
matching roommates.

Other behavioral and attitude factors such as simi-
lar bedtime, study habits, ideas toward coed living and
racial concerns showed large groupings and percentages.
These factors were all in the high sixties to seventies on
a percentage scale of those that agreed or strongly agreed.
One can deduce that these items were also considered impor-
tant by the residents for the purpose of pairing roommates.

Only one behavioral or belief factor turned out to
be rejected by the residents as being important. That was
the time in the morning that the roommates get up from bed;
61 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed that it was a
factor to be considered important when pairing roommates.

Chi-square Data Findings

The chi-square computation was used to find any fac-
tors that might be statistically significant when compared

with each other. The five conditions that were introduced earlier in this report, namely: roommate happiness situation; mutual roommate selection; sex; classification; and residence hall type, were compared by chi-square analysis to the answers from questions eleven through twenty-six.

There were several other items analyzed through the chi-square computations in the hopes that something significant might be discussed even though unexpected in the original research. Such a finding might have as important a bearing as the others on matching roommates. The other chi-square computations were: sex X mutual roommate selection; sex X roommate happiness situation; mutual roommate selection X roommate happiness situation; academic classification X mutual roommate selection; academic classification X roommate happiness situation; freshmen through graduates that mutually selected roommates X roommates happiness situation; and males and females that mutually selected roommates X roommate happiness situation.

In the chi-square analysis, each individual cell was taken into account in the data report and later in interpretation. There was no combination of responses made in the significant chi-square analysis data as there was in the frequency count data report of the Likert-scale responses to questions eleven through twenty-six.

From this chi-square analysis thirty-two items
appeared to be significant at the .05 level or greater.
These thirty-two items were then analyzed to determine the
chi-square expectancy level for each. After this computa-
tion it was found that only fifteen of the thirty-two items
could really be dealt with reliably because the rest had
cells with expectancy levels below five. Such low expec-
tancy levels rendered the data and the level of significance
for that particular item too unreliable to work with as a
significant factor.

In further analysis of the chi-square data findings
only those comparisons that showed a significance level of
at least .05 or greater, and also had expectancy levels
above five were analyzed. Those comparisons that showed a
significance level of at least .05 or greater but had cells
with expectancy levels below five, could not be considered
reliable and were not dealt with in further analysis.
Table 3 shows the comparisons between major factors and
major conditions. Three numbers are given for each compar-
ison: the first number is the level of significance; the
second number is the degree of freedom in the chi-square
analysis; the third number is the chi-square of that parti-
cular comparison.

Table 3

Significance, Degree of Freedom and Chi-Square of
Major Conditions Compared with Major Factors

Major Factors	Major Conditions				
	Roommate Happiness Situation	Mutual Roommate Selection	Sex	Academic Classification	Residence Hall Type
Major	0.0071* 4 14.054	0.0045* 4 15.087	0.0000* 4 26.780	0.3766 16 17.140	0.0000* 8 37.909
Hometown Size	0.9365 4 0.814	0.6463 4 2.490	0.7119 4 2.129	0.9431 16 8.187	0.3139 8 9.346
GPA	0.4720 4 3.538	0.9722 4 .512	0.0464* 4 9.669	0.5018 16 15.313	0.0633 8 14.794
Highschool Size	0.1974 4 6.022	0.1020 4 7.730	0.1469 4 6.798	0.5567 16 14.564	0.0889 8 13.735
Smoking Habits	0.8124 4 1.580	0.6892 4 2.253	0.0549 4 9.261	0.6821 16 12.871	0.2313 8 10.505
Bedtime	0.0012*+ 4 18.013	0.6265 4 2.601	0.1291 4 7.132	0.6373 16 13.481	0.2575 8 10.108
Coed Housing Attitude	0.5063 4 3.316	0.9129 4 .979	0.0001*+ 4 23.285	0.6120 16 13.821	0.0000*+ 8 57.043
Visitation Attitude	0.2534 4 5.348	0.9326 4 .842	0.0341*+ 4 10.408	0.0323*+ 16 27.925	0.0181*+ 8 18.452
Drug Usage	0.9454 4 .747	0.6929 4 2.233	0.0000* 4 29.490	0.0046*+ 16 34.518	0.0202* 8 18.145
Wake-up Time	0.0085*+ 4 13.651	0.7461 4 1.944	0.4928 4 3.402	0.9041 16 9.218	0.1382 8 12.303
Study Habits	0.0233*+ 4 11.305	0.6724 4 2.346	0.0057*+ 4 14.578	0.0001*+ 16 46.805	0.0970 8 13.457
Beer Usage	0.7286 4 2.038	0.4280 4 3.876	0.1819 4 6.239	0.0229*+ 16 29.163	0.0101*+ 8 20.053
Social Activities	0.1348 4 7.021	0.3617 4 4.341	0.3671 4 4.298	0.7219 16 12.316	0.4672 8 7.662
Racial Attitudes	0.3897 4 4.122	0.4181 4 3.911	0.0031* 4 15.906	0.5301 16 14.924	0.0271*+ 8 17.305
Religious Beliefs	0.4132 4 3.946	0.0327* 4 10.505	0.0001* 4 23.175	0.4532 16 15.996	0.0284* 8 17.167
Religious Affiliation	0.7245 4 2.061	0.7409 4 1.971	0.0074* 4 13.969	0.3591 16 17.417	0.0647 8 14.724

In the cells of this table the first number is the level of significance, the second number is the degree of freedom for the analysis and the third number is the chi-square.

* Denotes a significant level of at least .05 or greater.

+ Denotes a significant level of at least .05 but cell size expectancy is below 5.

Significant Chi-square Findings

Academic major X roommate happiness. This comparison was significant at the .0071 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 14.054. The significance of this comparison appears to come from the respondents that were not happy with their roommate situation. Of those that were not happy in their roommate situation, more than expected agreed and fewer than expected disagreed with the statement that academic major was an important compatibility factor. It appears that of those who were unhappy in their roommate situation, there was a tendency to feel that academic major was an important compatibility factor.

Mutual roommate selection X academic major. This comparison was significant at the .0045 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 15.087. The significance of this comparison appears to have come from those that strongly agreed or agreed with the idea that academic major is an important factor to consider in roommate compatibility. Of those that mutually selected their own roommates there were fewer than expected that strongly agreed and agreed with the idea. Of those that did not mutually select their own roommates there were more than expected that strongly agreed or agreed with the idea. It appears that there is a

slight tendency for those who did not select their own roommates to strongly agree or agree more with the idea that academic major is an important compatibility factor, than those who did select their own roommates.

Mutual roommate selection X religious beliefs. This comparison was significant at the .0327 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 10.505. The significance of this comparison appears to come from those who agreed with the idea that religious belief is an important factor to consider in roommate compatibility. Of those who selected their own roommates more than expected agreed with the idea. Of those who did not select their own roommates, fewer than expected agreed with the idea. It appears that those who selected their own roommate had a tendency to feel that religious beliefs was an important factor to consider in roommate compatibility. While those who did not select their own roommates had a tendency to feel that religious beliefs was not as important a factor as do those who did not select their own roommate.

Sex X academic major. This comparison was significant at the 0.0000 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 26.780. The significance of this comparison appears to have come from those who strongly agreed that

academic major is an important factor to consider in room-
mate compatibility. Fewer females than expected strongly
agreed with the statement and more males than expected
strongly agreed with the statement. It appears that males
tended to strongly agree more than females do, that aca-
demic major is an important compatibility factor.

Sex X grade point average. This comparison was sig-
nificant at the .0464 level with 4 degrees of freedom and
a chi-square of 9.669. The significance of this comparison
appears to have come from those who strongly agreed that
GPA is an important compatibility factor. More females
than expected strongly agreed and fewer males than expected
strongly agreed with the idea that roommates should have
similar GPA's.

Sex X drug usage. This comparison was significant
at the 0.0000 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a chi-
square of 29.490. The significance of this comparison
appears to have come from those that strongly disagreed
and disagreed with the idea that similar ideas toward drug
usage by a roommate is an important compatibility factor.
Fewer females than expected strongly disagreed or disagreed
with the idea and more males than expected strongly dis-
agreed or disagreed with the idea. It appears that there

was a tendency for fewer females than males to strongly
agree or agree with the idea that drug usage attitude of
a roommate should be similar.

Sex X racial attitudes. This comparison was signi-
ficant at the .0031 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a
chi-square of 15.906. The significance of this comparison
appears to have come from those that strongly disagreed
with the idea that racial attitudes is an important compa-
tibility factor. Fewer females than expected strongly dis-
agreed with the statement and more males than expected
strongly disagreed with the statement. It appears that
there was a tendency for fewer females than males to strongly
disagree with the idea that racial attitudes of a roommate
is an important compatibility factor.

Sex X religious beliefs. This comparison was signi-
ficant at the .0001 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a
chi-square of 23.175. The significance of this comparison
appears to have come from those that agreed with the idea
that religious belief is an important compatibility factor.
More females than expected agreed with the statement and
fewer males than expected agreed with the statement. It
appears that there was a tendency for females to agree more
than males do, with the idea that religious beliefs are an
important compatibility factor.

Sex X religious affiliation. This comparison was significant at the .0074 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 13.969. The significance of this comparison appears to have come from those that agreed and strongly agreed with the idea that religious affiliation is an important compatibility factor. More females and fewer males than expected agreed with the idea. Fewer females and more males than expected strongly agreed with the idea. It appears that there was an overall tendency for more females than males to strongly agree and agree with the idea that religious affiliation is an important compatibility factor.

Residence hall type X academic major. This comparison was significant at the .0000 level with 8 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 37.909. The significance of this comparison appears to have come from two areas. First, from female dorm types and male dorm types that strongly agreed with the idea that academic major is an important compatibility factor and secondly, from female dorm types and male dorm types that disagreed with the idea. Fewer female dorm types than expected and more male dorm types than expected strongly agreed with the idea. More female dorm types than expected and fewer male dorm types than

expected disagreed with the idea. It appears that there was a tendency for female dorm types to strongly agree less and disagree more than male dorm types do with the idea that academic major is an important compatibility factor.

Residence hall type X drug usage. This comparison was significant at the .0202 level with 8 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 18.145. The significance of this comparison appears to have come from female dorm types who disagreed and male dorm types who strongly disagreed with the idea that roommates should have similar ideas toward drug usage. Fewer female dorm types than expected disagreed and more male dorm types than expected strongly disagreed with the idea. It appears that there was a tendency for male dorm types to strongly disagree more than female dorm types and for female dorm types to disagree less than male dorm types with the idea that roommates should be similar in ideas concerning drug usage.

Residence hall type X religious beliefs. This comparison was significant at the .0284 level with 8 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 17.167. The significance of this comparison appears to have come from those male dorm types and female dorm types that agreed with the idea

that roommates should have similar ideas concerning religious beliefs. More female dorm types agreed than expected and fewer male dorm types agreed than expected with the idea. It appears that there was a tendency for female dorm types to agree more than male dorm types with the idea that religious beliefs are an important factor to consider in roommate compatibility.

Sex X mutual roommate selection. This comparison showed no significance at the .05 level with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of .441.

Sex X roommate happiness. This comparison showed no significance at the .05 level with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of .337.

Mutual roommate selection X roommate happiness. This comparison was significant at the .0058 level with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of 7.621. The significance of this comparison appears to come from those who were unhappy with their roommate situation. Of those roommates that mutually selected each other, fewer than expected were unhappy with their present situation. Of those roommates that did not mutually select each other, there were more than expected who were not happy.

Academic classification X mutual roommate selection. This comparison was significant at the .0007 level with 4 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 19.250. The

significance of this comparison appears to come from fresh-
men and seniors. Fewer freshmen than expected selected
their roommates. More seniors than expected selected their
own roommates.

Academic classification X roommate happiness situa-
tion. This comparison was significant at the .0124 level
with 4 degrees of freedom and a chi-square of 12.779.
Although the significance level of this comparison is great
enough for examination in this study, there were cells that
had expectancy levels below five. Because of low expec-
tnacy levels, this significant comparison was not examined.

Mutual selection (freshmen) X happiness situation.
This comparison showed no significance at the .05 level
with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of .805.

Mutual selection (sophomore) X happiness situation.
This comparison showed no significance at the .05 level
with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of 3.459.

Mutual selection (junior) X happiness situation.
This comparison showed no significance at the .05 level
with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of .686.

Mutual selection (senior) X happiness situation.
This comparison showed no significance at the .05 level
with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of .563.

Mutual selection (graduate) X happiness situation. There were thirteen graduate students that responded to the questions concerning mutual selection and the happiness of their situation. There were three of the graduate students that did select their roommate and ten that did not. All thirteen of those who answered said they were happy with their present situation. There were no graduate students that said they were unhappy in their present situation.

Mutual selection (female) X happiness situation. This comparison showed no significance at the .05 level with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of 2.993.

Mutual selection (male) X happiness situation. This comparison was significant at the .0446 level with 1 degree of freedom and a chi-square of 4.035. It appears that the significance of this comparison has come from those males who were not happy in their present situation. Of those who selected their own roommate there were fewer than expected that were unhappy in their present situation. Of those who did not select their own roommate there were more than expected who were unhappy in their present roommate situation.

Academic classification X roommate preference. This comparison was significant at the .000 level with 12 degrees

of freedom and a chi-square of 253.164. Although the significance level of this comparison is great enough for examination in this study, there were cells that had expectancy levels below five. Because of low expectancy levels, this significant comparison was not examined.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Frequency Count Data Summary

Mutual selection and satisfaction of situation. It
is very important to note that there were only 241 of the
respondents that mutually selected their roommate. There
were, however, 444 respondents that were satisfied with
their roommate situation. It would appear that of the 287
respondents that did not select a roommate and were assigned
one by the present system, the large majority were satisfied
with the roommate they were assigned. This would tend to
support the idea that the present system of assignment works
relatively well. The information might also support Fried-
nan and Sherrill (1968) and Pierce (1970) both of whom
claimed that assigned roommates will lend themselves to
possible changing of attitudes to meet situations and thus
avoid conflict. In order to support these other two studies,
however, more research in that direct line would need to be
undertaken.

Similar GPA or class rank. There were 66.2 percent
of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that room-
mates should have similar grade point averages or class
rank. A relatively large percent of the respondents seem

38

to feel that compatibility of roommates is influenced by
the similarity of grade point average or class rank. These
findings also support, to a mild degree, the ideas and find-
ings of Grosz and Brandt (1969), Hall and Willerman (1963),
and DeCoster (1966 and 1968). These men felt that in var-
ious ways, GPA strongly affected roommates and their influ-
ence on each other. These findings also support the present
system of assignment at KSU in respect to the high priority
GPA has in assignment.

High school of similar size. There were 61.5 percent
of the respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that
roommates should be from high schools of similar size.
These findings tend not to support the present system which
ranks high school size as an important factor in assigning
roommates. It seems that there was a slight tendency for
the respondents to disagree with the idea that similar
high school size is an important compatibility factor. These
findings tend to support Gehring (1970), in his results that
found high school size to be unimportant as a compatibility
factor.

Similar attitude toward use of tobacco. There were
92.5 percent of the respondents who agreed or strongly
agreed that roommates should have similar beliefs toward

the use of tobacco. There was a very strong trend because the respondents felt that tobacco use was an important compatibility factor to consider. This trend supports Broxton's (1962) findings that concluded smoking habits were similar among satisfied roommates. These findings did not correspond with the present assignment system. By the results of these findings it would appear that this factor might deserve a higher priority.

Similar bed time. There were 78 percent of the respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the idea that roommates should not have similar bed times. It appears that a relatively large percent of the respondents seem to have believed that bed times should be similar. These findings would support Broxton (1962) in his beliefs that sleeping habits are similar between satisfied roommates. By the results of these findings it would appear that this factor might deserve a higher priority.

Similar attitudes toward coed living. A large percentage of 66.2 agreed or strongly agreed with the idea that roommates should have similar attitudes toward coed residence hall living. It would appear that there was a tendency for a large number of residents to feel that roommates should have similar attitudes toward living in coed residence halls.

Similar visitation privilege use. There were 94.7 percent of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that roommates should have similar attitudes toward visitation privileges and their use. There was a very strong trend here that points to the idea that roommates should be similar in their use of visitation privilege.

Similar attitudes toward drug use. There were 84.6 percent who agreed or strongly agreed that roommates should have similar beliefs toward the use of drugs. It appears that a large number of the respondents felt roommates should have similar beliefs toward drug usage.

Similar wake-up time. There were 61.1 percent of the respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that roommates should have similar wake-up times. There is a slight trend here that points to the belief that roommates need not have the same rising time. This tends to support the present system of roommate assignment. Rising time ranks low in priority of factors that pair roommates at KSU.

Similar study habits. There were 77.6 percent of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the idea that roommates should have similar study habits. These findings tend to support the idea that the respondents felt their roommates should have similar study habits.

These findings also tend to support Broxton (1962) and Hall and Willerman (1963) when they found that satisfied roommates were similar in study habits. Study habits is ranked low in the present system; these results might show a need for a higher priority.

Similar attitudes toward beer usage. There were 83.5 percent of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with the idea that roommates should have similar beliefs toward the usage of beer. These results show a strong trend toward the respondents wanting their roommates to have a similar attitude toward the use of beer. At present the question of beer usage only figures into assignment when someone requests to live on a corridor without beer privileges. These findings tend to support Broxton's (1962) findings that satisfied roommates tended to have similar drinking habits.

Similar racial attitudes. There were 66 percent of the respondents who agreed or strongly agreed that roommates should have similar attitudes toward racial concerns. This tends to show that the respondents wanted roommates that do show attitudes toward racial concerns that are similar to their own.

Other factors. It is important to point out that in several other areas there were no noticeable trends.

The idea that roommates should have similar major areas of study showed no trend at all. The responses were evenly divided between those who agreed and those who disagreed. One's major area of study is ranked high in the present system of assigning roommates. Hometown size is ranked in the middle of the present system of assignment, yet, it also shows no trend that is strong enough to say that it should merit such high priority.

Social activities outside of one's hall showed no strong trend as to whether or not the respondents felt it was an important factor. There was no trend at all to support Hall and Willerman (1963), Nudd (1965), and Lozier (1970) in their findings concerning the similarities of social activities of satisfied roommates.

Chi-Square Significant Figures Summary

Academic major. The major factor of academic classification showed to be significant at the .05 level or greater when compared with the major conditions of roommate happiness situation, mutual roommate selection, sex and residence hall type. These significant findings tend to support the present system of assignment and its high priority of matching curriculum when assigning roommates.

When compared to roommate happiness situation, the significance came from those who were unhappy in their situation. When compared to mutual selection, the significance came from those who did not select their own roommate. It would appear that this item of academic major was important when dealing with unsatisfied roommates and those roommates who did not select each other. When the factor of academic major was compared to sex and residence hall type the significance came from males in both cases. Males and male residence hall types both felt that academic major was an important compatibility factor.

These significant findings tend to support the findings of Volkwein (1966), Nudd (1965), and Hall and Willerman (1963). Together, both of these findings might justify academic major being an important factor and its high priority in the present system.

Grade point average. The major factor of GPA was significant at the .05 level or greater when compared with the major condition of sex. These significant findings tend to support the present system of assignment and its high priority of matching GPA when assigning roommates.

The significance came from those who strongly agreed with the idea that roommates should have similar GPA.

Females supported the idea more strongly than did the
males. The significant findings also lend support to the
frequency count data of this study and the findings of
other researchers: Grosz and Brandt (1969); Hall and
Willerman (1963); and DeCoster (1966 and 1968).

Drug usage. The major factor of drug usage was sig-
nificant at the .05 level or greater when compared with
the major conditions of sex and residence hall type. In
both comparisons the males and male residence hall types
disagreed to a greater degree than the females that drug
usage beliefs should be similar between roommates. This
was only the area where the significance came from, the
vast majority of males and females from the frequency count
data felt that roommates should have similar attitudes
toward drug usage.

Racial attitudes. This factor was significant at
the .05 level or greater when compared with the major con-
dition of sex. The significance came from females strongly
disagreeing less than males with the idea that racial atti-
tudes should be similar between roommates. The majority
of males and females from the frequency count data felt
that roommates should have similar racial beliefs.

Religious beliefs. This factor was significant at
the .05 level or greater when compared with the major

conditions of mutual roommate selection, sex and residence hall type. When compared with those who did or did not mutually select their roommates it was the ones who selected their own roommate that said religious beliefs were important and contributed the significance. In the comparisons with sex and residence hall type the significance came from females who agreed more strongly than males that similar religious beliefs are important between roommates.

Religious affiliation. This factor was significant at the .05 level or greater when compared with the major condition of sex. The significance of this factor comes from more females believing this factor to be important than males.

Mutual selection X roommate happiness. This comparison's significance came from those who mutually selected each other and were unhappy with each other and from those that did not mutually select each other and were unhappy with each other. It appears that if roommates do select each other they have a better chance of being happy than if they do not select each other.

Academic classification X mutual selection. The significance of this comparison came from freshmen not selecting roommates and a large number of seniors that did

select roommates. It appears from this comparison that upperclassmen will mutually select a roommate far more often than will freshmen.

Mutual selection (male) X roommate happiness. The significance of this comparison came from there being fewer than expected of mutual selection that were unhappy in their situation and more than expected of those who did not select roommates that were unhappy. It appears that males who select their roommates are happier than those who do not.

Recommendations

Based upon the data findings of this study there should be a reordering of priority for the present system of roommate assignment. An especially high priority should be given to use of visitation privilege and smoking habits. Such items as grade point average, bedtime, study habits, beer usage and academic major should also be given high priority because of the strong feelings shown by the residents of the system. High school size and wake-up time need not have the high priority that they have had in the present system.

It should be noted that the residents of the present system felt that behavioral factors were more important

than background factors. In future research a control group may be established in the residence hall system that is matched by behavioral factors. It can then be noted if requests for roommate change are fewer in the control group than that of the overall system.

It is also suggested that the questionnaire used in this study be modified and used again in two different ways. Questions that did not show large or significant response patterns and questions that cannot be applied to actual roommate assignment should be removed. Such things as religious beliefs and affiliation, racial attitudes and drug usage might be removed from the questionnaire. The questionnaire may then be given again to see if results are similar. Secondly, the modified questionnaire may be given to those residents who request and receive a roommate change at the first of the school year. By using the questionnaire in this way, it can be determined what factors are considered most important by those who are actually dissatisfied.

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APPENDIX A

Cover Letter for Roommate Questionnaire

Dear Resident Hall Student,

This questionnaire is part of a study that I am conducting for the Department of Housing to find out if certain factors are important in relation to roommate compatibility. This questionnaire is aimed at finding out what factors students feel are important. If the results of this questionnaire show the need, they will be used to revise the present system of assigning roommates. Be assured that the answers to this questionnaire will be confidential.

It should take no longer than 10 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

This is a poll of student opinion and is important to keep in mind that it is YOUR OPINION we want.

Please return the questionnaire to your RA/SA by May 1.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and assistance.

Bill Muret

Bill Muret

APPENDIX B

Roommate Questionnaire

PLEASE MARK THE APPROPRIATE SPACES

1. Sex
    ___Female   ___Male

2. Present Classification
    ___Freshman   ___Sophomore   ___Junior   ___Senior   ___Graduate or Special Student

3. What was your entering status at K-State?
    ___Freshman   ___Transfer from Junior College or University   ___Graduate or Special

4. Including the present semester, how many semesters have you lived in a Residence Hall?
    ___1-2   ___3-4   ___5-6   ___7-8   ___9 & above

5. In what College are you currently enrolled?
    ___Agriculture   ___Architecture & Design   ___Arts & Sciences   ___Business Administration

    ___Education   ___Engineering   ___Graduate School   ___Home Economics   ___Veterinary Medicine

6. The Residence Hall I currently live in is...
    ___Co-ed   ___All Female   ___All Male.

7. Prior to this year the Residence Halls I lived in were... (Mark all those applicable)
    ___Co-ed   ___All Female   ___All Male   ___I have not lived in a Hall prior to this year.

8. Did you and your present roommate mutually select each other?
    ___Yes   ___No

9. From the following list please rank in order, 1 through 3, the classifications of roommate that you might possibly be assigned. NOTE: 1 = most preferred classification, 3 = least preferred classification

    ___Freshman   ___Upperclassman   ___Graduate or Special Student

10. Are you satisfied with your present roommate situation?
    ___Yes   ___No

Below are listed a series of 16 factors that are believed to influence roommate compatibility. Please rate these factors according to how strongly you agree or disagree with their importance in getting along with a roommate. Use the scale given here.

1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree, 5 = cannot judge/no opinion

PLEASE READ QUESTIONS CAREFULLY

11. ___Roommates should have the same or similar major areas of study.

12. ___Roommates should be from hometowns of similar size.

13. ___A roommate should not have the same or similar GPA or class rank.

14. ___Roommates should be from high schools of similar size.

15. ___A roommate should have similar beliefs toward the use of tobacco.

16. ___The time that roommates go to bed at night should not be similar.

17. ___A roommate should not have similar beliefs toward Co-ed Residence Hall living.

18. ___Roommates should have a similar beliefs toward visitation privileges and their use.

19. ___Roommates should not have similar beliefs toward the use of drugs.

20. ___The time that roommates get up in the morning should be the same or similar.

21. ___Roommates should not have the same or similar studying habits.

22. ___A roommate should not have similar beliefs toward the use of cereal malt beverages.

23. ___Social activities outside the Hall should be similar. (e.g. dating, committee work, athletics)

24. ___Roommates should not have similar beliefs toward racial concerns.

25. ___A roommate should have similar religious beliefs.

26. ___Roommates should not be of the same religious affiliation.

A STUDY OF FACTORS RELATING TO RESIDENCE
HALL ROOMMATE COMPATIBILITY

by

WILLIAM EARL MURET

B. A., Kansas State University, 1976

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S THESIS

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

College of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1976

The aim of most residence hall systems is to provide the proper conditions for a student to live and pursue academic goals with the least amount of conflict as possible. In order to minimize conflict it is important to match roommates as closely as possible by their likes and dislikes, their behavior and habits and their background. This study attempted to determine what factors and conditions the students in the Kansas State University Residence Hall System felt were important in relation to roommate compatibility.

To study the question of what factors and conditions were considered important by the students, two kinds of data were used. First, the findings of previous researchers were utilized in an effort to determine what factors and conditions were considered important by them. Secondly, a questionnaire was constructed and administered to a random sample of the residence hall population. This questionnaire asked for the opinion of the residents concerning sixteen factors that related to compatibility. These were factors that were of both a behavioral and background nature. A chi-square analysis was made of the comparisons between these sixteen factors and five other conditions on the questionnaire.

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2

Items of the analysis that showed to be significant at the .05 level or greater and also with large enough expectancy count levels were noted and discussed. Also trends from frequency count data were noted for interpretation. Data from the significant comparisons did substantiate some of the findings from previous research. The trends of the frequency count data offered the most results in way of current residents opinion.

From the overall analysis it was found that residents considered behavioral factors of a roommate to be much more important in relation to compatibility than background factors.