

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO LIVING GROUPS UNDER  
TWO CONDITIONS OF CURRICULAR CHOICE

by *22/4*

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## CHAPTER I

### BACKGROUND FOR THE STUDY

The Freudian point of view is that the guidelines of an individual's personality are laid down by the age of three. Even if this were true, the guidelines are not so structured as to disallow freedom to change personality. It has been shown numerous times that persons change throughout life, not only biologically but in attitudes, values, and orientation of thinking. Not only has change been shown to occur but experimentation has shown that this change can be influenced (2)(12)(23). Since change does occur and can be influenced, the residence halls can play a part in this change.

#### I. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY OF CHANGE IN RESIDENCE HALLS

Students live in residence halls. It is important to know if and how this experience is affecting the student. A factor which is influential in change is personal relationships. In a study done at Stanford and Berkeley by Katz (7), it was found that between one-third and one-half of the students looked back on four years of college and saw personal relationships as the most important contributor to change but only one-fifth to one-fourth saw course work and professors as important sources of change. An explanation of this might have been that more time was spent outside

class than in class and in studying.

One-third of the Kansas State University students lived in residence halls in 1968-69. The average amount of time spent in class by a student at Kansas State University in the fall of 1968 was 19.4 hours per week (26). For a great many students, time spent outside the classroom, approximately 148 hours per week, was spent in residence halls or in activities originating from within the halls.

Nearly all students have at one time lived in residence halls because of the requirement for all freshmen to live on campus. This seemed to indicate that the halls held an important role in determining what influenced the students. Officials of the university have given this matter consideration and have tried various methods to help make the residence hall experience profitable.

## II. INNOVATIONS IN HOUSING

In the past few years the housing administrators at Kansas State University have tried a number of innovative ideas in housing. They subscribe to the philosophy that the University's primary purpose is to teach students how to be beneficial and effective citizens of their community and nation and to lead satisfying lives. A. Thornton Edwards, Director of Housing, stated, "Although housing is outside the purely academic, it is an embellishment of the academic" (25). The administrators have tried to make

residence halls more attractive to the students. In 1964-65 two corridors in two halls housed students who scored high on ACT tests. This experiment led into the conception of the "honor dorm." In the spring of 1966 Kansas State University saw the first coed residence hall with ten women and 60 men staying in Waltheim Hall and by fall of 1969 two larger residence halls had been converted into coed halls. Up until 1966-67 some of the women's halls were separated by academic classification. Another innovation instituted the fall of 1967 was computer roommate pairing. The most recent innovation, in 1968-69, was the placing of students in corridors by academic major. Students submitting residence hall applications were given the option of choosing to live on these corridors. Since the residence hall played such a large role in the lives of so many students, it was necessary to determine what difference, if any, the groupings by academic major had upon the students.

### III. MEASUREMENT OF CHANGE

If changes do occur it is necessary to measure them. There are three ways to determine whether change has occurred and, if so, how much change has taken place. One method is to ask the subject if he has changed, in what ways, and how much. Another method is to have an observer watch behavior at some point, look at later behavior and decide if change has occurred, what type of change occurred and how much each subject changed with respect to the other subjects. The last

method is to administer a reliable and valid personality test and readminister the test after a specified time lapse to assess the amount of possible change.

This latter method, giving personality tests, has some advantages when doing research assessing change due to housing innovations. By an impartial test, subject and observer bias are taken away. Furthermore, the test scores from a standardized test can be used in statistical analysis. In such a test change can be operationally defined as the difference between the first and second administration.

#### IV. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to determine if a group of students living together on the same corridor and majoring in similar curricula would change significantly from another group of students living together on another corridor and undecided as to major.

#### V. HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis held by the researcher was that there would be a significant difference in change on various personality dimensions between the two groups.

#### VI. DESIGN OF THE INVESTIGATION

To determine personality changes between the decided and the undecided groups the Omnibus Personality Inventory (44) was administered to the two groups of freshmen women.

Some data was available through the Study of Student Development research since the women had taken the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI) the previous summer during pre-enrollment. This served as a pre-test. The post-test of the OPI was administered during the last week of classes to the subjects in the investigation. The pre-test and post-test scores of the OPI were considered in three ways--the comparison of means, the t-tests of independent samples, and the analysis of covariance. The .05 level of significance was used as a criterion in this study.

## VII. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The sample sizes in the research were very small. This caused a decrease in the validity and reliability of the data. The difficulty in getting significance was increased because of the small sample sizes.

The instrument used did not help in determining why a change took place. Possibly another instrument used in combination with the OPI or a totally different instrument could have done this. By using available data, the researcher was limited to the OPI.

Most previous research looking at change in college students took four years into consideration. Possibly a longer time span than the one year in this study would have shown more distinct changes.

## VIII. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Change. For the purposes of this study, change was operationally defined as the difference in scores between the first administration of the Omnibus Personality Inventory and the second administration.

Corridor. A corridor in a residence hall was a part of a floor which was physically separated from the other part or parts of the floor. These sections were treated as units and the students in each unit, because of proximity, seemed to see the corridor as a source of identity.

Personality. A definition which seems to be appropriate is as follows:

Personality is the entire mental organization of a human being at any stage of his development. It embraces every phase of human character: intellect, temperament, skill, morality, and every attitude that has been built up in the course of one's life. (21, p. 333)

"Every phase of human character" was not taken into consideration in this study. The research was limited to those phases measured by the Omnibus Personality Inventory.

Group A. Group A was 20 women freshmen who lived together and all had similar majors.

Group B. Group B was 16 women freshmen who lived together and were undecided as to major.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Interest was focused on three phases of the literature relating to change in college students. The review of literature included change in personality in general and change in personality due to the influence of the peer group and the living group. Finally, literature related to each individual scale found in the Omnibus Personality Inventory was presented.

#### I. CHANGEABILITY OF PERSONALITY

An important phrase in the definition of personality is "at any stage of his development." This clearly states that personality is not static. Allport stated this succinctly when he said, "Any theory that regards personality as stable, fixed, invariably is wrong" (2, p. 175).

Now that the changeability of personality has been discussed, the question is--what makes this change occur? The people surrounding individuals contribute to personality change. Peers, parents, faculty, and anyone who comes into contact with a student exerts pressure for change. This pressure was demonstrated by Allport when he discussed cultural influence and the national character. Allport found that ". . . steady pressure in the direction of cultural pattern must inevitably affect the course of the developing

personality" (2, p. 172). College and friend patterns can be subcultures of the overall cultural design. The friends of a student as well as the persons on the same corridor with that student must have a definite effect on the personality of that person.

The effect of the peer group may be large or small depending on the students' openness to change. The dimensions into which openness has been split was as follows: flexibility of cognitive style, awareness of self, venturesomeness, and openness of college goals and life objectives (12).

Webster, Trow, and McConnell (23) found that students who change during their freshman year generally scored higher on the social maturity, developmental status, impulse expression, thinking introversion, and complexity scale of the Omnibus Personality Inventory than those freshmen who indicated no change.

Selvin and Hagstrom (38), Finney (47), and Spohn (17) found that those students vocationally oriented to college were less affected by college than those who were interested in a general education.

## II. PEER AND LIVING GROUP INFLUENCE ON PERSONALITY

Coelho, Hamburg, and Murphey (28) stated that the peer group can reinforce values and keep students from changing. At the same time it has been found that the peer group can challenge old values, present new points of view, and support students who are in the process of changing (28).

Kelley (8) found that a person who is a member of a group can use that group as a reference for his attitudes, behaviors, and evaluations, including self-evaluations. If this were true, students in a group would change together.

The influence of the housing arrangements of a student is largely due to the peers living in the same group. Vreeland and Bidwell (40) studied the impacts of eight "houses" at Harvard College. They found that the different environments caused a difference in student change. The degree of change was attributed to the extent of peer involvement in each house.

Norman Miller (53) compared attitudes of Greeks with Independents. He found the least amount of difference in the freshmen and the largest difference between the seniors of the two groups. This indicated that the living group had an impact on these attitudes.

### III. INDIVIDUAL SCALES OF THE OMNIBUS PERSONALITY INVENTORY

A detailed listing of the definition of each scale, with descriptions of high scorers and low scorers on each scale is found in the appendix.

Intellectual orientation. In studies where intellectual scales were used, a great many but not all, results showed an increase in intellectual orientation during the college years (20)(39). Not all of these increases were statistically significant and in some studies no difference was

found. This would indicate that evidence is inconclusive. Generally speaking, however, seniors were more likely to enjoy reflective thinking, show more creativity, attend cultural events, and read unassigned books than freshmen (33).

Estheticism. Estheticism is one of the two values which showed consistent change on the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values (41). Without exception, seniors have been shown to be more interested in estheticism than freshmen. These results were statistically significant (9).

Complexity. In studies which have measured the need for orderliness and routine, the seniors had a lower need than the freshmen for planfulness and orderliness but a greater need than freshmen for change and flexibility. Only a trend was indicated as these studies did not show statistically significant results (22).

Autonomy. Seniors were shown to be more confident, more self-sufficient, and more independent than freshmen (510)(31). There are very few exceptions to these findings. Even though the studies showed definite directional trends, differences have not been large. Approximately half of the studies which reported levels of significance were shown to be statistically significant.

Religious values. Spranger (18) divided values into six types: theoretical, economic, esthetic, social, political, and religious. When using the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study

of Values (41), religious was one of the two values which consistently showed a strong change when comparing freshmen and seniors. The seniors regarded religious values to be of lower importance than freshmen. This difference was almost always shown to be significant.

Studies have indicated that seniors are less moralistic and more flexible than freshmen when it comes to attitudes toward moral norms (30)(32)(19). In addition the seniors were shown to be more consistent in their moral judgement.

In a study by Hall (49), it was found that there was no difference between freshmen and seniors in religious attitudes. However, when he subdivided his sample by academic major, he found significant differences between freshmen and seniors in specific majors.

The direction and degree of religious change has been shown to vary with the sample under investigation. Jacobson and Sharp (51) showed that Catholics decrease less on religious orientation scales than those students of other faiths.

Social extroversion. Studies have shown that seniors have less need than freshmen to be sociable, friendly, and to be nurturant to others. The most outstanding studies in this area which had statistical significance were done by Izard (31) and Harrington (50). Other studies are inconsistent as to whether seniors are less sociable (39)(33)(27). There is little evidence to support a theory that students become more sociable during their college years and the evidence to

the contrary is inconsistent (34)(29).

Impulse expression. In most studies of readiness to express impulses, juniors and seniors showed more spontaneity in expressing impulses than freshmen (37)(22)(9). The seniors have a greater tendency than freshmen to seek gratification in overt action. At the other end of the continuum, the freshmen seemed to have more self-control and restraint. Most of these studies have results which are statistically significant.

Personal integration. Studies showed no uniform direction of change of emotional maturity and stability. A little over half of the studies showed that seniors were more stable (34) and under half showed that freshmen were more stable and mature (33)(51). The difference seemed to depend upon which personality test was being used. The Omnibus Personality Inventory has consistently shown increased psychological well-being in seniors(9).

Anxiety level. There was no consistent evidence as to direction or degree of change in anxiety in college. Romine and Gehman (36) showed that seniors were less tense than freshmen, but their findings were not statistically significant. Pressey and Jones (35) found that in some samples seniors had less worries than freshmen and in other samples, seniors had more worries than freshmen. No levels of significance were stated.

Altruism. In the studies concerning conscientiousness and social responsibility, seniors scored significantly lower than freshmen (39)(33)(46). There were exceptions in which freshmen scored lower than seniors.

Practical outlook. Authoritarianism is one of the elements of practical outlook. Authoritarianism was divided into the following elements by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford: conventionalism, authoritarian submission, authoritarian aggression, anti-inception, superstition and stereotypy, power and "toughness", destructiveness and cynicism, projectivity, and sex (1, p. 228). Rokeach (13) made his own scale measuring authoritarianism so that "rightist" political views would not be weighted more heavily than general authoritarianism.

Almost all studies have shown seniors to be less authoritarian than freshmen. The differences between freshmen and seniors were relatively large and statistically significant in most cases (9)(20).

Masculinity-Femininity. Most masculinity-femininity scales have been used to measure the degree to which the student has attitudes, interests, and feelings which are similar to those attributes considered stereotypes of each sex in our society. Most studies have shown senior males to be somewhat less masculine than freshmen males in his attitudes, interests, and feelings (33)(52). The senior women tended to be less feminine than freshmen women (33).

These studies concerning masculinity-femininity are not entirely consistent (9)(51).

Response bias. The researcher found no evidence of experiments studying the change of response bias in college students.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODS AND MATERIALS

The residence hall chosen for the study, Goodnow Hall, had seventeen corridors of women students. Eight of these corridors were curriculum oriented in that the students who lived on each of these corridors were in the same or similar curricula. One corridor in the hall was occupied by students who had not yet declared their major and the eight remaining corridors were occupied by students in a variety of majors.

#### I. SAMPLE SELECTION

The sample was composed of thirty-six freshmen women. Of these, twenty students had decided upon their major and lived together on one corridor. The other sixteen students had not decided upon a major and lived together on another corridor. The specific corridors were chosen because they contained more freshmen than any other corridors of that type in the hall. The students who had decided upon their major had chosen either physical education, physical therapy, or medical technology.

The freshmen who had decided upon a major were treated as one sample and the freshmen who had not decided on a major were treated as the control group.

## II. VARIABLES AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The variables. The independent variable was the type of corridor on which the student lived. The dependent or criterion variable was the difference between scores of the pre-test and post-test on the Omnibus Personality Inventory. The Omnibus Personality Inventory, administered to all freshmen during pre-enrollment, was used as a pre-test. The Omnibus Personality Inventory was re-administered to the samples during the last week of classes in the spring semester.

The methods of analysis. The t-test for two independent samples and analysis of covariance were used to test the significance of difference in the two groups with respect to change on the criterion variable. The analysis of covariance was used in order to account for initial differences in the two groups. This procedure was repeated for each of the fourteen subtests on the Omnibus Personality Inventory. Raw scores were used in all analyses. The computer was used to analyze the data.

## III. VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The validity. The validity of the Omnibus Personality Inventory was determined by its authors by correlating the individual scales to other measures which have been accepted as measures of specific values or orientations.

These correlations were listed in the Omnibus Personality Inventory Manual (43, pp. 28-33). Some examples

showing medium correlation follow. Thinking introversion was correlated with the literary score on the Kuder Preference Record-Vocational (45) with a result of .52; complexity was correlated with the need for order on the Activities Index (44) with a result of  $-.45$ ; altruism was correlated with economics on the Study of Values (41) with a result of  $-.48$ ; altruism was correlated with the social scale of the Study of Values (41) with a result of .46.

Construct validity was shown by intercorrelating the scales (43, p. 50). These correlations ranged from .00 between altruism and complexity to  $-.76$  between practical outlook and autonomy.

The reliability. Three different approaches were used by the constructors of the Omnibus Personality Inventory to determine estimation of reliability (43, p. 49). Coefficients were derived for each subtest with the Kuder-Richardson Formula 21. Results ranged from .67 on the response bias subtest to .89 on the personal integration subtest. The split-half method was also used to determine reliability. The coefficients ranged from .65 on the response bias scale to .91 on the religious orientation scale. These two methods measured internal consistency.

The third method of obtaining estimates of reliability was the test-retest procedure. The tests were administered three to four weeks apart. The correlations on two samples ranged from .84 to .94.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The pre-test and post-test scores of the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI) were considered in three ways--the means on pre-test and post-test variables, t-tests for independent samples, and the analysis of covariance.

#### I. MEANS ON PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST VARIABLES

The means on the pre-test and post-test variables varied from scale to scale (Table I). On the intellectual disposition scales of the OPI (thinking introversion TI, theoretical orientation TO, estheticism Es, and complexity Co) both Group A and Group B decreased in TI, TO, and Co while one increased and one decreased in Es.

Both groups increased in RO and Au; however, Group A increased a great deal more in both Au and RO than Group B. RO is a negative scale; therefore, both groups became less religious in their attitudes.

On the social extroversion scale of the OPI, Group A decreased while Group B increased. Both Group A and Group B increased in impulse expression. On personal integration Group A increased and Group B decreased. The two groups moved toward each other in their means on personal integration. They started out over five raw score points apart in group

TABLE I  
MEANS ON PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST VARIABLES\*

OPI scales	Group A**		Group B***	
	pre-test	post-test	pre-test	post-test
Thinking Introversion	22.250	20.625	21.300	19.250
Theoretical Orientation	16.875	15.625	17.350	14.950
Estheticism	13.438	14.188	12.000	11.800
Complexity	14.313	14.063	15.350	14.850
Autonomy	21.500	24.750	22.100	22.900
Religious Orientation	9.250	11.563	9.050	9.150
Social Extroversion	23.813	23.000	25.000	25.400
Impulse Expression	28.063	29.875	28.200	28.450
Personal Integration	27.375	30.125	32.650	29.150
Anxiety Level	12.313	13.250	13.500	11.400
Altruism	21.875	21.500	23.200	22.700
Practical Outlook	15.563	15.938	16.500	16.650
Masculinity-Femininity	24.188	24.313	26.500	23.900
Response Bias	12.125	10.375	12.250	10.050

\*data used was in raw scores

\*\* Group A lived together and all had similar majors

\*\*\* Group B lived together and all were undecided as to major

mean and ended only one raw score point apart.

Both groups decreased in altruism. The decrease in each case was minor. Both groups decreased in response bias. On the other hand both groups increased in practical outlook to a very minor degree.

Group A increased in anxiety level while Group B decreased. This scale is a negative scale; therefore, Group A became less anxious whereas Group B became more anxious. On the masculinity-femininity scale Group A increased slightly and Group B decreased a little. Neither change was large.

## II. T-TEST FOR INDEPENDENT SAMPLES

Another method of analysis used was the t-test for independent samples (Table II). The means of the difference between pre-test and post-test scores of each individual for each variable were used. The mean of a variable was equal to the mean of [post-test score minus pre-test score]. The .05 level of significance was figured for the two-tailed t-test for independent samples.

There was a definite trend for the groups to differ in change on religious orientation. Both groups became less religious in their attitudes; however, Group A became much less religious than Group B.

On another scale, personal integration, there was a slight trend for the groups to change differently. Group A increased while Group B decreased. The groups started out

TABLE II

T-TEST FOR DIFFERENCES IN PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST  
MEANS WITHIN THE INDEPENDENT SAMPLES GROUP A AND GROUP B

OPI scales	t-statistic
Thinking Introversion	-0.685
Theoretical Orientation	0.876
Estheticism	-1.265
Complexity	-0.635
Autonomy	1.050
Religious Orientation	1.839
Social Extroversion	-0.283
Impulse Expression	-0.762
Personal Integration	-1.542
Anxiety Level	-1.108
Altruism	0.165
Practical Outlook	0.004
Masculinity-Femininity	-0.607
Response Bias	0.491

five raw score points apart and ended only one raw score point apart.

On other scales of the OPI--estheticism, autonomy, and anxiety level--there was a slight tendency for the groups to change differently from one another. In estheticism Group A increased while Group B decreased. In autonomy both groups increased; however, Group A increased more than Group B. In anxiety level Group A increased and Group B decreased; however, this is a negative scale. Group B was the group which became more anxious.

### III. ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

The third method of analyzing the data was by analysis of covariance (Table III). This method took into consideration the initial difference between the groups on each scale. There was a significant difference in change in religious orientation and anxiety level. Since this difference in change was significant to the .05 level, the hypothesis that there would be a significant difference in change on various personality dimensions between the two groups was upheld. On the religious orientation scale both groups increased; however, Group A increased more than Group B. This is a negative scale; therefore, the groups became less religious in their attitudes. On the anxiety level scale, Group A increased while Group B decreased. Anxiety level is another negative scale; therefore, Group B became more anxious while Group A became less anxious.

On several other scales of the OPI--estheticism, autonomy, and personal integration--the groups tended to change differently. In estheticism, Group A increased while Group B decreased. In autonomy, both groups increased; however, Group A increased more than Group B. In personal integration, Group A increased while Group B decreased.



TABLE III  
ANALYSIS OF COVARIANCE

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OPI scales	f-value
<hr/>	
Thinking Introversion	0.431
Theoretical Orientation	0.497
Estheticism	2.076
Complexity	0.009
Autonomy	2.343
Religious Orientation	5.373*
Social Extroversion	1.022
Impulse Expression	0.560
Personal Integration	2.855
Anxiety Level	5.311*
Altruism	0.090
Practical Outlook	0.000
Masculinity-Femininity	1.121
Response Bias	0.181

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\* These scores are significant beyond the 0.05 level.

## CHAPTER V

### INTERPRETATION

On the first four scales of the OPI [thinking introversion TI, theoretical orientation TO, estheticism Es, and complexity Co] often referred to as the intellectual disposition scales both groups decreased in TI, TO, and Co while one increased and one decreased on Es. Even though none of these changes were significant, some might consider it important that the groups changed in the same direction especially since these scales are considered a natural grouping. Since there are only three items out of 132 which overlap, the similarity of scoring direction cannot result from overlap of items. In the past, results have varied but an increase in intellectual orientation was indicated by several studies. This research has neither confirmed nor denied past research. It has, however, shown that the living group experiences of the two groups did not influence them in intellectual disposition so that they changed differently from one another.

The religious orientation (RO) and autonomy (Au) scales of the OPI have been positively correlated [.63 for women and .62 for men] (43, p.51). There is only one item which overlaps on these two scales. Both groups affirm this relationship. Both increased in RO and Au; however, Group A

increased a great deal more in both areas than Group B. This research supports past research showing that throughout their years in college, students become more autonomous and less religious. Looking at the t-test, the difference in amount of change for Groups A and B in RO was significant to the .10 level. Since the criterion adopted for testing the hypothesis involved a .05 level of significance this can only be accepted as a strong trend in the direction indicated. By allowing for differences in the initial makeup of each group, the analysis of covariance showed a significant difference in change of RO. The change in autonomy was not significant; however, a trend was evident. The reason Group A became less religious and more autonomous cannot be determined by the study. The influence of more scientific curricula than Group B might be a factor. The writer could not account for this significant change.

On the social extroversion scale of the OPI, Group A decreased while Group B increased. Neither change was significant. Research in the past has been inconsistent and this research does not help in determining how students change in regard to sociability.

Both groups increased in impulse expression. The past research indicated an increase throughout college in the tendency for students to seek gratification in overt action. This study supported past research in direction of change but was not significant.

On personal integration Group A increased and Group B decreased. The difference in these changes was significant to .20 level of significance when using the t-test. Since the criterion adopted for testing the hypothesis involved a .05 level of significance, this can only be accepted as a slight trend in the difference of change. It is interesting to note that the two groups moved toward each other in their means. They started out over five raw score points apart in group mean and ended only one raw score point apart. The research did not support findings that students, as they continue in school, become more stable. The results also did not negate that research.

Group A increased in anxiety level while Group B decreased. This scale is a negative scale; therefore, Group A became less anxious whereas Group B became more anxious. By taking into consideration the initial differences of the groups, the analysis of covariance shows a significant difference in comparing the two groups. In past research no consistency is shown as to direction of change in anxiety level. The reason as to why Group B became more anxious and Group A less anxious cannot be determined by the study. Group B may have become more anxious because of the necessity to make a decision about what curriculum to enter. Or possibly the students in Group B had made a decision but were not yet comfortable with their decision.

Both groups decreased in altruism. The decrease in each case was minor; however, the direction of change was consistent with research which showed that seniors scored lower in altruism than freshmen.

Both groups increased in practical outlook (PO) to a very minor degree. The direction of change was contrary to previous research which showed a decrease in PO throughout the college years. The change was not significant and the groups did not change significantly from one another.

On the masculinity-femininity scale Group A increased slightly and Group B decreased a little. Neither change was significant nor was the difference in change significant.

Both groups decreased in response bias. There has been no past research showing which direction students change. This research showed a trend in a decrease as students went through their freshman year.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

#### I. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine if a group of students living together on the same corridor majoring in similar curricula (20 freshmen women) would change significantly from another group of students (16 freshmen women) living together on another corridor and undecided as to major. The hypothesis was that there would be a significant difference in change between the two groups on various personality dimensions. The women had taken the OPI the previous summer during pre-enrollment. The researcher administered the OPI once more to the two groups of freshmen women during the last week of classes and compared the differences of the changes on the various scales.

Several recent studies in the area of personality change were reviewed. Change can occur and has been measured with personality tests. Peer groups and living groups have shown to be able to support the process of change or to reinforce values and keep them from changing. The personality traits measured by the Omnibus Personality Inventory have been researched and it has been shown that some traits change significantly throughout the college years.

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The hypothesis was upheld for some scales on the OPI in the investigation. The results showed a significant difference [.05 on analysis of covariance] in change between the two groups in religious orientation and anxiety level. The group with definite majors became less anxious while the undecided group became more anxious. The reason for this was unknown. Possibly the pressure from peers, family, and faculty pushing the undecided students to make a decision made them anxious. Possibly the students had made a choice, but not yet being enrolled in a curriculum, they were anxious about their futures. The groups both became less religious; however, the group with the definite major became much less religious. Why this happened was not determined. The influence of peers on the corridor may have been a factor. A more science related course load may have influenced them.

On personal integration the students who had not decided on a major decreased while the other group increased. The difference in change was not significant but a slight trend was seen. Past research showed an increase in stability throughout college. The present research neither supported nor negated past research, but showed a trend toward earlier integration among students who had decided on a curriculum.

Even though the reasons for the changes and the differences in change are not known, it is important



to know that the changes did occur. Those people working in residence halls must decide what changes in personality are desirable, then do what they can to promote these changes. The counseling staff must be trained to facilitate the occurrence of these changes.

## II. CONCLUSIONS

Past research together with this investigation has shown that change does occur in college. Whether the living group or the curriculum was the determining factor is unknown. Regardless of what caused the change, the counseling staff in the living group must realize that change can and does occur. The counseling staff should be trained in the areas of recognizing change, understanding change, and coping with change. Often people are not comfortable with the idea of change and an adjustment must be made.

If the living group atmosphere is a determinant of change, it will be necessary for those involved in staffing and programming in the residence hall to make a value judgement. "What direction and what degree of change is considered 'good'?" "What should be promoted and encouraged?" After these questions are answered, the "how to?" of affecting change must be considered.

Evaluation of change is ambiguous and subjective by nature. To illustrate value judgements and their use with OPI an example based on subjective judgements will be given.

High scores on thinking introversion, theoretical orientation, estheticism, complexity, autonomy, personal integration, anxiety level, and altruism may be considered "good." Religious orientation, practical outlook, masculinity-femininity, response bias, social extroversion and impulse expression are scales on which most scores are considered desirable. Extremes in most areas are not good. It is also highly acceptable that students engage in reflective thought and academic activities, have a positive attitude toward dealing with theoretical concerns, have an interest in artistic matters and activities, and have a tolerance of ambiguities and uncertainties. Students should be independent, tolerant of viewpoints of others, non-authoritarian; however, one student's autonomous behavior should not infringe on someone else's rights. Students should not feel socially alienated or emotionally disturbed. They shouldn't be tense and high strung. They should be trusting and ethical in relationships with others. Any programming, staffing, advising, counseling, etc. within a residence hall will be influenced by these biases.

Personal bias or evaluation on the part of administrators influences other areas besides residence halls. Parents influence children. Schools influence children. Even the atmosphere or expectations on the part of management at a place of employment influences workers. Those people in positions of authority need to realize what their biases are

and how they may be influencing others. Consideration of results on the OPI may aid administrators in helping students reach certain predetermined educational goals.

### III. IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In this study it was found that Groups A and B did change; in several ways they changed significantly from one another. One reason for change may have been the fact that one group had decided on a major and the other group were undecided. However, one cannot assume that this investigation proved that this was a factor in the changes observed. Why these different types of changes occurred could not be determined. The researcher suggests that further study be made by controlling some of the variables involved. By measuring the change made by students in the same major but who were not living together one could determine whether the curriculum had influence on change. By measuring the change made by students randomly selected but living together one could determine whether it is necessary for a group to have common educational interests or goals to change together.

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## APPENDIX

## DEFINITIONS OF THE FOURTEEN SCALES (43, pp. 4-5)

1. Thinking Introversion (TI)--43 items: Persons scoring high on this measure are characterized by a liking for reflective thought and academic activities. They express interests in a broad range of ideas found in a variety of areas, such as literature, art, and philosophy. Their thinking is less dominated by immediate conditions and situations, or by commonly accepted ideas, than that of thinking extroverts (low scorers). Most extroverts show a preference for overt action and tend to evaluate ideas on the basis of their practical, immediate application, or to entirely reject or avoid dealing with ideas and abstractions.

2. Theoretical Orientation (TO)--33 items: This scale measures an interest in, or orientation to, a more restricted range of ideas than is true of TI. High scorers indicate a preference for dealing with theoretical concerns and problems and for using the scientific method in thinking; many are also exhibiting an interest in science and in scientific activities. High scorers are generally logical, analytical, and critical in their approach to problems and situations.

3. Estheticism (Es)--24 items: High scorers endorse statements indicating diverse interests in artistic matters and activities and a high level of sensitivity and response to esthetic stimulation. The content of the statements in this scale extends beyond painting, sculpture, and music,

and includes interests in literature and dramatics.

4. Complexity (Co)--32 items: This measure reflects an experimental and flexible orientation rather than a fixed way of viewing and organizing phenomena. High scorers are tolerant of ambiguities and uncertainties; they are fond of novel situations and ideas. Most persons high on this dimension prefer to deal with complexity, as opposed to simplicity, and very high scorers are disposed to seek out and to enjoy diversity and ambiguity.

5. Autonomy (Au)--43 items: The characteristic measured by this scale is composed of liberal, non-authoritarian thinking and a need for independence. High scorers show a tendency to be independent of authority as traditionally imposed through social institutions. They oppose infringements on the rights of individuals and are tolerant of viewpoints other than their own; they tend to be realistic, intellectually and politically liberal, and much less judgmental than low scorers.

6. Religious Orientation (RO)--26 items: High scorers are skeptical of conventional religious beliefs and practices and tend to reject most of them, especially those that are orthodox or fundamentalistic in nature. Persons scoring around the mean are manifesting a moderate view of religious beliefs and practices; low scorers are manifesting a strong commitment to Judaic-Christian beliefs and tend to be conservative in general and frequently rejecting of other viewpoints. (The direction of scoring on this scale, with

religious orientation indicated by low scores, was based chiefly on the correlation between these items and the first four scales, which measure a general intellectual disposition.)\*

7. Social Extroversion (SE)--40 items: This measure reflects a preferred style of relating to people in a social context. High scorers display a strong interest in being with people, and they seek social activities and gain satisfaction from them. The social introvert (low scorer) tends to withdraw from social contacts and responsibilities.

8. Impulse Expression (IE)--59 items: This scale assesses a general readiness to express impulses and to seek gratification either in conscious thought or in overt action. High scorers have an active imagination, value sensual reactions and feelings; very high scorers have frequent feelings of rebellion and aggression.

9. Personal Integration (PI)--55 items: The high scorer admits to few attitudes and behaviors that characterize socially alienated or emotionally disturbed persons. Low scorers often intentionally avoid others and experience feelings of hostility and aggression along with feelings of isolation, loneliness, and rejection.

10. Anxiety Level (AL)--20 items: High scorers deny that they have feelings or symptoms of anxiety, and do

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\*When discussing scores on the RO and AL scales with others, the counselor should make sure that the meaning of high and low scores is clearly understood; i.e., a high score indicates less evidence of the trait while a low score indicates more of it.

not admit to being nervous or worried. Low scorers describe themselves as tense and high-strung. They may experience some difficulty in adjusting to their social environment, and they tend to have a poor opinion of themselves. (Note the direction of scoring on this scale: a high score indicates a low anxiety level, and vice versa.)\*\*

11. Altruism (Am)--36 items: The high scorer is an affiliative person and trusting and ethical in his relations with others. He has a strong concern for the feelings and welfare of people he meets. Low scorers tend not to consider the feelings and welfare of others and often view people from an impersonal, distant perspective.

12. Practical Outlook (PO)--30 items: The high scorer on this measure is interested in practical, applied activities and tends to value material possessions and concrete accomplishments. The criterion most often used to evaluate ideas and things is one of immediate utility. Authoritarianism, conservatism, and non-intellectual interests are very frequent personality components of persons scoring above the average.

13. Masculinity-Femininity (MF)--56 items: This scale assesses some of the differences in attitudes and interests between college men and women. High scorers (masculine) deny interests in esthetic matters, and they admit to few adjustment problems, feelings of anxiety, or personal

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\*\*See footnote \*, page 43.

inadequacies. They also tend to be somewhat less socially inclined than low scorers and more interested in scientific matters. Low scorers (feminine), besides having stronger esthetic and social inclinations, also admit to greater sensitivity and emotionality.

14. Response Bias (RB)--28 items: This measure, composed chiefly of items seemingly unrelated to the concept, represents an approach to assessing the student's test-taking attitude. High scorers are responding in a manner similar to a group of students who were explicitly asked to make a good impression by their responses to these items. Low scorers, on the contrary, may be trying to make a bad impression or are indicating a low state of well-being or feelings of depression.



A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO LIVING GROUPS UNDER  
TWO CONDITIONS OF CURRICULAR CHOICE

by

SHARLENE KAY MITCHELL

B. S., Kansas State University, 1968

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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

1971

## ABSTRACT

The present study is a comparison of change in various personality scales of the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI) during the freshman year between a group of students living together majoring in job-oriented curricula (20 women students) and another group of students living together who were undecided as to curricula (16 women students). All subjects resided in university residence halls. The OPI was administered to the freshmen during pre-enrollment and again during the last week of classes. The differences of pre-test and post-test scores were used as the dependent variable and the type of major of each group was used as the independent variable. The t-test and the analysis of covariance were used to determine the significance of difference of change between the two groups.

Using the t-test a tendency to change differently was seen in the autonomy, estheticism and anxiety level scales. On personal integration the students in undecided majors decreased whereas the group with decided majors increased; the difference was not significant, however, a slight trend was evident. By taking into consideration the initial makeup of each group, the analysis of covariance showed a difference in change in religious orientation and anxiety level with a level of significance which met the

criterion of the .05 level. Both groups decreased in religious attitudes; however, the students with a decided major decreased much more. The undecided group became more anxious and the decided group became less anxious.

The reasons the change of one group differed from the change of the other could not be determined by the study; however, the study does have implications for residence hall personnel. In staffing residence halls, the administrators must keep in mind that students vary when they come to school and they will change while they are in the halls. The staff should be able to recognize, understand, and cope with change. The programming in the halls should be aimed toward the different types of students. The key is flexibility.