

SATISFACTION LEVEL OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AS DEMONSTRATED BY THEIR
REACTIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

by

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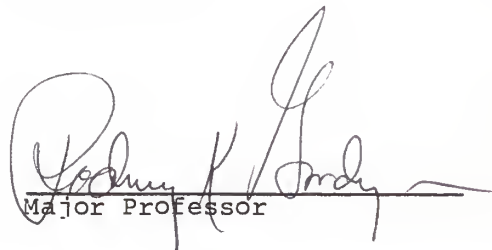
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INTRODUCTION

College environments can exert a potent influence on the extent and kind of change that occurs in college students. The more intensive, committed, cohesive, and socially integrated the college setting, the greater its impact on students. In order to evaluate this impact, however, the characteristics of these students must also be considered.

Because college attendance is selective, college students do not represent all youth in their age cohort. For example, two of the stronger determinants of college attendance are students' level of intelligence and socioeconomic background, both of which are positively correlated with college attendance (Feldman & Newcomb, 1969).

Those who attend are likely to self-select into a particular college based on their own assessments of the "fit" between themselves and the college. In studying a small sample of high school students as they were considering to what colleges to apply, Silber and Coelho (1961) found that the students considered attending a given college according to their perception of its image. This image was derived from a variety of sources, including college catalogs, school visits, friends, parents, and high school counselors. In using this information, potential college students attempted to match the image of the college with their own views, needs and aspirations.

This matching might occur by: obtaining input from someone who already attends that college; assessing the college in terms of new experiences they view themselves as requiring; and, considering what main interests and attitudes that college would be reinforcing.

From the time they enter college, students are affected by interpersonal conditions and other environmental pressures, demands, and opportunities. The students' environment may be viewed as a "press" that tends either to appease or to frustrate their needs in varying degrees. With regard to the college setting, "the environmental press is found in the characteristic pressures, stresses, and conformity-demanding influences of the college culture" (Pace, 1957).

In examining students' perceptions of the college environment, Witt and Handal (1984) found that environment accounted for the most variance when compared to personality and congruence of person to that environment. Of the environment variables, community accounted for the most variance with each measure of satisfaction except satisfaction and recognition. Environmental perceptions had the strongest relationship to each component of satisfaction, with personality and congruence of person significant but weaker in their relationships to satisfaction.

Research on college students' perceptions of the

environment is not new as it has been conducted for well over 30 years. However, the topic is particularly important now because of declining enrollment. If college environments could be improved, this may be a key to increasing enrollment numbers. This research proposal investigated students' perceptions of their college environment using the Students Reaction to College (SRC) test (ETS, Princeton, New Jersey, 1977).

Purpose of The Study

This study was concerned with the perception of undergraduate students' enrolled in Kansas State University's College of Education (COE) had of four aspects of their environment:

1. Processes of instruction and studying
2. Goals and plans of the student
3. Administrative regulations and problems in scheduling classes
4. Student activities and general problems of living--housing, finances, transportation, etc.

The purpose of the study was to explore where there would be differences by sex and/or age (24 or under vs. 25 or older) and/or by major (elementary education vs. secondary education) in subjects' perceptions of the environment. The research questions asked were:

- 1) Do females perceive college as a more satisfactory experience than males?

- 2) Does major field of study indicate greater satisfaction in elementary education majors as opposed to secondary education majors?

Significance of The Study

Student satisfaction or frustration concerning various aspects of environmental "press" Murray(1938) will be assessed. These findings may help faculty and administrators translate need into action.

Limitations

This study was limited in that it was conducted solely in one college on one campus. It was further limited in that it was conducted at sophomore, junior, and senior grade levels only.

Definition of Terms

Environment -- those elements in the university setting that affect the satisfaction, learning and personal growth of the students.

Satisfaction -- contentment or happiness with the total college experience.

Perception -- that which a person is conscious of.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter was to review theoretical and empirical literature relating to techniques of assessing college environments and addressing issues that influence college environments. The following topic areas were covered: early studies of college student environment; results of measuring instruments; conclusion of study results; students and faculty influence; incongruence: students' needs and environmental press; significant influences; developmental levels; student discontent; opposing data; perceptions of abilities and academic achievement; major field of study; and age and sex variables related to satisfaction.

Early Studies of College Student Environment

The systematic study of students emerged after World War I along with the student personnel movement (Davis, 1977). New emphasis on the development of the whole student--dorm life, class instruction, extra-curricular activities--led educators to begin a serious study of student life. Later, scholars undertook comprehensive studies of entire institutions to examine the effects of the college experience over a four-year period. Two studies in particular are usually regarded as classics: Theodore Newcomb's study of Bennington College (1943), and Nevitt Sanford's study of Vassar College (1956). New-

comb's study showed that certain sets of personality conditions were shown to be related to acceptance and to nonacceptance of the dominant attitudes in that community. The question now arises as to the degree to which the relationship between personality conditions and attitude change is a function of community in that condition. Significant change in social attitudes were shown between freshman and senior years in college. Freshman are more "conservative" and seniors less "conservative". Whatever the content of the term "conservative", those who show it least on any given campus tend to make higher scores on intelligence tests, or to make better scholastic records or both than those who show it most, Newcomb(1943).

The prevailing opinion has been that the personality is pretty well formed or set by age 18, and what happens after is an expression of dispositions that have been established earlier. Sanford's study was to dispute this theory. The freshman class of 1952 at Vassar College was studied over a four-year period with data to show that changes did exist for college students when influenced by environmental elements as peer groups, subject choice, and social aspects, Sanford(1956),

Results of Measuring Instruments

The first systematic instrument for measuring college environments, the College Characteristics Index (CCI) was a questionnaire developed by Pace and Stern, (1958). Based on the theory that individuals have certain needs and that

environment can be characterized by their press to meet, or not meet, those needs, it contains 300 items. Responses are scored on 30 10-item scales and scores are averaged to give 30 scores of environmental press for an institution.

Examples of the CCI are:

<u>Need-Press Scale</u>	<u>Scale Definition</u>	<u>Sample Items from CCI (True-False)</u>
Adaptibility-Defensiveness	Acceptance of criticism vs. resistance to suggestion	Students quickly learn what is done and not done on this campus. Student organizations are closely supervised to guard against mistakes.

Later Pace(1963) shortened, simplified, and factored this instrument into five scales. The scales are practicality, community, scholarship, awareness, and propriety. Scoring is accomplished by noting items about which 2/3 of the test-takers at a particular college agree. Student's responses are clearly influenced by their location in the environment and also their own attitudes, values, and personality characteristics. This revision became the College and University Environment Scales (CUES).

Examples of CUES are as follows:

<u>Scale</u>	<u>Scale Definition</u>	<u>Sample Items(T-F)</u>
Propriety	Polite and considerate environment; caution and thoughtfulness are evident; group standards of decorum are important; there is an absence of demonstrative, assertive, rebellious, risk-taking, inconsiderate, convention-flouting behavior.	Students rarely get drunk & disorderly. Most students have a great deal of caution & self-control in their behavior. Students are conscientious about taking good care of school property.

Another instrument to study college environments, the Environment Assessment Technique (EAT), was developed by Astin and Holland (1961). It is based on six environmental dimensions: realistic, intellectual, social, conventional, enterprising, and artistic.

A more comprehensive study of college environments in terms of scope of variables and numbers of institutions was combined in a study report "Who Goes Where To College?" Astin (1965). Astin combined EAT with several dimensions of achievement of entering students which he called freshman input factors. Data were gathered on 127,212 students in 248 colleges and universities, and the result was a helpful guide to empirically measured differences in campus climates which include classroom experiences, social activities, dorm life, peer-group influences, and other related campus environmental characteristics.

Witt and Handel (1984) in a study at St Louis University, used the CUES, the Personality Research Form (PRF) Form E (Jackson, 1967), a 352-item personality questionnaire assessing 20 personal needs and a third instrument called College Student Satisfaction Questionnaire (CSSQ; Betz, 1970). CSSQ is a 5 factor scale of working conditions; compensation, quality of education, social life and recognition. It is a 70-item scale reporting student satisfaction on the preceding 5 scales.

Conclusion of Study Results

Results of studies based on these instruments suggest that what happens to students' in college depends, to some extent, on their perceptions of the college environment. A student's perception of the features and characteristics of the total college environment seems to be affected by his or her particular "fit" in that environment with university life (Feldman, 1969).

Students and Faculty Influence

Feldman (1969) stated that faculty (either specific teachers, faculty in general, or as judged by courses and course work) are seen by individual students to be of more influence than fellow students on intellectual development and occupation/career decisions. An element of the relationship between faculty & students is the particular balance in the faculty itself of "local" or cosmopolitan orientation. Clark and Trow (1966) state:

Faculty members; interests vary from singleness of purpose in shaping the undergraduate student to a complex of interests in which the student plays a very small part. At one extreme there is the teacher who deeply involves himself in the lives of students, seeing them frequently and informally in diverse situations and being on call at any hour for advice and support. Here faculty interests

encourage an interpenetration of faculty and student cultures. . .

At the other extreme is the professor who teaches as little as possible and then is off to interests that separate him from students, often but not always the pursuit of research and scholarly writing. . .

Colleges may be viewed as socializing organizations in which students, in varying degrees, come to accept normative attitudes and values by interacting with each other and with the faculty. Individual students are influenced by the total body of their campus peers as well as by various subgrouping. Data collected in the early and middle years of the 1960's showed that students were, on the average, moderately satisfied with their colleges. Although they typically did not report a large amount of faculty contact outside the classroom, nor necessarily wanted it, teachers did affect them. Students reported that teachers influenced their intellectual development and career decisions and students' peers influenced their personal and social arena (Feldman and Newcomb, 1969).

Incongruence: Students' Needs and Environmental Press

Feldman (1969) suggested that the more incongruence between a student's needs and the overall environment of his or her college, the more likely that student would be to withdraw from the college. Those who remained in college were those whose experiences within the environment has not been perceived as too threatening. From

this point of view, Feldman(1969) suggested that a college's objectives might include that of inculcating a tolerance, or even a desire, for those person/environment discrepancies that could stimulate change and growth.

Significant Influence

A decade ago, Appel, Berry, & Hoffman(1973) asked students at the University of Texas at Austin what factors they perceived as having the most influence on their lives during college. Positive influences students mentioned most frequently were peers, instructors, and organizations. Aversive influences most frequently mentioned were classes, administrative structure and climate, and organizations. Students' hostile reactions were directed towards certain factors in the classroom situations, such as grades, tests, and class size, but not against the instructor. The authors concluded that the influence of peers was highly significant. Also, faculty was a major source of influence. The extent of this influence was apparently a direct function of the degree of social distance or involvement a student had with a faculty member. Day-to-day, one-to-one relationships that students had with other persons on campus carry a major portion of the influence on their thinking and behavior.

Davis(1977) stated that as resources become scarce and pressures mount for educational institutions to

become more accountable, the controversy over the structure of undergraduate experience will become one of the important debates in higher education. How issues are resolved on academic levels may well depend on what we know about what actually happens when students go to college.

Developmental Levels

It is important to recognize that students arrive on campus with a variety of developmental levels, such that no two students have the same environmental requirements (Chickering, 1969). For example, students begin achieving competence through intellectual, personal, and social areas. Moving to another level, students develop the ability to manage their emotions. Their first task being to become aware of their feelings and trust those feelings. Students then show the ability to carry on activities and to cope with problems without seeking help. They are becoming autonomous.

The next level of Chickering's (1969) student developmental model, is to establish identity. This is done by discovering with what kinds of experience and at what levels of intensity and frequency, we function in satisfying, safe or self-destructive fashion. How students perceive their campus environment will be a major influence on the degree to which they progress developmentally.

Student Discontent

University student satisfaction was researched by Schmidt and Sedlacek, (1972) at the University of Maryland. This research was undertaken to obtain reasons for students' discontent. One important aspect of their disaffection, especially in larger university settings, was the feeling of isolation or lack of identity with the institution as a whole. Perceptions and attitudes towards faculty & administration may be quite stereotyped and responsive to individual feelings for the individual student has minimal contact with faculty and administration.

Schmidt and Sedlacek(1972) found a low degree of anticipated dissatisfaction on the part of new students compared to a relatively high level of dissatisfaction on the part of previously enrolled students. Results were consistent with those of Feldman and Newcomb(1969). Schmidt and Sedlacek(1972) also cited Pervin(1967) and Richardson(1969) in that the better "fit" between an individual and the college environment, the more content the student will be.

Opposing Data

Hallenbeck(1978) conducted research on college student satisfaction in order to refine university goals and objectives and to improve the campus environment. This research was based on the assumption that parallels

exist with the research on employee satisfaction, work adjustment, and productivity (Betz, Klingensmith, and Menne, 1970). Using this analogy, five subscales on the CSSQ test (working conditions, compensation, quality of education, social life, and recognition) were used as dependent measures. The data show that older students were more satisfied than younger students and that nontraditional students were more satisfied than the traditional students. Hallenbeck (1978) concluded that satisfaction with campus programs and services may need to be examined as a function of two factors: the number of faculty contacts outside the classroom and/or number of contacts with one's faculty advisor. Data also show that differences in GPA were not found when students were grouped by sex, ACT scores, or level of participation in university registered organizations, parents' educational background and ethnic background. This research has opposing results to the Betz et al (1970) study.

Perceptions of Abilities and Academic Achievement

Davis (1977) stated that college attendance depends on how the student perceives his or her own abilities and what is expected. He quotes Herriott's (1965) three hypothesis about levels of educational aspiration: The higher the level of self-assessment relative to others, the higher the level of educational aspirations; the

higher the level of expectation perceived from significant others, the higher the level of educational aspirations; the more the expectation from a significant other is valued, the stronger the association between expectations and aspirations.

Student ability is by far the most important known determinant of academic performance. Students of higher ability get better grades in college than do students of lower ability Davis(1977). There are, of course, many reasons why students drop out of college. Davis(1977) related one study done in the 1960's indicating that attrition seems to be associated with lack of secondary-school preparation, low scholastic aptitude, and poor academic performance at college.

A study done by Nelson, Scott, and Bryan(1984) at the University of North Dakota examined predictors of freshman year persistence. The authors hypothesized that once students were in college, early academic integration was reflected by satisfaction with academic performance to date. Data show however, that two subgroups with a GPA over 2.00 were only moderately satisfied with their performance.

Major Field of Study

Different academic fields teach students not only different content, but different cognitive skills. Natural science majors tend to solve problems by looking

for facts; and humanities majors tend to solve problems by trying to categorize all new information(Chase, 1980). Hecklinger(1972) compared satisfaction scores of male and female college students who had chosen a major with those who had not. Lower satisfaction scores were recorded for those students who had not decided on a major; women were more satisfied with their majors than were men. Hecklinger(1972) said that one might expect higher satisfaction scores among women with chosen majors at an institution where education programs predominate. Hecklinger's(1972) study was done at an institution that was predominately education oriented. Findings also indicated that a lower satisfaction score for undecided students in all areas was predominate as opposed to students who had a chosen major.

Age and Sex Variables Related to Satisfaction

Anolik(1980), compared male and female relationships between self-concept and college satisfaction among younger and older students, ages 18-22 & 30-53 respectively. Results show that older students compared to younger students were more satisfied with their academic performance. Within-group sex differences showed that younger females were more satisfied with college than the younger males while older females expressed less self-confidence than older males.

Results of a study done at Iowa State University by Sturtz(1971) based on the CSSQ Survey(Betz, Klingensmith, & Menne, 1970) using 110 adult women ages 25 and older with 123 women under 25, showed that older women were more satisfied with college. Sturtz(1971) suggested that from these findings each age group may have different needs or expectations related to overall student satisfaction.

The literature review show that according to Hecklinger's(1972) research, females were more satisfied than males with their major field of study. Hallenbeck (1978) reported older students were more satisfied than younger students. Sturtz(1971) reported that older females were more satisfied with college than younger females. Data from Anolik(1980) show older students were more satisfied than younger students. Anolik(1980) data show younger females more satisfied in comparison to younger males, but older males had more self confidence. Using this related research, this study investigate and analyses the measure of environment as perceived by college students as to their frequency of satisfaction according to age, major field of study, and sex.

METHODOLOGY

The major purpose of this research study was to measure college student satisfaction with their environment as it relates to age level, major field of study, and sex.

Subjects

Subjects for this study were KSU students enrolled in Educational Psychology II during fall semester 1985. Ninety-one students agreed to participate and took a questionnaire. Of those, 53 (58%; 44 females, 9 males) returned completed materials.

Materials and Instrumentation

All students used the Educational Testing Service survey, Student Reactions to College (SRC; 1978). The manual stated that almost all students should be able to complete the SRC in 45 minutes. The SRC was a 150-item questionnaire with space for an additional 20 questions that the individual investigator could develop. Some items of the survey employ a Likert scale, others require a statement of frequency in occurrence of the experience. The survey asked students their opinions about four major content areas which are sub-divided into 19 categories which report a sub-test score on a range from 5 to 18. They are as follows:

1. Processes of instruction and studying

Quality of instruction	18 items
Form of instruction	8 items
Academic performance	9 items
Grading	10 items
Instructor accessibility	6 items
Involvement with faculty	8 items
Counseling and advising	8 items
Programming	13 items

2. Goals and plans of the students

Student-centered instruction	9 items
Planning	11 items
Studying	13 items

3. Administrative regulations and problems
in scheduling classes

Registration and scheduling	11 items
Library and bookstore	5 items
Rules and regulations	8 items
Administrative procedures	7 items

4. Student activities and general problems
of living--housing, finances, transportation, etc.

Campus climate	7 items
Organized student activities	8 items
Help with living problems	8 items
Financial and related problems	9 items

The SRC was developed and field tested with interviews from 162 students, 60 faculty members and 45 administrators in diverse groups of 18 two-year colleges scattered across the country. Comparative data was obtained from the administrations of the SRC to 12,133 students at 59 four-year colleges and universities between July 1979 and December 1983. The final survey as used is as indicated above.

In technical reports of the SRC, no reliability or validity data were reported.

Procedures

In mid-October 1985 the investigator attended all sections of Educational Psychology II and requested students in attendance to participate in this study. Forty-four females and nine males volunteered. Each survey was numbered and no names were placed on the survey for reason of anonymity of subjects. The groups were informed that no individual scores would be analyzed, only group data. As an added incentive for participation, two survey numbers were drawn from each section of the course. The students having those numbers would receive a free meal at Wendy's. However, no students availed themselves of the free meal incentive.

Research Design and Analysis

The research questions were examined in two analyses

each using multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) with scores on the SRC 19 scales as the dependent measures. The first analysis was a 2 X 2 factorial MANOVA in which the independent variables were major(elementary vs. secondary) X age(older vs. younger students). Following the SRC manual, note that, "older" was operationally defined here as 25 years old or older and "younger" was operationally defined as 24 years old or less. The second analysis, a one-way MANOVA, examined only the single independent variable of sex(male vs. female).

RESULTS

In this chapter the results and statistical analyses of the data from the research project are summarized. Each of the two MANOVA's and their subsequent analyses will be addressed in turn.

In the 2(age: 24 and below vs. 25 and above) X 2(major: elementary vs. secondary education) MANOVA, no significant differences were found for the interaction effect (approximate $F = .87$, $p < .62$) or for the main effects of age (approximate $F = 1.61$, $p < .12$) or major (approximate $F = .62$, $p < .86$). For this reason, none of the subsequent univariate analyses of variance were interpreted. Nevertheless, means and standard deviations are summarized by group in Table 1.

For the variable of sex, the MANOVA revealed an approximate F (Wilks criterion) 1.85, $p < .059$. Because this approached significance, it was decided to consider each of the univariate analyses. These are summarized in Table 2, along with relevant means and standard deviations. Employing a .05 alpha level, only two analyses revealed significant between-group differences, those for Programming and Organized Student Activities. For Programming, males scored higher (31.11 vs. 27.66 for M); for Organized Student Activities, females scored higher (M of 23.16 vs. 21.45).

TABLE 1

Summary Statistics by Major and Age for Each SRC Scale

<u>Scales</u>	<u>ELEMENTARY</u>						<u>SECONDARY</u>					
	<u>Younger</u>			<u>Older</u>			<u>Younger</u>			<u>Older</u>		
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>(N)</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>(N)</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>(N)</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>(N)</u>
QI	39.59	2.40	(17)	40.14	5.76	(7)	40.96	5.76	(26)	42.00	7.21	(3)
FI	22.59	2.58	(17)	21.43	2.51	(7)	22.00	2.98	(26)	19.67	.58	(3)
SCI	26.53	4.36	(17)	25.14	2.91	(7)	26.62	3.46	(26)	25.33	5.51	(3)
AC	22.76	2.68	(17)	22.43	2.07	(7)	22.27	2.36	(26)	21.67	1.15	(3)
G	30.94	2.84	(17)	27.29	3.35	(7)	29.31	4.45	(26)	27.33	2.08	(3)
S	31.47	4.42	(17)	29.71	9.16	(7)	31.92	5.25	(26)	28.33	6.43	(3)
IA	13.53	1.94	(17)	14.57	1.13	(7)	14.04	1.71	(26)	14.00	.00	(3)
FAC	14.35	3.55	(17)	14.43	2.07	(7)	15.08	2.77	(26)	16.67	3.06	(3)
CA	20.35	2.29	(17)	19.14	2.61	(7)	19.35	2.56	(26)	19.00	2.00	(3)
PL	31.47	3.95	(17)	30.43	3.64	(7)	32.12	3.81	(26)	32.33	3.51	(3)
PR	27.88	4.85	(17)	27.29	3.04	(7)	28.62	4.78	(26)	29.33	4.73	(3)
RS	25.53	4.00	(17)	25.58	4.28	(7)	25.35	3.59	(26)	27.00	5.20	(3)
LB	14.59	2.00	(17)	13.86	1.34	(7)	14.73	2.34	(26)	15.00	1.73	(3)
RR	22.71	3.96	(17)	23.14	1.68	(7)	22.50	2.64	(26)	19.67	2.08	(3)
AD	13.58	3.57	(17)	11.29	2.43	(7)	13.19	2.65	(26)	17.34	4.51	(3)
CC	20.76	2.56	(17)	20.29	3.20	(7)	20.38	2.30	(26)	17.67	1.53	(3)
OSA	23.29	2.05	(17)	23.00	2.83	(7)	22.58	1.58	(26)	22.67	3.21	(3)
HLP	22.65	2.60	(17)	24.43	3.69	(7)	22.46	3.66	(26)	21.67	3.06	(3)
FRP	17.88	3.35	(17)	23.29	5.02	(7)	17.54	2.87	(26)	23.00	3.61	(3)

NOTE: QI = Quality of Instruction; FI = Form of Instruction; SCI = Student-Centered Instruction; AC = Academic Performance; G = Grading; S = Studying; IA = Instructor Accessibility; FAC = Involvement with Faculty; CA = Counseling and Advising; PL = Planning; PR = Programming; RS = Registration and Scheduling; LB = Library/Bookstore; RR = Rules and Regulations; AD = Administrative Procedures; CC = Campus Climate; OSA = Organized Student Activities; HLP = Help with Living Problems; FRP = Financial and Related Problems.

TABLE 2

Summary Statistics for Univariate Analyses of Variance for Variable of Sex

Scale	<u>MALE</u>			<u>FEMALE</u>			<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>(N)</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>(N)</u>		
QI	42.78	7.95	(9)	40.00	3.47	(44)	2.87	.10
FI	20.56	3.61	(9)	22.27	2.48	(44)	3.05	.09
SCI	25.89	4.81	(9)	26.41	3.56	(44)	.14	.71
AC	21.45	1.74	(9)	22.61	2.42	(44)	1.88	.18
G	28.22	3.46	(9)	29.70	3.96	(44)	1.09	.30
S	32.78	6.48	(9)	30.98	5.46	(44)	.76	.39
IA	14.23	1.64	(9)	13.89	1.70	(44)	.29	.59
FAC	16.56	2.55	(9)	14.50	2.94	(44)	3.80	.06
CA	20.33	2.29	(9)	19.48	2.47	(44)	.92	.34
PL	32.89	3.79	(9)	31.45	3.75	(44)	1.09	.30
PR	31.11	5.16	(9)	27.66	4.21	(44)	4.66	.04
RS	27.00	3.50	(9)	25.23	3.82	(44)	1.65	.21
LB	14.78	2.39	(9)	14.55	2.03	(44)	.09	.76
RR	22.67	2.45	(9)	22.45	3.17	(44)	.04	.85
AD	14.33	2.35	(9)	13.09	3.34	(44)	1.12	.29
CC	20.00	2.69	(9)	20.41	2.50	(44)	.20	.66
OSA	21.45	2.01	(9)	23.16	1.87	(44)	6.15	.02
HLP	22.00	3.35	(9)	22.87	3.31	(44)	.53	.47
FRP	20.33	4.42	(9)	18.39	3.82	(44)	1.84	.18

NOTE: QI = Quality of Instruction; FI = Form of Instruction; SCI = Student-Centered Instruction; AC = Academic Performance; G = Grading; S = Studying; IA = Instructor Accessibility; FAC = Involvement with Faculty; CA = Counseling and Advising; PL = Planning; PR = Programming; RS = Registration and Scheduling; LB = Library/Bookstore; RR = Rules and Regulations; AD = Administrative Procedures; CC = Campus Climate; OSA = Organized Student Activities; HLP = Help with Living Problems; FRP = Financial and Related Problems.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study evaluated KSU College of Education students' perception of their college environment using the Students Reaction to College (SRC) survey. Subjects were 53 student volunteers (9 male; 44 female) enrolled in Educational Psychology II during fall semester 1985.

Subjects were given the SRC a 150-item questionnaire which yields scores on 19 subscales assessing dimensions of academic life related to students' satisfaction. The scales are: quality of instruction; form of instruction; student-centered instruction; academic performance; grading; studying; instructor accessibility; involvement with faculty; counseling and advising; planning; programming; registration and scheduling; library/bookstore; rules and regulations; administrative procedures; campus climate; organized student activities; help with living problems; financial and related problems.

No significant differences were found in students' degree of satisfaction when comparisons were made of students by major (elementary vs. secondary), by age (24 or less vs 25 or more) and major and age in combination. However, when between-group differences were tested for the independent variable of sex alone, statistical significance was found for the two scales of Programming

and Organized Student Activities. For Programming, males scored higher (\underline{M} = 31.11 vs. 27.66); Organized Student Activities found females scored higher (\underline{M} = 23.16 vs. 21.45). Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction.

Discussion

It may be concluded from these results that COE students are generally homogenous by choice of major and age relationships in their perceptions of their college environment.

That students differentially perceive their campus environment as a function of sex, age, and/or major was supported in this study by only two comparisons, both related to students' sex. Males perceived meeting with faculty advisors or counselors a more successful experience than did females. Males also perceived that the information they obtained from counselors or college staff members to be more correct. Also, males perceived their programmed required courses in their major field of study prevented them from taking other courses they would have chosen.

To a greater extent than males, females perceived (as indicated on the Organized Student Activities subscale), that organized social activities could be minimized; non-curricular activities were not as important, and eliminating registration fees for extra curricular activities would be more satisfactory for females. Sample size may

have been a significant factor in the assessment, but perhaps it may be a possibility that females perceive the college environment as more of an academic experience relative to social activities receiving less impetus.

Of other factors which may have contributed to these results, the extremely small sample size may have been the most significant. For example, the small results is a very conservative test of the research hypotheses. If sample size were increased the survey results may approach a significant difference.

The investigator's relative inexperience in research may be another factor that confounded the study. It would seem safe to assume that an investigator with little or no research experience differs in a variety of ways from one with vast research experience. For example, in the middle of explaining the survey procedure to students in one participating section, the instructor interrupted the investigator and said, -- "Now tell them how much time it will take." When the investigator responded that it would take 30-45 minutes, she perceived many potential volunteers to withdraw. Circumstance such as this may well have had an impact not only upon the voluntary participation of the students, but may even have influenced responses. Unfortunately, in this study investigator effects could not be assessed.

In considering these results, the possibility should

be entertained that the instrument used in this study may have been insufficiently sensitive to identifying between-group differences. According to Tracey & Sherry (1984) a key problem in conducting person-environment fit research is in defining and assessing person and environment using comparable constructs and instruments. That the manual for the instrument reported no reliability or validity data certainly leaves this a reasonable question.

The survey manual indicated only that reliability is assured through the aggregation of the responses of many students. It further stated that "the information conveyed by virtue of the relationships among items and through the joint consideration of several items, whether related statistically or not, can be examined directly through attention to clusters or groups of items formed in any way that seems useful". (p.19 SRC Manual)

Conclusion

In this study hypotheses II was not supported. The major course of study (elementary vs. secondary X age "24 or less vs. 25 or more:) was not shown to make a difference in environmental perceptions as to the satisfaction of the college student.

For the variable of sex, only two statistically significant between-group differences were revealed, the subscales of Programming and of Organized Student

Activities. Results of the survey may provide COE faculty and administrators with information that homogeneity is a strong possibility of perceived satisfaction among students in the college. Satisfaction between-group differences in sex shows females are less satisfied with faculty advisors related to contacts, and males prefer more socially related activities.

Implication for Furthur Research

Assessing the results of the present investigation in light of the limitations of the study(e.g., small and unequal sample sizes, inexperience of investigator, and possible weaknesses in the instrument) suggests that a fair test of the research hypotheses was not given. It would appear, therefore, that a replication or a similarly designed research project that addresses in its design these weaknesses is needed. Whether or not it would make any contribution to theory a study of this sort has the strong potential to benefit students and strengthen programs.

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SATISFACTION LEVEL OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AS DEMONSTRATED BY THEIR
REACTIONS TO THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

by

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ABSTRACT

Students are affected by interpersonal conditions and environmental pressures from the time they enter college. The impact of a college on students depends in part on the extent to which its environment is perceived as committed, cohesive and socially integrated. In this study, students from Educational Psychology II courses (44 females and 9 males) participated in a survey from the Educational Testing Service, Student Reactions to College (SRC; 1978). It is a 150-item questionnaire concerned with students' perceptions of the environment. Dependent measures were the SRC 19 subscales. The first analysis was a 2 X 2 factorial MANOVA in which the independent variables were major (elementary vs. secondary) X age (older vs. younger students). No significant interactions were found. The second analysis, a one-way MANOVA, examined only the single independent variable of sex (male vs. female). This variable revealed significant between-group differences in the subscales of Programming and Organized Student Activities. Males scored higher in Programming while females scores higher in Organized Student Activities. Higher scores indicate greater satisfaction.