AN ADAPTATION OF THE IN-BASKET TECHNIQUE FOR USE IN A SIMULATED MANAGERIAL SITUATION

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ABSTRACT

AN ADAPTATION OF THE IN-BASKET TECHNIQUE FOR USE IN A SIMULATED MANAGERIAL SITUATION

by Mary E. Thompson

The purpose of this exploratory study was to work out a system for classifying home managers as to their approach to problem recognition. The study also attempted to test the usefulness of a simulation technique known as the In-Basket test in determining the approach home managers took in this first phase of the decision-making process.

The In-Basket test had three elements: the first was the simulated situation; the second element was the taped and written records of the subjects' responses to the situation and the last element was the data obtained from the Reason for Action forms.

The test group consisted of ten female university students who had taken the home management theory course the previous term and who were not home economics education majors. Fifteen names were obtained from the class list for the course. Ten of these students were available for interviewing.

Data were collected from the students in personal interviews in the home management house. The situation was

briefly explained to each student. She was seated at the manager's desk and told to begin. The interviews were tape recorded as well as recorded on observation forms. The subjects time limit was two hours but she was to tell the researcher when she felt she was finished. Then she was asked to complete a Reason for Action form.

The observation forms were scored for four variables- time, problem sensitivity, materials attended and information sources. Three interview ratios were derived from these scores for each subject. A general score used to classify each subject could then be computed by adding together their scores for time, problem sensitivity and two of the interview ratios.

The subjects were expected to fall along a continuum rather than fall into groups or categories. This continuum varied from an approach termed didactic to an approach termed dialectical. The general scores for the subjects varied from a low of 25 to a high of 116. The greater the length of time spent working on the in-basket did not indicate that a larger number of embedded problems were recognized. There was a great difference among the subjects not only in the number of problems recognized but in the type of problems recognized. The seven problem categories used to sort the problems sensed were: food, entertainment, schedules, relationships, division of labor, money and

rules. The ability of the subjects to see the interrelationships and interdependency of these problems on one another varied from a total lack of recognition of the problem's existence to foresight as to problems for the future as well as problems at the moment.

Although generalizations could not be made, some indication of what can be expected to be found in the use of a simulation technique were given. The study identified the types of problems the students recognized and compared the differences in the problem recognition style of home managers and the problem recognition style of teachers.

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Home management as a practical science and art considers decision-making one of its basic concepts. One of the jobs of a home economist is to help home managers solve their problems by providing information that will help them see their decisions more clearly. But before a problem can be solved, it must be identified or recognized as such.

The home economist makes an attempt to help the home manager "manage well."[1] As a professional, one of the reasons she is expected to be especially equipped to do this is her more advanced knowledge and skill about the structure of the home situation, particularly about the interrelatedness and interdependency of the decisions the manager must make.

But before a manager can control her situation, she must be able to recognize her problems or the opportunities for making choices. Then, she can attempt to solve them by carrying through to action a decision or a series of decisions.

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[1]Rhoda Kotzin, "Remarks on the Appropriateness and Adequacy of a Conceptual Framework to a Discipline with Special Reference to Home Management." Proceedings of Conference on Conceptual Frameworks: Process(es) of Home Management, Department of Home Management and Child Development, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 1964, p. 11.

According to Gross and Crandall, "The five steps involved in making a decision are: (1) defining the problem to be decided; (2) seeking alternative solutions; (3) thinking through alternatives; (4) selecting an alternative; and (5) accepting responsibility for the decision."[1] In this particular study the focus is on the first phase because a clear perception of problems in the home seems basic to managing well.

As Gross and Crandall state, "It is surprising though not uncommon to find a group making decisions without each member being clear as to exactly what is being decided.... The ensuing steps in the making of a decision cannot be satisfactorily taken unless this first hurdle (defining the problem) is overcome."[2] In a recent article Deacon and Maloch state, "Families with different value structures may interpret the pertinence of the same events quite differently. The point at which events are actually strong enough to become demands or require action is a needed topic for research."[3] The research attempted so far on problem recognition is scarce and those studies available come from many fields.

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[1]Irma H. Gross and Elizabeth Walbert Crandall, Management for Modern Families (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1963), p. 65.

[2]Ibid., p. 66.

[3]Ruth Deacon and Francille Maloch, "Proposed Framework for Home Management," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 58 (January, 1966), p. 31.

Prominent researchers in many fields have only recently begun to realize how important a clearer understanding of cognitive processes involved in decision-making could be to their work.

Halliday[1] examined the relationship between extent of rationality and the context of family living in which the decision is made. The findings from this study suggested that degree of rationality did not correspond to the context in which the decision is made. What did seem related was the importance of the decision as viewed by the subjects. One of the implications of this study for home management clearly seems to be that the interrelatedness and interdependency of problems needs to be made more explicit and not be treated in an isolated way if there is to be improvement in teaching techniques in the area of decision-making. Halliday goes on to say that further research is needed to learn about the mental processes of decision-making and to find out what variables are most crucial in influencing decision-making.[2]

The recent emphasis in the literature has been on the process(es) of home management. The identification of an

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[1]Jean Halliday, "A Conceptual System for Researching Decision-making" in Proceedings of Conference on Conceptual Frameworks: Process(es) of Home Management, Dept. of Home Management and Child Development, East Lansing, Michigan, 1964, p. 86.

[2]Ibid., p. 87.

event as a problem by a home manager is a virtually unexplored but necessary area for research. Recently a method known as the "In-Basket" technique has been used in social science research to obtain a clearer understanding of cognitive processes involved in problem recognition. The purpose of this study was to develop a Home Manager's In-Basket and explore the possibilities of this research technique as a useful method for studying the way home managers identify home management problems.

The Home Manager's In-Basket which was developed presented the subject with a simulated managerial situation. A series of interrelated and interdependent managerial problems as they occur in a home[1] were embedded in the items in the in-basket. The subject was seated at the manager's desk where she finds a description of the situation in which she has been placed and instructions on how to behave. Three types of information were available for her to use. The first type of information provided was all the items she finds on her desk. These were written sources of information that have embedded in them a series of managerial problems. The other types of information were: the "human sources" such as the apartment advisor and the "reference memory," any person who had experience in the role in which the subject is trying to act. Both of these roles were played by the researcher during the interviewing.

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[1]Beatrice Paolucci, "Managerial Decision Patterns," Penney's Fashion and Fabrics, Vol. 8 (Fall-Winter 1963), p. 16.

One of the outstanding characteristics of the in-basket simulation is its likeness to a real situation. Another important feature of the simulation is that participants will not be faced with making choices among pre-determined alternatives but they create or discover for themselves the alternatives to the problems. The most important feature of this simulation technique is that it creates a dynamic situation; the information sources are manipulated by the subject.

Purpose of the Study

The specific purpose of this exploratory research was:

(1) to work out a system for classifying home managers as to their approach to problem recognition.

Assumptions

This study assumed that:

(1) meaningful and real responses would be elicited by the in-basket items.

(2) the potential problems would provide a range of the situations a home manager meets.

(3) cognitive processes can be verbalized by the subjects as they are being observed.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Problem Recognition

Researchers have for a long time been interested in the study of cognitive processes. The research that has been done has taken the traditional 'present-a-problem, find-the-solution' approach where the emphasis is on finding one solution to a series of problems presented to the subject one at a time. The studies have tended to ignore other dependent problems and factors in the environment that would influence the subjects.

Two studies have proven to be exceptions to this traditional approach because they took into account not only the problem situation but the relationship of several psychological variables to the subject and the situation in which the subject is placed.

A study by Stern, Stein and Bloom,[1] found that in the exchange between the individual and his environment, both give to each other and both are affected and to some degree altered by the exchange. In order to assess cognitive processes, the

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[1]G. Stern, M. Stein and B. Bloom, Methods In Personality Assessment (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1956), p. 36.

detail and complexity of the situation was reduced to more manageable proportions. They did this by focusing their study on the relationship of attitude and interest variables to learning and cognitive behavior.

The second study, by Kogan and Wallach,[1] attempted to find out how motivation (psychological variable) affected consistency in a test (problem) situation. They found that motivational influences may intrude upon thinking in various ways and to differing degrees.

While the development and testing of the instrument designed in this study did not include psychological variables, these two studies showed the necessity of making the testing situation as real as possible for the subject rather than using the traditional artificial approach. In any study that was not exploratory, the psychological variables would have to be included in order to get concrete results.

Home Management and Problem Recognition

Decision-making has been identified by Gross and Crandall[2] as the crux of home management. They identify the process of decision-making as consisting of five separate steps. The first phase, recognition of the problem, is the major point of focus for this study.

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[1]Nathan Kogan and Michael Wallach, Risk Taking (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 190.

[2]Gross and Crandall, op. cit., p. 19.

Researchers in the past have tended to ignore this first step and there has been a large gap in our knowledge of what were recognized as problems in the home situation. There are several proposed classifications for these problems such as the central-satellite method[1] for viewing the home situation yet, there is no information on whether all home managers identify the same aspects in each situation as the problem to be solved.

The two studies previously cited emphasized the interaction of several variables in the process of solving several problems rather than the traditional approach that presents the subject with one problem at a time and asks him to solve each one as it is presented. So far our research methodology in home management has followed this traditional approach in our study of other steps in the decision-making process. It is necessary for us to look for new methods of research in order to learn more about the complex of interrelated and interdependent problems as they exist in the home situation.[2] To do this we must look for information and guidance about the cognitive processes related to problem recognition in the research literature of other fields.

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[1]Paolucci, op. cit., p. 17.

[2]Dorothy Price, "Research Methodology in Home Management," Journal of Home Economics, Vol. 59 (June, 1967), p. 433.

Related Research on Problem Recognition

In two of the classic studies on problem-solving, Duncker and Maier make a plea that future researchers present the subjects with the entire situation. According to Maier, "When the solution of a problem is broken into three parts and given to a subject as three separate experiences, then such experiences are not sufficient to bring about the solution of the problem. Thus a selected presentation of the experience is not enough. The parts of experiences must be combined in a certain manner and a direction or way the problem is attacked seems to be a factor which determines the nature of the combination."[1]

Duncker's[2] study stresses the necessity of providing the subject with knowledge independent of the basic facts to which the researchers theoretical expectations refer. He emphasized the necessity of the researcher developing new methods when old ones are not satisfactory for the discovery of new knowledge.

Several techniques have been developed by researchers in their attempts to externalize the process of problem solving. Rimoldi's[3] subjects were confronted with a problem

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[1]N. R. F. Maier, "Reasoning in Humans: On Direction," Journal of Comparative Psychology, Vol. 10 (1930), p. 143.

[2]K. Duncker, "On Problem-Solving," Psychological Monographs, Vol. LVIII, No. 5 (1945), p. ii.

[3]H. J. A. Rimoldi, "Problem Solving As A Process," Educational and Psychological Measurement, Vol. XX, No. 3 (1960), p. 451.

and they were given a list of questions that could be asked in any order. In Suchman's[1] study of cognitive processes, he presents his subjects with problems in the form of filmed scientific experiments whose details are puzzling. He then asks his subjects, "Why did this happen?" The subjects may ask any question as long as it is answerable by Yes or No. In neither of these studies is the subject allowed to sense the problem to be solved and the testing situation is not true to life.

In the Bloom and Broder research on problem solving processes in college students, it is assumed that the subject has the information tools to answer the posed question. The focus of this research is the manner in which the student uses this information to manipulate the components of the problem. They observed that, "... it is quite evident that some points in a problem seem to furnish a starting point for students to a much greater extent than do others."[2] On the basis of this evidence, the researcher expected the subjects to focus on different aspects or parts of the problem embedded in the simulated situation developed.

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[1]J. R. Suchman, "Inquiry Training: Basic Skills To Autonomous Discovery," Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, Vol. VII, No. 3 (1961), p. 156.

[2]B. S. Bloom and L. J. Broder, "Problem Solving Processes of College Students," Supplementary Educational Monographs, No. 173 (1900), p. 101.

The In-Basket Technique

Inquiry under natural conditions differs in a number of ways from the previously cited experimental situations. The real world does not consist of carefully constructed situations that are presented to individuals as problems for solution. Instead, individuals move through an array of situations selectively reacting to some and not to others. Those situations that are problematic do not present themselves one at a time in a predetermined numerical order, but their definition and the order in which they are handled is derived from the cognitive activity of the inquirer.

In his research on simulated classroom decision-making situations, Kersh confronted his subjects with a critical classroom incident and they are asked how they would handle the situation.[1] While this technique is realistic and involving, Kersh has not been interested in the cognitive processes of his subjects but rather his concern was with their specific decisions or the products of the inquiries.

Frederiksen developed a simulated technique for observing the behavior of Air Force Administrative officers. The In-Basket test consists of putting a candidate into a realistic situation which calls upon him to deal appropriately with such material as an Air Force officer might find in his in-basket.[2] The immediate problem field is the contents of

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[1]B. Y. Kersh, "Classroom Simulator," Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. 13 (1962), p. 336.

[2]N. Frederiksen et al., "The In-Basket Test," Psychological Monographs, Vol. LXXI, No. 9 (1957), p. 4.

his in-basket which includes letters, memoranda and many other communications which may be perceived as calling for action on the part of the administrator. The subject may take any action in response to the content of the in-basket. Frederiksen scored his subjects' responses in terms of a set of categories for classifying the kinds of decisions made by the administrator, e.g., delegate responsibility, reserve judgment while sending for more information or write a reply.[1]

Hemphill, Griffiths and Frederiksen[2] developed an administrator in-basket for their study of administrative behavior and personality. The researchers not only improved the scoring procedures but also investigated the relationships of psychological characteristics to in-basket performance. The understanding of the variety of administrative performances observed in their research was enriched by an understanding of how the described in-basket behaviors related to the psychological measurements they used.

The in-basket technique seemed promising because it did not necessarily specify the problems to be handled, or their necessary order. It left room for potential problems, to which some subjects reacted and others did not. The researchers, through an inclusion of the psychological correlates of

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[1] Ibid., p. 10.

[2] John K. Hemphill, Daniel E. Griffiths and Norman Frederiksen, Administrative Performance and Personality (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1962), p. 343.

behavior, provided a much better understanding of the processes studied than could have been provided by description alone.

Shulman[1] used an in-basket test as well as a series of psychological test scores in a study that attempted to classify individual differences in the inquiry patterns of student teachers. According to Shulman, "The purpose of this research was to characterize the processes of inquiry as they are observed in a 'natural' situation. The current interest in inquiry as an operation central to the processes of education has awakened research activities concerned with cognitive processes as distinct from their products."[2]

Shulman adapted the in-basket situation to the study of inquiry processes by developing a new in-basket, which included a range of potentially problematic situations which could be reacted to by the subjects, a role playing set to engage their emotional interest and a universe of internal and external sources which they could manipulate in their inquiries.

With this technique, he attempted to study the total inquiry process rather than the truncated form of inquiry generally denoted by the term 'problem-solving.' The focus

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[1]Lee S. Shulman, "Seeking Styles and Individual Differences in Patterns of Inquiry," School Review, Vol. 73, No. 3 (1965), p. 259.

[2]Ibid.

was on variables that were much more similar to the categories of Hemphill et al. Shulman's research confirmed the usefulness of an in-basket technique for the study of teacher inquiry behavior.

The review of the literature indicated that: the simulation situation must be realistic but it must also be of a size and complexity that can be handled by the researcher; while the situation must be manageable in terms of detail and complexity, it must not be so structured that the subject would be provided basic facts by the information sources; given a realistic situation, the subject will be able to identify the embedded managerial problems; and the problems embedded in the situation would have to present the subjects with a range of points at which they could identify a problem and then be able to manipulate the information in such a way as to see the relatedness of the embedded problems.

The Home Managers In-Basket developed in this study was patterned after the one designed by Shulman for prospective teachers. The in-basket for home managers included a variety of embedded problems that could be met in a home, a role playing set to engage the subjects' emotional investment and a variety of information sources that they could manipulate in the situation. This technique did not specify the problems to be handled. It left it up to the home manager to sense the problems by manipulation of the information sources provided in the simulated situation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The specific technique developed in this study was the "Home Manager's In-Basket." This test was designed to simulate a home situation and the problems that might be found there in order to classify home managers as to their approach to problem recognition.

Development of the In-Basket

The items chosen for the test were selected from two main sources. These were:

1) Shulman's Teacher In-Basket--items used by Shulman for teachers were adapted for a home situation and;

2) an apprentice experience in the home management residence that supplied the researcher with items that would be particularly suitable for a home situation.

In several instances, credit for the item should go to both sources because, while the ideas for the items might come from one source, help in adapting them to a home situation would be gotten from the other.

The items Shulman used that were adapted for the apartment situation were:

TABLE 1

IN-BASKET ITEMS ADAPTED FROM SHULMAN

Teacher In-Basket	Home Manager In-Basket
1. Orientation Materials--described what the subject was to do, the situation she was in and the community in which she was living.	1. Orientation Materials--described what the subject was to do (play role of manager), and the situation she was to manage. There was no written description of the community. A campus map, a university catalog and campus phone books were included with the material.
2. Memoranda from school principal, school secretary or school nurse.	2. Memoranda from the housing office, from the health center, from the resident advisor and from the phone company.
3. Correspondence from previous teacher and parents.	3. A personal letter from each girl to the resident advisor. These letters told a little about the type of life each girl led and also informed her of when they expected to arrive on campus for the new term.
4. School records for the year were on the teacher's desk. Previous years records were available from the office.	4. Expenditure records that had been kept in the home management house (these included: food, fuel, entertainment, depreciation, cleaning supplies, laundry, furnishings and newspapers and magazines).
5. School schedule for a week showing special classes, assemblies.	5. Class schedule for each girl for the new term. These also included a record of their personal committents such as church, private organizations.

The items based on materials from the apprentice experience in the home management residence were:

TABLE 2

IN-BASKET ITEMS ADAPTED FROM HOME MANAGEMENT HOUSE

Home Management Residence	Home Manager In-Basket
1. Girls live on a given income for food, etc. They have a checking account with a stated balance.	1. Checkbook, deposit slips and a bank statement showing balance of $785.00.
2. Previous expenditure records.	2. Old bills, record books showing expenditures according to categories such as food, entertainment, depreciation, and cleaning supplies.
3. Food and equipment inventories.	3. List of all equipment in the apartment. Food inventory showing what was passed on from previous term and money value of the food left.
4. Cookbooks, extension bulletins.	4. Cookbooks (3), extension bulletins (food preparation, laundry, stain removal), etiquette books, a menu and a recipe clipped from a newspaper.

This array of information contained within it many potentially problematic elements, varying from the obvious to the very obscure. The class schedules are a case in point. One of the obvious problems is the apartment members may not be able to have the same meal times so that problems of food

preparation, serving and eating could occur and will require some management. Included on the schedules was a list of each persons out of the household committments which could also effect meal management. This might be a less obvious problem to the subjects. An even more obscure problem related to the girls schedules was assigning jobs to be done in the apartment among the apartment members.

The in-basket used in this study was made up of the items listed in the Home Manager In-Basket column of the tables on the previous pages. The items in the Home Manager's In-Basket were selected to provide one type of information: built-in written information, primarily records. Two other types of information were used: "human sources" and a "reference memory." In the Home Manager's In-Basket, a human source would be a representative of the housing office or the home management advisor. Such human sources were represented by the researcher during the interviewing. A "reference memory" is a person who has had experience in the role in which the subject is trying to act and thus could, if asked, supply information based on experience. This role was also played by the researcher during the interview.

Collection of Data

It was decided that university students would be used as the home managers in testing out the instrument adapted from Shulman and the residence experience. When this was decided the simulated situation in which the subjects were to

be working could be planned. Since few of the possible subjects would have any experience in running a home, the situation described was an apartment in which five students would live for the term. Many of the university students live in or are familiar with such housing arrangements so it was felt that the subjects would find this a more realistic situation and one to which they could relate and could imagine experiencing.

The next question to be answered was where the testing would take place. These questions had to be answered in order for the researcher to write the orientation material given to the subject when the in-basket was administered. The home management residence was used both in the pre-test and for the larger test group. The house seemed to have several advantages: such as having the right amount of physical space and, being located on the campus which made it easily accessible to the students. Using this as the test area meant that home economics education majors needed to be eliminated from the sample to prevent any bias since they are required to live in the home management house while they take the residence course. These decisions led to the development of the orientation material that was included in the in-basket.

When this material was prepared, it was read by several graduate students to test the clarity of the descriptions and instructions that explained to the subject how she was to operate. Using their suggestions, words and phrases were changed to improve the clarity of the material.

It was necessary to decide how the interview information was to be recorded. The orientation materials instructed the subject to speak out loud so that the interviewer might obtain a record of her thoughts as she went through the items in the in-basket. Three types of records were made for each interview. These were: the written observation forms filled in by the researcher as the subject worked; taped recordings of the interviews and a Reason For Action form filled out by each subject during the post interview session.

The written observation forms used by the researcher were divided into three columns. The particular item the subject was working on was recorded in Column I. Column II was headed Time, meaning the time the subject began working and the time she completed the in-basket and Column III was headed, "Asks, Does, or Says," where the researcher recorded the subjects verbalized thoughts about the item.

The Reason For Action form was also divided into three columns. Column I contained a list of the items found in the in-basket. Column II was headed, "What did you do with It?" Column III was headed, "Why?"

Any blank spaces in the data collected on the observation forms could be filled in by playing back the taped recordings of the interview. The Reason For Action form provided a cross check on the researcher's interpretation of the subject's behavior.

Pre-testing

The in-basket and interview procedure were pre-tested on university students who had taken the home management theory course and who were not home economics education majors.

The researcher made an appointment to meet each subject at the home management house. When the subject arrived, she was shown around the house. Then she was seated at the dining room table which was to serve as her desk. Assembled on the table and in a folder were the items that made up the in-basket. The subject was told she would have two hours to work with the materials on the table and in the folder. But if she finished before that time, she was to tell the researcher that she was finished. Her instructions were inside the folder and she could begin. The subject was asked to speak aloud as she worked. The researcher started the tape recorder and she began to record data on her observation sheets. If the subject failed to talk, the researcher reminded her by ringing a gong. When the subject asked questions, it was impossible for the researcher to record data. These gaps were taken care of by replaying the tape of the interview at a later time.

When the subject informed the researcher she had finished, the researcher stopped the tape and recorded the time on the observation form. The post inquiry interview gave the researcher a chance to ask any questions of the subject in order

to clarify anything she said or did. The subject was then given the Reason For Action form and she was asked to fill it out. When this form was completed, the entire inquiry session was finished.

Adjustment Based on the Pre-test

The instrument was pre-tested to determine if the subjects could verbalize their cognitive processes as they were being observed; if meaningful and real responses could be elicited by the in-basket items and if the problems embedded in the simulation were sensed to be problems by the subject.

The pre-test of the in-basket elicited meaningful responses to the problems embedded in the situation. The pre-test resulted in making changes in the orientation materials. The directions in this material were reworded to clarify the idea that the home management house was to represent the apartment the subject was to organize. The list of items included in the orientation material was not changed or adjusted because the pre-test indicated that the subjects reacted well to the items selected. No change was made in the Reason For Action form because the responses provided a supplementary record of the respondent's reactions. It served the purpose of assisting in the analysis of the inquiry sessions.

Selection of the Test Group

The class list for the home management theory course was obtained. The names were checked against the records in the

Dean's office to eliminate those students majoring in home economics education. Every other name on the remaining list of names was contacted by the researcher. There was a possible group of fifteen subjects. Only ten of these students were willing to participate in the study. All were females, nine were single and one was married. Since all of the subjects had taken the theory course the same term, it was assumed that each of the subjects had a similar exposure to theories of home management.

When the subject agreed to participate in the study, the researcher scheduled a testing time with each one. The data were obtained by administering the Home Manager In-Basket to each student. The researcher was the only person present. The interview procedure used in the pre-test was followed.

The length of time spent working on the in-basket varied from twenty minutes to ninety minutes. The average length of time spent on the test was forty-one minutes. The post interview varied from twenty to thirty-five minutes. The average length of time was thirty-two minutes.

Analysis of Data

The simulation sessions were scored and analyzed in terms of four variables: problem sensitivity, materials attended, information sources and time.

Problem sensitivity was defined as the number of embedded potential problems reacted to as problems by the subject in

the simulated situation. Materials attended was the number of materials to which the subject attended in the interview period, representing the number of 'bits' of information processed by the subject. Information sources was a count of the number of kinds or categories of information brought to bear by the subject on the problems in the simulated situation, e.g., the number of human sources contacted. Time was the number of minutes the subject chose to spend in the simulation situation.

The Reason For Action forms were analyzed to provide supplementary information about what was recorded on the taped interviews and to improve accuracy in the scoring of the verbalized record of the simulation sessions. The scores for the four variables were computed by simple counting.

The aid of another graduate student in home management was enlisted to check the reliability of the content analysis of the verbalized record and the Reason For Action form. The researcher explained the nature of the instrument and what it was meant to do. She gave the graduate student a copy of the definitions of the variables to be scored. Using the information on the Reason For Action forms plus the record of the verbalized cognitive processes, the graduate student analyzed the content of the data. The graduate student and the researcher compared the scores each of them had computed for each subject. In the cases where the scores did not match, they went over the data together and in each case, they reconciled their differences.

Once agreement was reached on the scores for the four individual variables, these were converted to ratios for use in computing a General Score for each subject. The three ratios computed were: bits/time, problems sensed/bits and information sources/bits. The General Score is computed by adding together the scores for time, problem sensitivity, bits/time and information sources/bits. On the basis of this data, the home managers could be arranged on a continuum rather than be categorized by groups. The continuum would vary from a style termed "dialectical' to a style termed 'didactic.' The dialectical style was characterized by scoring high on problem sensitivity, by high flexibility in the search for and use of information and by a slow, reflective rate of information processing. The didactic style meant that the subject would score low on problem sensitivity, be more inflexible and narrow in the search for and use of information but would be quick to process information.

In order to judge the ability of the individual subject to see the interrelatedness and interdependency of the embedded problems the score for problem sensitivity was broken down into descriptive categories. The researcher used seven arbitrarily set up categories in which to assign the problems recognized by the subjects. These categories were: food, schedules, relationships, finances, entertainment, rules and division of labor. This data gave the researcher information about the completeness of the subjects search as he worked on the simulated material.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Scoring of the Simulation Variables

The amount of time spent by the subject working on the in-basket varied. Some of them deliberated over each item as they read it. Others looked over the items first and then went back and sorted them out. Some went over what they had done to check that they had left nothing out.

The variation in the time spent on the in-basket by the subjects ranged from a low of 20 to a high of 90 minutes. The average length of time spent on the in-basket was 40.2 minutes.

TABLE 3

TIME AS COMPARED TO PROBLEMS SENSED

Subject Number	Time (Minutes)	Problems Sensed
1	39	37
2	23	8
3	29	10
4	50	14
5	33	16
6	48	13
7	30	23
8	20	3
9	40	7
10	90	24

The problems sensed by the subjects was a numerical count of what each respondent reacted to in the situation as a problem. The average number of problems sensed was 14.7. The number of problems sensed varied from a low of 3 to a high of 37. The figures in Table 3 show that the length of time spent on the in-basket did not necessarily mean the respondent sensed more problems.

The materials attended to by the subjects was a numerical count of the number of pieces of the materials which the subject looked at during the interview period. This variable represents the 'bits' processed by the subject. The variation in 'bit' ranged from a low of 10 to a high of 27. The average number of 'bits' used by the subjects was 19.5. Table 4 compares this variable with time and problem sensitivity. This table also includes a column, 'Problem Categories' that describes the general nature of the problems sensed by each subject and tells how many of the problems sensed by the subject fell into each of the categories. There were seven possible categories for the problems sensed by the subject. These were: Food, Schedules, Interpersonal Relationships, Finances, Entertainment or Outside Interests, House Rules and Division of Labor (Upkeep).

One of the most important results of this study is illustrated in this table. The great variety in responses of the subjects to the same material points out the great difference in ability of individuals to see the interrelatedness and

TABLE 4

TIME, PROBLEM SENSITIVITY, MATERIALS ATTENDED AND PROBLEM CATEGORIES

Subject Number	Time	Problems Sensed	'Bits'	Problem Categories						
				Food	Schedules	Relats.	Fin.	Enter.	Rules	Labor
1	39	37	20	8	3	11	5	5	2	3
2	23	8	10	2	1	0	2	0	0	3
3	29	10	16	2	1	2	2	0	1	2
4	50	14	19	4	1	2	3	1	2	1
5	33	10	16	3	0	3	2	1	0	1
6	48	13	22	3	1	1	3	1	1	3
7	30	23	20	6	2	6	3	2	1	3
8	20	3	23	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
9	40	7	27	4	1	1	1	0	0	0
10	90	24	22	5	3	5	4	3	1	3

interdependency of the embedded problems or to recognize a problem.

Information sources is a numerical count of the number of kinds or categories of information brought to bear by the subject on problems in the in-basket situation. The variation in information sources used ranged from a low of 14 to a high of 35.

Table 5 compares this variable with time, problemsensitivity and materials attended. The average number of information sources used by each subject was 24.6.

TABLE 5

TIME, PROBLEM SENSITIVITY, MATERIALS ATTENDED AND INFORMATION SOURCES

Subject Number	Time	Problems Sensed	'Bits'	Inform. Sources
1	39	37	20	22
2	23	8	10	14
3	29	10	16	21
4	50	14	19	32
5	33	10	16	18
6	48	13	22	22
7	30	23	20	26
8	20	3	23	25
9	40	7	27	35
10	90	24	22	31

In addition to these four variables, three ratios were calculated to show relationships between the time, materials attended and information sources.

The first ratio, bits/time, was a measure of input speed, that is, how quickly materials are processed by the subject. The second ratio, information sources/bits, reflected the breadth of the subjects information seeking relative to the total number of materials processed during the session. The third ratio, problems sensed/bits, was a measure of the number of problems sensed per unit of material attended to by the subject.

The first ratio varied from a low of 0.24 to a high of 1.2. The second ratio varied from a low of 1.0 to a high of 1.7. According to Shulman,[1] the higher this second ratio, the more variably and flexibly did the subject employ the potential array of information sources within the [simulated interview] situation. The third ratio varied from a low of 0.13 to a high of 1.95. Table 6 on the following page compares the ratios obtained for each subject.

To be able to work more easily with these measures, a general score was computed. This was arrived at by combining the four basic measures expected to differentiate between styles: time, problem sensitivity and two of the ratios--bits/time and information/bits. The measures obtained for

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[1] Ibid., p. 261.

TABLE 6

INTERVIEW SESSION RATIOS

Subject Number	Bits/Time	Info./Bits	P.S./Bits
1	0.51	1.1	1.95
2	0.43	1.4	0.80
3	0.55	1.3	0.63
4	0.38	1.7	0.74
5	0.48	1.1	0.63
6	0.46	1.0	0.60
7	0.67	1.3	1.15
8	1.20	1.0	0.13
9	0.68	1.3	0.26
10	0.24	1.4	1.04

each subject were summed to get a single general score. The scores ranged from a low of 25 to a high of 116.

Table 7 on the following page shows the general score for each subject. The average general score was 57.3.

According to Shulman, "Seeking styles are seen as varying along a continuum from the dialectical to the didactic."[1] As used by Shulman, seeking styles denote a consistent mode of initiating, conducting and terminating an inquiry that is characteristic of individuals or groups of individuals. Operationally, dialectical seekers are more sensitive to

[1] Ibid., p. 262.

TABLE 7

GENERAL SCORES

Subject Number	General Score
1	80
2	33
3	41
4	66
5	45
6	63
7	55
8	25
9	49
10	116

potential problems, employ a wider range of information sources and exhibit a more flexible and reflective seeking pattern than do didactic seekers.

For example, the student in the test group with the highest general score was termed dialectical. She recognized a larger number of problems, manipulated a greater number of information sources and appeared to reflect on the problems and how they related to each other rather than to take each one at face value. She went through each item but verbalized how she saw it relating to the other items and the problems it did or did not create. She recognized problems that pertained to each of the categories.

The subject who received the lowest general score recognized the fewest number of problems, did not go through all the items, used only a few of the information sources, and spent her time on a couple of the items, e.g., the instructions on the food inventory. The problems she recognized fell in three of the seven possible categories and she did not verbalize any relationship she may have seen between them.

On this basis, the five subjects with the highest general score would be dialectical and five with the lowest score would be didactic. The following table shows the mean scores and differences between the two styles for seven variables.

TABLE 8

MEAN SCORES AND DIFFERENCES FOR SEVEN VARIABLES

Variable	Dialectical	Didactic	Differences
Time	51.4	29.0	22.4
Problems Sensed	22.6	7.6	15.0
Materials Attended	20.6	18.4	2.2
Information Sources	26.6	22.6	4.0
Info./Bits	1.3	1.2	0.1
Bits/Time	0.452	0.658	-0.206
General Score	56.0	38.6	17.4

The following table compares the differences among dialectical and didactic seekers in Shulman's study and dialectical and didactic seekers in the home managers study.

TABLE 9

COMPARISON OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TEACHERS AND HOME MANAGERS

Variable	Teachers	Home Managers
Time	10.7	22.4
Problem Sensitivity	6.1	15.0
Materials Attended	-4.1	2.2
Information Sources	4.2	4.0
Info./Bits	0.22	0.1
Bits/Time	-0.32	-0.21
General Score	26.2	17.4

The figures indicate differences in the predicted directions in both of the studies for time, problem sensitivity, information sources, information sources/bits, bits/time and general score. The major difference illustrated by the figures on the preceding table is the score for materials attended. Shulman's results indicate that the didactic seeker attended to a greater number of materials while the home managers indicate that the dialectical seeker attended to a larger number of materials. It is for this reason that there is such a small difference in home managers scores for

the information sources/bits variable. These differences between the two studies may be due to the fact that the home managers were given a definite time limit while Shulman's teachers could work as long as they pleased. The time limit may have forced the home managers to feel they had to work faster or that they had to spend that much time organizing the apartment.

Analysis of Reason For Action Forms

The content analysis of the responses to the Reasons For Action form provided a helpful supplement to the record of the interview sessions. The responses revealed sharp differences in the perception of the situation and in what each subject recognized as a problem. Selected examples of the responses to some of the questions illustrate these differences.

Old Records (household accounts, entertainment)

In answer, 'What did you do with the Old Records?' some of the answers were:

"Looked over."
"Kept for each manager."
"Glanced over."
"Examine."

The real differences come in reply to the question, "Why did you do this?" Some of the answers were:

"To gain idea if I was on right track."
"For later reference--not necessary to prepare the apartment."
"To learn from past experience."

All of the subjects took some action with this item. There was no one who did nothing.

Class Schedules (each student's class schedule for Spring term)

In response to, 'What did you do with the class schedules?' some of the replies were:

"Consider these when delegating responsibility."
"Glanced at."
"Check carefully to plan work around them."
"Post on bulletin board."

Replies to the question of 'Why?' varied from general to specific. Examples of a few of the replies were:

"Out of curiousity."
"To be familiar with."
"To let each one know where the other one is to be."
"To see what general plan would have to entail."

Letters (one from each student telling arrival time and particular interests)

Nine of the replies to, "What did you do with the letters?' were:

"Read."

Answers to the 'Why?' question showed a difference in approach:

"Girls can look at and decide what to do."
"Curiousity."
"To see if there would be special problems to deal with."
"To get a feeling about the individual girl."

Cookbooks (Betty Crocker, Campbell's Regional Cookery)

Replies to, 'What was done with the cookbooks?' were very general:

"Put on book shelf."
"Nothing."
"Looked through."
"Keep around."

The 'Why?' question was answered with statements like:

"For further reference."
"Put in bookcases."
"To help the girls manage."
"Recipes wouldn't be necessary until all the girls had met together and decided what foods they wanted to have."

Extension Bulletins (Decision-making, Management, Food Buying, Stain Removal, Etiquette)

In answer to, 'What did you do with the bulletins?' some of the answers were:

"Checked through."
"Nothing."
"Put in bookcases."
"Give to girls."

Examples of replies to the 'Why?' question were:

"Read later as sources for general knowledge."
"Get idea of what they were and how they might fit into management process."
"For use by the girls."
"Might be useful for information on decision-making."

Phone Company Notice (told how to have the phone connected)

In response to, "What did you do with the phone company notice?' some of the answers were:

"Nothing."
"Must be taken care of."
"Call and ask to have phone restored."
"Keep it.

Replies to the question of 'Why?' varied from the general to the specific. Examples of the answers are:

"Phone is necessary."
"Girls can see and decide what to do."
"Need phone before girls arrive."
"No use."

The responses to the other items on the Reason For Action form are found in the Appendix.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the analysis of the data in Chapter IV, the differences in individual seeking style and the type of problem identified will be discussed in relation to the underlying theory and to the findings.

The theory underlying this study begins with the observation that individuals differ in their relative "openness' to the world around them, especially to the ambiguous or problematical aspects of that world. Some individuals prefer to interact with the uncertain, problematical elements of their environments and seek out opportunities to manipulate such elements. Others prefer to deal with more clearly defined situations and to achieve closure more quickly. The former operate in a universe of problems-to-be-solved; the latter in a world of answers to be learned. Openness to environment results in a flexibility of interaction with that environment. A relative lack of openness leads to inflexibility and perseveration. The consequence of the 'open' cognitive attitude is the dialectical seeking style or pattern. The 'closed' attitude leads to the didactic style of seeking.

Based on this theory, it was expected that the dialectical seeker would score high on problem sensitivity, exhibit high flexibility in the search for and use of information and

would have a slow, reflective rate of information processing. The didactic seeker would score low on problem sensitivity, would be more inflexible and narrow in the search for and use of information but would process information quickly.

In terms of the four variables used, the dialectic seeker would have higher scores on time, problem sensitivity, information sources, information sources/bits and general score. The didactic seekers would have higher bits/time ratios.

While there are only two seeking styles described, these did not represent little groups or categories. Rather they represented the ends of a continuum with the subjects falling all along it. Since the general score was a combination of the variables that would differentiate the styles, the subjects were divided on this basis even though the results would be different if the division depended on only one of the variables. The division by general score corresponded to the scoring on bits/time ratio. The subjects with the highest general scores were termed dialectical. The subjects with the lowest general scores were termed didactic. The subjects with the low scores had the highest bits/time ratios, one of the differentiating characteristics of the didactic style. Since this was an exploratory study, the findings cannot be considered concrete. But the data suggest a tendency towards a particular style of approach or way of recognizing problems.

When the differences between the general scores for didactic and dialectical home managers were compared with the differences between the general scores for didactic and dialectical teachers, there was a great deal of similarity in the direction of the differences.

One of the most important results of the study was the variation in number and kind of problems recognized by the subjects. The problem categories were arbitrarily determined by the researcher based on the material that had been included in the simulated situation. The range in ability to recognize a problem varies from total lack of recognition to the recognition of obscure problems classified in one of the major problem categories.

The findings indicate that all home managers do not identify the same aspects in each situation as the problem to be solved.

They also indicate the necessity of finding out what made these events demand action on the part of some subjects and not on the part of others. One possible explanation is the importance of the problem as viewed by the subject. This would relate to Halliday's suggestion that degree of rationality in decision-making seemed to be related to the importance of the decision as viewed by the subject.

The adapted in-basket elicited real responses to the simulated situation and the problems embedded within it. This made it possible to compute a general score and thus classify

the subjects according to style. The variation in the findings for each subject indicate that the situation was not so structured that their behavior followed the same pattern, but elicited their individual approach.

Summary

The purpose of this study was:

(1) to work out a system for classifying home managers as to their approach to problem recognition.

No hypotheses were formulated since this was an exploratory study. In the review of the literature, the lack of research in home management on problem recognition was shown. Many researchers were aware of the need in this area. But the previous research that had been done was in other fields also interested in increasing knowledge of these cognitive processes.

An in-basket includes a description of the situation the subject is to be placed in. The subjects in this study were told they were expected to organize an apartment where five students would be living for spring term. Attached to the description was a list of the items the subject was expected to work with to get the apartment ready. The items that were contained in the home manager in-basket were adapted from Shulman's teacher in-basket and from the researcher's apprentice experience in the home management house.

The adapted technique had three main elements. The first element was the simulated situation. The second element was the taped and written records of the subjects' responses.

The last element was the data obtained from the Reason For Action forms.

The researcher arranged to meet each subject at the Home Management house which was to represent the student apartment. The subject was seated at the manager's desk where she found three kinds of materials: the contents of the in-basket (including the description of the situation; the possible human resources in the situation; and a reference memory). The researcher made written observations. The subject was asked to speak out loud and the sessions were tape recorded. When the subject was finished working on the in-basket, she was given the Reason For Action form to fill out. When this was oompleted, the session was over.

The taping of the sessions proved helpful when analyzing the observations because any gaps in the written record could be filled in from the tapes. The Reasons For Action form also provided a supplementary check on the researcher's interpretation of what the subject said and did. It was an aid in interpreting the observations as they were being scored. The subjects seemed to have little trouble verbalizing their responses. If they forgot to talk as they worked, a signal from the researcher reminded them.

Before scores could be obtained from the observations and Reason For Action forms, the tapes were played back so that gaps in the observation forms could be filled in. The Reason For Action form supplied information as to how

important the subject viewed a particular item in the in-basket. The forms were coded for the four variables--time, problems sensed, materials attended, and information sources. The reliability of this content analysis was checked by having another graduate student code the data. When the results were compared, there were differences in two of the scores. These were reconciled by the researcher and the graduate student.

Implications

An exploratory study is characterized by a continual searching, false impressions and a shaping and revamping of the study as the work progresses. This is particularly true in exploring the intangible yet comprehensive area of problem recognition.

There is a scarcity of research in this important area. Other disciplines have made some contributions to knowledge about problem recognition. But the help they can give can only go so far since their concern is not the family. It is necessary for the professional who works directly with families to operate from more than assumptions.

The home management literature states that decisions cannot be made unless a problem or opportunity is recognized. Does the home manager realize family members may perceive problems differently or not perceive them at all? Do home managers see the interrelationships between and among the problems? How do differences in education, experience and

exposure to a home management situation affect ability to recognize problems?

There is a need for sound research and exploration of problem recognition. There is a need to include problem recognition in any conceptual framework of the field. If home management is to contribute to other disciplines, to total human knowledge and most important of all to knowledge of the total human family, much work remains to be done. This study implies that home management needs teaching techniques that help a student to recognize problem situations and to see their relationship to others. There is a need to help make them aware of the problems and opportunities and also to make them aware of the interrelatedness and interdependency of problems in the home.

The findings in this study cannot be considered conclusive. However, the technique used in this study has possibilities for use in evaluating the managerial ability of homemakers and students; for determining the criteria of success for home managers; for determining dimensions of performance in the home managership and thus to develop a better understanding of the nature of the manager's job; and to provide materials and instruments for the study and teaching of home management.

The main strengths of the study appear to be: it shows that simulation can be used to understand the way home managers recognize problems and the great variation in their ability to see the interrelatedness among them.

The main weaknesses of the study appear to be: the possible inadequacy of some of the items, the difficulty in coding and the small number of subjects. Some of the items did not elicit much of a response from the subjects. On this basis one might consider them inadequate. Yet it does not seem plausible to make this judgment at this time. The items should first be tested on a larger sample before any of them are discarded.

There was also the risk of making items that would be judged on content rather than idea. The instrument was designed for the observation of processes not products. An example of a stumbling block in this case was the food inventory. Several of the subjects were confused at this point. The lengthy instructions bothered them and prevented their continuing. This weakness might be overcome by having a group work on the items rather than their being the product of one person's effort.

Another weakness was the coding of the observation forms. Directions to the other coder could have been more explicit. She could have been given a trial run by having her score the pre-tests. This would have given her more experience in scoring the test group. According to Frederiksen,

> The scoring reliability may be expected to be a function of the amount and quality of training that the scorers have had. Appropriate training would ordinarily involve direct experience in scoring a large number of answers and in discussing the scoring of these answers with other more experienced scorers. Relevant experience

> with the job situation which the In-Basket test is designed to simulate would be very helpful in learning to score the test.[1]

Perhaps a panel of undergraduate students who had taken the core course could score the observation forms. Their experience would be more similar to the subjects.

In spite of these weaknesses and limitations, this study as a whole has some strengths as yet not mentioned. Simulated materials seem to be ideal for developing an ability to "see the total picture," since the subject continually examines specific problems in relationship to their total context. The problems are not presented one at a time but several problems are there at once in no pre-arranged order. It is up to the subject to first recognize them and then sort them out for consideration.

This study is only a small beginning but it is a start. Further research on simulation could yield valuable information to its use as a teaching technique as well as a research instrument. Since simulation presents real living situations, the likelihood of desired transfer of learning to on-the-job situations seems to be much more probable with them than with conventional teaching methods and materials. By starting with a representation of real living situations, greater responsibility will be placed on the instructor to relate theory and factor. Students will have a better opportunity to evolve

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[1]Frederiksen, op. cit., p. 342.

meaningful relationships between concepts and facts. Simulated material, when made use of in the classroom, can help to show relationships between what is and what ought to be. Students would then be better able to make effective improvements in home management.

Conclusions

The findings confirm the fact that there is great variation in a subject's ability to perceive something as a problem. They also show that the longer the time spent working on the in-basket does not indicate a greater number of problems recognized.

It is evident that the management situation presented was not perceived in the same way by every subject. This was one of the important aspects of the use of a simulation technique. The situation presented elicited different responses. These responses were found meaningful in terms of the general score computed from the variables and ratios scored. This combination of scores gave more information as to style than any of the single scores.

The home managers fell on a continuum that varied from a style termed didactic to a style termed dialectical. The dialectical style was characterized by high problem sensitivity, high flexibility in the search for and use of information and a slow, reflective rate of information processing. The didactic style is characterized by low problem sensitivity, narrow and inflexible use of information and the quick

processing of information. On the basis of the results of this study, a simulation technique like the home manager's in-basket can be used to identify the way home managers identify problems.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

Situation Description

The date is March 27, 1966. It is the Saturday before Spring term begins at Michigan State University. You are returning to MSU after a term's absence and you are going to be living in a campus apartment (Van Hoosen Hall). The apartment you will live in is to be shared with four other girls and you will be in charge for Spring term. The faculty advisor thought today would be a good chance for you to get organized to manage the apartment. The other girls will move in tomorrow night.

When you arrived at the apartment this morning, you were told by Miss Thompson from the housing office that many things had piled up on your desk during term break. She said she realized how hard some of the things would be to do since you didn't know all the girls well. But with the term beginning on Wednesday, you should try to do as much as you could today. She emphasized the fact that she would be available at any time to assist with any information you would need. Some of the records were available on the table. For more information you might check with her.

Please act in this situation as you would when you are in charge of the Van Hoosen apartment. You have at your

disposal all of the resources in the apartment you are now in, just as you would if you were living here, plus any resources you can use that can be supplied by Miss Thompson.

In the interests of the study being conducted, it is imperative that all of your thoughts in this situation be made verbal. That is, think aloud during this entire period. Nothing is too trivial to be said aloud. Keep talking all the time. At such a time as you stop thinking aloud, you will hear a gong. The success of this research depends largely on your ability to make your thoughts available to yourself and the observer.

You may write anything down or make lists if you want.

WELCOME TO VAN HOOSEN HALL!

In-Basket Items

Old Records that girls who have lived in the apartment in the past kept. They include food, fuel, depreciation, entertainment, cleaning supplies, magazines and newspapers, laundry, furnishings, service and elasticity.

Class schedules which include any outside interests of the student.

Personal letters from the girls.

Cookbooks

Etiquette books

Extension bulletins

Notice from phone company about restoring service

Bank statement showing balance of $785.00

Checkbook

Bank deposit slips

Off-campus housing notice on cooperative living including rules and hours.

Newspapers (State News and Free Press)

Health Center notice on one student

Invitation to a Coffee Hour

Food and equipment inventories

Laundry bill

Recipe

Menu

Notice of lecture-concert series

Campus map

University catalog

In-Basket (cont.)

TV Guide

Coupons

Green stamps

Magazines

REASON FOR ACTION FORM

ITEM	WHAT DID YOU DO?	WHY?
Old Records		
Class Schedules		
Etiquette Books		
Phone books		
Extension Bulletins		
Phone Co. Notice		
Bank Statement		
Checkbook		
Deposit Slips		
Housing Notice		
Newspapers		
Health Center Notice		
Invitation		
Food and Equipment Inventories		
Laundry bill		
Recipe		
Menu		

REASON FOR ACTION FORM (contd.)

ITEM	WHAT DID YOU DO?	WHY?
Lecture-Concert Series		
Map of Campus		
University Catalog		
TV Guide		
Magazines		
Coupons		
Stamps		

NAME:
DATE:

INTERVIEW OBSERVATION FORM

TIME	ITEM	ASKS, DOES OR SAYS

REASONS FOR ACTION QUESTIONNAIRE

The use made of each item on the manager's desk presents quite a contrast. The data recorded on the reasons for action form present specific examples of the differences in perception of the situation.

Etiquette Book

In answer to, "What did you do with the etiquette book?" some of the replies were:

"Nothing."
"Keep as reference."
"Don't need it."
"No particular use now."

Answers to the "Why?" question were quite varied.

"No answer."
"Use mainly as a reference."
"I never seem to use them."
"For proper etiquette."

Phone books

The answers to "What was done with the phone books?" were:

"No use now."
"Later reference."
"No need."
"Keep in specific place."

Bank Statement

Examples of answers to, "What did you do with the bank statement?" are:

"Consulted."
"Keep in safe place."
"Used as a bssis for making budget."
"Checked through."

Some of the reasons why they did these things were:

"To see how much money there was to work with."
"For financial management purposes; to know how much we have."
"To know exact amount on hand."
"Girls will have use of--give them more responsibility and independence."

Checkbook

Replies to the question, "What did you do with the checkbook?" are:

"Keep in safe place."
"Noticed them."
"Didn't use."
"Keep with bank statement."

Reasons for acting this way were:

"Girls should learn to use."
"To see what I must do."
"To see general setup."
"To be familiar with."

Deposit Slips

Answers to, "What was done with the deposit slips?" were:

"Nothing."
"Noticed them."
"Didn't use."
"Put in drawer with checks and bank statement."

The reasons why they acted this way were:

"No need."
"I know what they're like--no use now."
"Wasn't sure what they were for."
"Use during the term for further deposits."

Housing Notice

In response to, "What did you do with the housing notice?" some of the answers were:

"May go over AWS rules with the girls."
"Mention to girls and post."
"Nothing."
"Noted it in schedule."

Replies to, "Why?" were:

"May not be familiar with university housing rules."
"Make them aware of and prevent misunderstandings."
"So all girls could see it."
"Place it where easily available."

Newspapers

Answers to, "What did you do with the newspapers?" were:

"Nothing."
"Didn't use."
"Read and let others read."
"Put on magazine rack."

Replies to, "Why did you do this?" were:

"Not necessary to prepare the apartment."
"No use now."
"Relaxation--knowledge."
"Common around campus--everyone has access."

Health Notice

Answers to, "What did you do with the health notice?" were:

"Consider in planning meals."
"Read."
"Keep it and let others know."
"Checked it--thought of ways to fulfill individual's particular need."

Examples of replies to, "Why?" were:

"Let her make modifications on her own."
"To save on cost and inconvenience."
"General information--curiosity."
"When talking to girls, suggest types of foods to use."

Magazines

Answers to, "What did you do with the magazines?" were:

"Nothing."
"Read."
"Keep."
"Subscribe to one or two."

Examples of the replies to, "Why?" were:

"Not necessary to prepare apartment."
"Don't need now."
"Put in bookcase for others."
"For homemaking hints and good reading--also as a reference for further use on recipes."

Invitation

Answers to, "What did you do with the invitation?" were:

"Post."
"Read, R.S.V.P."
"Put in place where all could see."
"Accept."

Examples of the replies to, "Why?" were:

"Girls might enjoy meeting new people."
"Call to their attention when they return."
"So other girls can see it."
"Curiosity of what was in envelope."

Inventories

Answers to, "What did you do with the inventories?" were:

"Read and make grocery list."
"Check food and equipment to see if allright."
"Glanced at."
"Read through."

Examples of the replies to, "Why?" were:

"To have food when girls arrive."
"Fill in basics; find out who likes what."
"Determine what could be bought now."
"To buy and plan meals around equipment available."

Cleaning bill

In answer to, "What did you do with the cleaning bill?" some of the answers were:

"Pay."
"Post."
"Nothing."
"Check to see who should have paid it."

In response to, "Why?" some of the replies were:

"Make sure bill was correct."
"Has to be paid."
"All bills should be visible and together."
"Doesn't apply."

Recipe

In answer to, "What did you do with the recipe?" some of the responses were:

"Nothing."
"File."
"Keep."
"Irrelevant."

In response to, "Why?" some of the replies were:

"Doesn't apply now."
"For special entertainment."
"Place in cookbook."
"Too complicated recipes from papers are clutter to me."

Menu

In answer to, "What did you do with the menu?" some of the replies were:

"Remind me it's necessary to know menu planning."
"Post."
"File with recipe."
"Nothing."

In response to, "Why?" some of the replies were:

"May help (suggestion)."
"For future reference."
"Use as illustration when planning together."
"Doesn't apply now."

Lecture-Concert Series

In answer to, "What did you do with the lecture-concert series notice?" some of the replies were:

"Place where easily available."
"Noted."
"Post."
"Useful reference."

In response to, "Why?" some of the replies were:

"For later use."
"List on calendar for reference during the term."
"So all girls could see."
"Others could read."

Campus Map

In answer to, "What did you do with the map?" some of the replies were:

"Have available to girls."
"Useful to have around."
"Place with other booklets."
"Nothing."

In response to, "Why?" some of the replies were:

"Reference for a visitor."
"Girls could use them."
"For future reference."
"Doesn't apply."

Catalog

In answer to, "What did you do with the university catalog?" some of the replies were:

"Place where easily available."
"Nothing."
"Put in bookcase."
"Didn't use."

In response to, "Why?" some of the answers were:

"For later use."
"Leave in handy place for reference."
"Girls have own."

Coupons and Stamps

In answer to, "What did you do with the stamps and coupons?" some of the replies were:

"Can be used efficiently."
"Looked and filed."
"Hand on to for future use."
"Would not save."

In response to, "Why?" some of the replies were:

"May save money or may be wasteful in the long run."
"For later use."
"Don't think they're valuable."
"Beginning of a collection."