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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH STUDENTS AND BURNOUT AMONG
RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

By

Robert Lloyd Harris

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ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT WITH STUDENTS AND BURNOUT AMONG RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

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Fifty-two resident assistants (RAs) at the University of Georgia were included as subjects for an investigation of relationships among three variables: personal involvement with students, burnout, and subjects' perceptions of the residence hall environment. Documented concern about the effectiveness of paraprofessional staff in college and university residence halls and the stress which accompanies the RA position indicated a need for the investigation.

A review of the literature regarding paraprofessionals in higher education, residence hall staff, environmental concerns, and burnout provided the direction for the investigation.

Degree and quality of personal involvement were measured with respect to the RA's preference for associating with certain individuals in the living unit. An individual interview with each subject was taped, transcribed and analyzed according to predetermined criteria, and personal involvement scores were derived from the transcripts. A printed measurement instrument revealed burnout scores among the population which

Robert Lloyd Harris

were similar to scores among other research populations. The University Residence Environment Scale (URES) measured the RAs' perceptions of the residence hall environments in which they lived and worked.

Both degree and quality of personal involvement were negatively correlated with burnout, indicating that RAs who experience burnout are less effective in relationships with students. RA perceptions of the environment as positive with respect to student involvement and emotional support were positively associated with both degree and quality of personal involvement. Likewise, quality of personal involvement was also positively correlated with perceived Intellectuality. Student Involvement, Emotional Support and Order and Organization environment scales were negatively correlated with burnout.

Other findings in the investigation included the significance of gender of subjects and perceived Competition in the environment. Female RAs scored significantly higher than males on the burnout measure and indicated a significantly higher quality of personal involvement with students.

Perceived Competition in the residence hall environment was inversely related to both degree and quality of personal involvement.

Robert Lloyd Harris

All three primary variables were significantly related to each other in several respects. Conclusions and recommendations of the investigation were based on hypothesis tests and post hoc analyses. Findings are relevant for effective management of student housing programs.

Dedicated To

ANN WEBSTER

Director of Housing and Residence Life
The George Washington University

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	v
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Background	5
Statement of the Problem and	
Objectives of the Study	10
Assumptions	11
Definitions	13
Research Questions and Hypotheses	16
Procedures	18
Significance of the Study	20
Limitations of the Study	21
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	26
Student Affairs	26
Resident Assistants as Paraprofessionals	27
The Role of the RA	28
The Effectiveness of the RA	29
Environmental Considerations	34
The Resident Assistant's Environment	36
The Role of the Environment	41
Summary	44
Burnout	45
III. METHODOLOGY	63
Subjects	63
Data Collection	65
Hypotheses and Data Analysis	75

CHAPTER	Page
IV. RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION	80
The Research Population	81
Results of the Research Instruments	87
Results of Tests of Hypotheses	92
Post Hoc Analyses	102
Additional Analyses	107
Summary	111
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	114
Summary of Findings	115
Conclusions	119
Implications	134
Recommendations	140
LIST OF REFERENCES	143
REFERENCE NOTES	157
APPENDICES	
A. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE HOUSING ORGANIZATION	159
RA POSITION DESCRIPTION	160
B. LETTER TO SUBJECTS REGARDING PARTICIPATION IN THE INVESTIGATION	164
C. CONSENT STATEMENT	165
D. OUTLINE OF INTERVIEW PROCEDURES, INSTRUCTIONS AND RECORD SHEET	166
E. COVER SHEET FOR BURNOUT MEASURE	170
F. BURNOUT MEASURE	171
G. LETTER OF REQUEST AND RESPONSE FROM AYALA PINES	172
H. UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE ENVIRONMENT SCALE (URES)	174
I. COVER LETTER FOR URES	178

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 Summary of Selected Demographics of the Research Population	84
2 Academic Majors Represented by the Research Population	85
3 Summary of Personal Involvement Scores From Interview Transcripts	88
4 Burnout Scores of the Population of Resident Assistants and Comparison with Scores of Other Research Populations	91
5 Summary of Results of the University Environment Scales Used in the Investigation	93
6 Correlation Matrix for the Eight Primary Variables of the Investigation	101
7 Summary of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) for Hypotheses Eighteen and Nineteen	103
8 Summary of Statistically Significant Unhypothesized Correlations	108
9 Summary of Significance Tests Between Females and Males for Three Factors	110

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The housing of college students has been a major concern for higher education administrators since the colonial era. Two basic services -- room and board -- were provided the aspiring Early American scholar in exchange for cutting firewood, hauling water, and bearing a load of rules and regulations. The moral and religious principles and objectives underlying the colonial college inhabited the dormitory as well (Earnest, 1953). The nineteenth century presented an interesting contrast. On the one hand, dormitories were virtually eliminated on some campuses under the leadership of German-educated administrators who gave unqualified priority to the classroom; on the other hand, women's colleges were established with housing being essential to the safety, security, and sanctity of the young ladies (Earnest, 1953).

In the twentieth century the notion of housing accommodations as integral to the education of the "whole person" was pursued by prominent officials of higher education such as University of Chicago President William Rainey Harper and Princeton Dean Andrew West. Dormitories were truly centers of learning, albeit extracurricular, in the 1920's and 1930's (Rudolph, 1962). A sense of urgency to provide bed spaces for the influx of World War II veterans in the

1940's and 1950's, however, compromised the educational objective of housing and initiated a construction boom which lasted until the mid 1960's.

During the last two decades housing facilities have been dominant among campus structures and have provided the arena for the greatest impact of college on students -- the peer group (Dressel and Lehman, 1965; Brown, 1971). The changes in values, attitudes and interests which result from association with other students have been clearly demonstrated (Jacob, 1957; Chickering, 1967; Feldman and Newcomb, 1969; and Astin, 1977).

College and university housing has grown, like higher education, from "simple beginnings to a full-blown bureaucratic venture" (Stroup, 1970). Housing organizations incorporate, though not to an extreme, the character of the ideal-type form of bureaucracy, including rules, hierarchy, specialization and offices as careers (Miller, 1963). Chief housing officers delegate the responsibilities for carrying out tasks to various levels of staff. Herbert Simon has observed that the "the actual physical task of carrying out an organization's objectives falls to the person at the lowest level of the hierarchy" (in Merton, 1952). Such is the case with the paraprofessionals in housing organizations. These student/staff members work where they live and are identified by titles such as resident advisor, student assistant, and, most commonly, resident assistant (RA).

The RA position is quite complex from both an historical and organizational perspective. The counterpart in the colonial college was the tutor, usually a faculty member or recent graduate who lived in the dormitory (Powell, et al, 1969). As student housing changed, the tutor role changed as well, its evolution marked by such stages as proctor, housemother, prefect, counselor, and RA. The RA's role and status is now regarded as "paraprofessional" (Delworth, 1974; Hutchins, et al, 1976) in that the RA is a student who is "specifically selected, trained and given continuous supervision while performing tasks that otherwise would be conducted by a professional" (Delworth and Aulepp, 1976).

While occupying a low position in the bureaucracy and engaging in almost constant contact with students, the RA faces difficulties of role conflict and work overload. Coping with the challenges of the RA position is a significant task for a paraprofessional who is a full-time student. Difficulties and challenges notwithstanding, the focus of the RA as a paraprofessional is the clientele (students) being served. Concern for students is central to the RA role; therefore, indication of concern affords an important measure of RA effectiveness. Insofar as personal involvement with students is an indication of concern, a measure of the degree and quality of personal involvement would register the effectiveness of the resident assistant.

A current issue for many housing administrators is RA effectiveness in the job and the effects of anxiety on performance. In the forefront of research concerning stress and anxiety is the topic of "burnout".

Amid the difficulties faced by the RA, work overload and role conflict are primary contributors to the burnout syndrome (Osipow and Spokane, 1981). Furthermore, the experiences of exhaustion, helplessness, detachment and loss of caring for students frequently reported by RAs are associated with the burnout syndrome (Cherniss, 1980; Forney, et al, 1982). The type of person who expects and needs to be helpful to others -- attributes not uncommon among paraprofessionals in housing -- is often most susceptible to burnout (Maslach, 1976, 1978; Mattingly, 1977; Edelwich, 1980).

The questions which emerge for both researcher and practitioner are numerous: How is the phenomenon of burnout related to the effectiveness of the worker who must demonstrate concern for his students? What is the relationship between involvement of the worker with students and the degree of exhaustion experienced by the worker? Does involvement with particular individuals in the work setting seem to have any connection with reported burnout? How are the characteristics of the residence hall environment associated with personal involvement and burnout?

In this chapter the investigator demonstrates the need for investigation of the concept of "burnout" as it relates

to the involvement of resident assistants with students in their charge and the environment in which the RA lives and works. First, the investigator provides background perspective on the problem to be considered. Secondly, the problem is presented in terms of the objectives of the investigation, the questions to be answered, and the hypotheses to be tested. Finally, the procedures for conducting the investigation are described.

Background

Work adjustment theory maintains that "the individual responds to the requirements of the work environment and the work environment responds to the requirements of the individual" (Dawis, in Cull and Hardy, 1973). Balance or mutuality of responsiveness of the individual and the work environment is no simple accomplishment. Truly, the objective of most organizations which engage in employee selection, placement, supervision, and evaluation is to attain a productive person/environment "fit".

"Individuals who come to work for an organization differ in their needs and personality traits as well as in their capabilities" (Porter, Lawler, and Hackman, 1975). Experiences in the job vary with the individual. For example, "one worker is upset by a boss who closely supervises his work while another finds close supervision desirable" (Margolis and Kroes, 1974). Differences in job experiences reflect both individual and environmental variations. Ecological and interactionist theories clearly

demonstrate the basic inseparability of the individual and the environment (McGrath, 1970). The concept of "reciprocal causation" is represented by Pervin's (1968) use of the term "transaction" to clarify the active relationship of the individual and the environment.

Employee anxiety as a function of individual-environment transactions is as complex as it is common. "Job stress implies so many events and processes," according to Margolis, "that it is often conceived to be a nebulous concept, difficult to study in a scientific manner" (in McLean, 1974). Investigation of the particular situation in which the worker functions, however, can yield information pertinent to the study of job stress. Such investigation relies heavily on the workers' reports of experiences in the job, their perceptions of the environment, and their relationships with the clientele of the organization. As workers clarify the elements of the work situation which are relevant to the investigation, conclusions can be drawn about the worker, the environment and the transactions which occur.

One area of research which deals with employee anxiety is burnout research. Studies have been conducted in a variety of human service organizations to explore burnout as a phenomenon which results in debilitation of the worker and disruption of the work environment. The sources of burnout are very likely found in the environment of the worker as well as within the worker himself. It has been

argued that certain individuals are more prone to burnout. Freudenberger (1975) concludes that "some individuals are driven to burnout and will always burn themselves out in one way or another." Maslach (1979) asserts that "many of the causes of burnout are located not in permanent traits of the people involved, but in certain specific social and situational factors." Like the causes, the characteristics of burnout also vary with the individual and the situation. Burnout is commonly viewed as "a subtle pattern of symptoms, behaviors and attitudes that are unique for each person" (Mattingly, 1977). Because the importance of situational factors in determining behavior is established in social science theory (Magnusson and Stattlin, 1982), burnout research must reduce the work environment to its singular components -- the individual worker situations -- in order for data to prove meaningful. While collective perceptions as a data source would verify environmental conditions relevant to stress and burnout, burnout as an individual phenomenon would not come into focus as clearly through such methods. Nevertheless, "any investigation of burnout should attend to both situational as well as personal variables" (Vander Ven, 1982).

Literature on burnout consists of reports on research and observations, as well as reflections and opinions. Whether the writers of such literature have engaged in scientific research or personal reflection on their own

experiences, one conclusion about burnout usually emerges -- for employees who are involved in continuous direct contact with clients, burnout is almost inevitable (Freudenberger, 1975).

Burnout is anxiety to an extreme. The concept of anxiety of staff members in college and university residence halls was advanced by Dickson (1975), who stated that "intense and/or prolonged stress creates anxiety that may decrease the effectiveness of the resident assistant (RA)." This concept has been pursued in a variety of investigations and is gaining attention from housing administrators. As research in stress and burnout expands, the likelihood of discovery of preventives of and remedies to this growing phenomenon increases. As Daley (1979) concludes, "It is important for both workers and supervisors to identify sources of stress that may lead to burnout and together commit their energies to the efficient management of such factors."

The resident assistant is already a focal point of considerable investigation in the field of college student affairs work. For many college students across the nation the primary contact with a student affairs worker occurs with the RA. Exploration of the relationship of the worker with the client -- the RA with the student -- is of paramount import in understanding the RA position and the environment in which the job is carried out.

Increased understanding the the RA-student relationship has implications for all dimensions of the position, particularly those aspects which are most frequently investigated and reported in the literature, i.e., selection, education, supervision, and evaluation of RAs.

The focus on the worker-client relationship is equally important in the field of burnout research. Christina Maslach, a modern pioneer with respect to burnout as a field of study, has asserted that "the quality of client contact is so central to burnout that it is imperative that it be clearly defined and well-measured" (Maslach, 1981). This imperative, combined with the ever-present need for greater understanding of the RA position, underlies the purpose of this investigation.

Assessment of the worker-client relationship is a delicate task. A key indicator of the nature of the relationship is the concern which a worker demonstrates for and the involvement the worker has with the client. When the concern and involvement can be ascertained in a realistic manner, the information which is gathered can prove beneficial to research and practice.

Personal involvement and burnout are frequently linked in the literature on burnout. While no causal relationship has been empirically verified, researchers imply that the degree and quality of personal involvement are related to burnout as a source in some instances and as an outcome in

others. As an antecedent, personal involvement with clients by overzealous helpers is so constant and so intense that the helpers exhaust themselves in the process of helping. As a consequence of burnout, personal involvement is withheld or withdrawn by burned out workers as they seek relief and protection through detachment (Maslach, 1974). Maslach (1974) states that burned out workers spend less time with clients who are problematic and more time with clients where achievement or success is indicated.

Statement Of The Problem And Objectives Of The Study

The investigation described herein explored the relationships between personal involvement with students, burnout, and perceived characteristics of the environment in which the resident assistant lives and works. Specifically, four general questions were addressed as follows:

1. What is the degree and quality of personal involvement of resident assistants with students who live in their assigned areas of responsibility?
2. What is the extent of measured burnout among selected resident assistants?
3. What are the characteristics of the residence hall environment, i.e., the work and living situation, as perceived by resident assistants?
4. What are the relationships among the three factors of personal involvement, burnout, and the residence hall environment?

The objectives of the investigation were as follows:

1. Investigate the degree and quality of personal involvement of resident assistants with students;
2. Employ an established measurement instrument to assess burnout among the research population;
3. Survey the RAs' perceptions of selected characteristics of the residence hall environment in which they live and work;
4. Examine the relationships of personal involvement in its several dimensions, the extent of measured burnout, and the residence hall environment as it is perceived by RAs;
5. Discuss and clarify the relationships among the measured variables;
6. Summarize and interpret the findings in light of current research;
7. Develop questions and make recommendations for further study and application for housing administrators.

Assumptions

For the purpose of this investigation there were seven assumptions. First, it was assumed that the responses to the burnout measure, the residence environment scales, and the interview questions represented the truth about the subjects. The methods of information collection were intended to be realistic and to elicit honest responses.

Secondly, it was assumed that the RAs who comprised the research population had similar role conceptions regarding the RA position.

The third assumption was that the population was representative of most college students across the nation who hold the position of resident assistant.

While normality of the population was assumed, there was an attempt to establish a degree of homogeneity with respect to certain external variables. The criteria for selection of subjects were (a) time on the job, (b) training, and (c) type of assignment. It was assumed that the criteria used for selection of subjects had similar effects among the population without compromising the normality of the population.

The fifth assumption was that personal involvement of RAs with students implied concern for the students and that it was therefore indicative of the relationship of the RA with the students.

Sixth, the investigator assumed that the RAs' perceptions of the residence environment were legitimate as a measure of the reality of the situation. The assumption is based on the idea that "what people think is true is true for them, and that is reality" (Conyne and Clack, 1981).

The seventh assumption was that "burnout" is a single measurable construct which is distinct from yet related to other variables in the work setting. This assumption was

substantiated by research conducted with the existing burn-out measure in other settings (Pines and Aronson, 1981).

Definitions

Following are the operational definitions of terms which were used extensively in both the conduct of the study and the report of findings and implications:

Resident Assistant: A paraprofessional student-staff member who lives and works in a residence hall and has specific duties and functions of helping and administration in an assigned area with a group of students.

Student: A college student who lives in a residence hall and who is a member of the group in the charge of a resident assistant.

Research Population: The group of subjects (RAs) selected for this particular investigation from the total population of resident assistants at the University of Georgia. These subjects were selected on the basis of three criteria, which served as controls:

- (a) Time on the job: RAs who had less than one year on the job and who began employment Fall Quarter 1982.
- (b) Training: RAs who were enrolled in the initial training program (an academic credit course entitled "Students Helping Students" in the College of Education), and who attended the Fall, 1982, staff workshop for RAs.

(c) Type of Assignment: RAs who were assigned to a single-sex floor (rather than a co-educational floor).

Personal Involvement: An indicator of concern for students represented in frequencies of statements about those students in an interview setting. There are two dimensions of personal involvement described below.

Degree of Personal Involvement: When referring to a student, the number of statements about that student which are classifiable into predetermined categories of statements which indicate involvement with that individual.

Quality of Personal Involvement: The emotional tone of the statements made in reference to a student, either positive or negative, and quantified by the ratio of positive statements to the total number of classifiable statements.

Preference for Association: The preference the RA has for certain individuals within the living unit when asked to identify those students with whom he or she most prefers to associate and those students with whom he or she least prefers to associate.

Interview: A research method which gathers information through personal interaction with an individual and which is structured, more or less, on the basis of a prearranged format and questionnaire.

Burnout: A state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion which results from long-term involvement with people in situations that are emotionally demanding (Pines, 1981).

Burnout Measure: An instrument which measures a single construct as defined above.

Residence Hall Environment: The social climate of the living unit as perceived by the individuals who live in a particular location within the residence hall.

Living Unit: The specific area of a college or university residence hall or dormitory for which one resident assistant is in charge. A living unit is referred to as the "floor," the "neighborhood," or the "house."

Characteristics of the Residence Hall Environment: Descriptors or items which describe a particular behavior or phenomenon which is perceived as exerting a press toward a dimension of the residence hall environment. The dimensions of the residence hall environment are conceptualized by Moos and Gerst (1974) and are as follows:

- (1) Relationship Dimensions: "The types and intensity of personal relationships among students and between students and staff."
- (2) Personal Growth or Development Dimensions: "The emphasis within the house environment upon maturational processes."

(3) System Maintenance and System Change Dimensions:

"The structure of organization within the house as well as the processes and potential for change in its functioning."

University Residence Environment Scale (URES): A one hundred item form which "assesses the social climates of university student living groups, such as dormitories, fraternities, and sororities" (Moos and Gerst, 1974).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The general purpose of the investigation was to seek answers to the following questions:

What is the degree and quality of personal involvement of RAs with students in their charge? What is the extent of measured burnout among selected RAs? How do the RAs perceive the residence hall environment in which they live and work?

These three questions provided the foundation of the investigation. The results of the three measures used to answer these questions are presented in the "Demographics" section of Chapter IV.

The hypotheses tested in this investigation concern the relationship of the variables of personal involvement of RAs with students, measured burnout, and perceptions of the residence hall environment. The general hypotheses of the investigation were as follows:

1. Burnout is associated with (a) lower degrees of personal involvement with students, (b) lower quality of personal involvement with students, and (c) fewer reported environmental characteristics indicative of involvement, emotional support, intellectuality, order and organization, and innovation.
2. Degree of personal involvement of RAs with students is associated with an increase in reported environmental characteristics indicative of involvement, emotional support, intellectuality, order and organization, and innovation.
3. Quality of personal involvement of RAs with students is associated with an increase in reported environmental characteristics indicative of involvement, emotional support, intellectuality, order and organization, and innovation.
4. There are significant interaction effects of burnout and preference for students on degree of personal involvement; or, RAs with higher burnout scores indicate a higher degree of personal involvement with students with whom they most prefer to associate than with students with whom they least prefer to associate.
5. There are significant interaction effects of burnout and preference for students on quality of

personal involvement; or, RAs with higher burnout scores indicate a higher quality of personal involvement with students with whom they most prefer to associate than with students with whom they least prefer to associate.

Procedures

From the total population of RAs employed at the University of Georgia during the 1982-83 academic year, the investigator identified a research population of resident assistants on the basis of three criteria -- experience, training, and assignment to a single-sex living unit. Homogeneity of the research population was established on the basis of these criteria.

A key component of this investigation was defining and measuring the degree and quality of personal involvement of RAs with students. Derived from an approach implemented with elementary school teachers, interviews served as the data collection measure (Jackson, Silberman and Wolfson, 1969). Development of a structure of classifying responses was based on analysis of pilot interviews with RAs not included in the research population. Individual interviews were conducted by student affairs workers who were trained and supervised by the investigator. The interviews were taped and transcribed, and transcripts were analyzed and scored by the investigator. Reliability of the scoring of interview transcripts was established through matching scores

assigned by independent judges to randomly selected transcripts.

"The Burnout Measure" (Pines and Aronson, 1980) was selected as the most suitable instrument for the purposes of this investigation. This instrument is a measure of exhaustion in three dimensions -- physical, emotional, and mental.

Measurement of burnout took place immediately following the interview with each subject. All interviews were completed during a designated period in the spring quarter, 1983. The time span was limited in order to reinforce the homogeneity of the group. A time relatively late in the year was selected to allow for maximum familiarity of RAs with their students.

The manner in which RAs perceive their immediate environment was the third variable incorporated in this investigation. A standardized measure of the residence hall environment -- The University Residence Environment Scale (URES: Moos and Gerst, 1974) -- was administered in its entirety to all subjects. Five of ten subscales were selected for consideration in this investigation. The subscales used were Involvement, Emotional Support, Intellectuality, Order and Organization, and Innovation.

Analysis of the data employed statistical measures appropriate for testing the hypotheses as stated, and is detailed in Chapter III.

The research population was comprised of the total group of RAs who met all three of the stated criteria at the time approval for the investigation was granted. While it was anticipated that some of the members of the research population would be unable or possibly unwilling to participate, the estimated number of subjects was forty (40) to fifty (50) from a total population of one hundred forty-nine (149) RAs. The actual number of subjects who provided complete and usable data was forty-seven (47).

Significance Of The Study

In the literature on resident assistants and burnout, there are no reports on personal involvement of RAs with students and RA burnout. The significance of the study, however, lies not only in the uniqueness of the investigation, but also in the implications of such a study for many dimensions of college student housing administration. RAs occupy key positions in implementing the goals of the housing organization and in providing services to the clientele. Significant, direct contact occurs between the RA and the student, and it is in this relationship that burnout can be critical. Environments vary from RA to RA, and it is imperative that an established environmental measure be employed.

For those who seek greater understanding of personal involvement and burnout in general and/or of the RA position in particular, this investigation should be enlightening.

To those who manage, develop, and rely on the RA position, this investigation may prove helpful.

Knowledge of RA involvement with students, of the RA's work situation and RA burnout should enable the housing administrator and the RA to work together toward individual growth and improved effectiveness. Application of the findings of this investigation could include (a) prevention and remediation of burnout, (b) enhancement of the RA's personal involvement with students, (c) improvement in initiating and developing helping relationships with students, (d) development of effectiveness in coping with the difficulties of the job, (e) management of the residence hall environment toward more effective outcomes, (f) contribution to housing organization development, and (g) improvement of student affairs services.

Understanding of personal involvement, work environments and burnout has implications for the investigator and the practitioner in paraprofessional staff selection, assignment of duties and responsibilities, placement, supervision, education, and performance evaluation.

Limitations Of The Study

Parameters of the investigation were the research population itself and the measures used. These were also the delimitations of the findings and implications.

As stated above, subjects were regarded as representative of a sample of a normal population of paraprofessional housing

staff but were selected in a manner which provided sufficient homogeneity to avoid moderation of the findings of the investigation. All three criteria by which subjects were selected were external to the subjects and thereby provided some degree of control by the investigator.

Personal involvement was measured through a personal interview with each subject. The interview was brief and structured, yet the setting was realistic, and the responses were assumed to be natural and honest. Interview research is time-consuming and is often criticized for its subjectivity (Richardson, Dohrenwend and Klein, 1975; Kerlinger, 1973). This investigation utilized interviews in such a way that a minimum amount of time was required of the subjects, a realistic setting was fostered by the interviewer, and an objective analysis of the data was utilized. Subjectivity was minimized through interview consistency and reliability testing (Jackson, Silberman and Wolfson, 1969). While the limitations of interview research were acknowledged, the investigator attempted, insofar as possible, to avoid those potential liabilities. This method of interviewing and measuring personal involvement was constructed with a consideration for its replicability in both research and practice in both large and small scale efforts.

While there are four burnout instruments suitable for research purposes, the instruments are quite different from one another. This fact presented a limitation of a lack of

assurance that the instrument chosen for this investigation was the best instrument. As outlined by Shinn (1981) burnout has been isolated as a measurable variable in four instruments which may be used for research purposes. These instruments are briefly described below:

1. Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI: Maslach and Jackson, 1982) addresses work-related factors of (a) Emotional Exhaustion, (b) Personal Accomplishment, and (c) Depersonalization.
2. The Burnout Measure by Pines and Aronson (1980) which considers three dimensions of exhaustion -- physical, emotional, and mental -- but which is not specific to the work setting in the wording of the items.
3. The Staff Burnout Scale (SBS: Jones, 1980b) which includes cognitive, emotional, behavioral and physiological items and which is specific to the work environment.
4. An untitled job alienation measure by Berkeley Planning Associates (1977).

The burnout instrument used for this investigation -- The Burnout Measure by Pines and Aronson (1980) -- is not work-related in that its items do not refer specifically to the work setting. This instrument was selected for use because burnout, as it occurs, is not necessarily a function of work only, nor is it manifested solely on the job. The

orientation of the instrument is particularly relevant to a study concerning part-time paraprofessionals who are "on call" whenever present in the residence hall and "on duty" an average of twenty hours per week.

Another limitation was the lack of empirical verification of a causal relationship between personal involvement with clients and burnout. As mentioned above, these two variables are consistently linked in the literature on burnout. Nevertheless, the strength of any relationship between the variables neither substantiates nor demonstrates a causal relationship.

If, as some theorists have proposed, burnout occurs in stages, this consideration presents an additional limitation of the study. Although reliability of the measure over a period of time may be quite high, literature suggests that burnout has neither a sudden onset nor is it a constant state. Burnout is a syndrome in the sense that it is a pattern of emotions and behaviors which has implications for the individual and the environment. Edelwich and Brodsky (1981) have identified four "states of disillusionment" which, beginning with enthusiasm, include states of stagnation, frustration, and apathy. In this context apathy is considered synonymous with burnout. Golembiewski has engaged in considerable research to identify and specify the stages of burnout syndrome and their respective implications for the individual and the environment (Golembiewski and

Munzenrider, 1981; and Golembiewski, Munzenrider and Phelen, 1981). This progressive aspect of the burnout syndrome is highlighted as a precaution that burnout is not to be seen as an absolute condition or a final diagnosis. Viewing burnout as a progressive phenomenon presents a limitation for this investigation because the measurement was conducted at a single point in time and reflected only the state of the person at the time of measurement. By contrast, the measurement of personal involvement with students was regarded as reflective of the ongoing concern for and involvement with students. This difference is accounted for somewhat by the reliability of the burnout measure. (Test-retest reliability: .89 for 1-month interval; .76 for 2-month interval; .66 for 4-month interval).

The final limitation was that the investigation took place in a large university environment. This environment is considerably different from the milieu of many human services agencies. Consequently application of the findings will be limited somewhat to similar environments. This consideration, however, is in essence the basis for exploring personal involvement and burnout among staff in a new territory.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Student Affairs

Changes in the American college and university have been accompanied by parallel developments in the profession of student affairs (Williamson, 1949; Miller and Prince, 1976) and major shifts in the role and function of college student housing (Riker, 1966). The evolution of the student affairs enterprise necessitates changes in the responsibilities and priorities of staff who carry out the tasks and objectives of the organizations in which they work. Of particular significance in changing methods and approaches to the student affairs endeavor is the paraprofessional movement (Delworth, Sherwood and Casaburri, 1974).

Paraprofessionals have been reported working in the "widest possible variety of helping relationships" (Westbrook and Smith, 1976; Zimpfer, 1974); however, by far the most extensive use of paraprofessionals in higher education is in college student housing programs (Bliming and Miltenberger, 1981).

Developments in the housing paraprofessional role can be linked to variations in student perceptions and expectations of the college and university (Berdie, 1966; King and Walsh, 1972) and abandonment of in loco parentis (Pitts, 1980) in favor of student freedom and responsibility (White, 1969; Michael, 1972) and participation in the educational

process (McGrath, 1970).

Resident Assistants As Paraprofessionals

The Resident Assistant (RA) is regarded as serving "the most comprehensive role in the entire student affairs division" in a college or university (Bliming and Miltenberger, 1981). RAs are paraprofessionals because they are "selected, trained, and given continuous supervision while performing tasks that otherwise would be conducted by a professional" (Delworth and Aulepp, 1976).

It has been reported (McKee, et al, 1977) that paraprofessionals are perceived as "having the potential for contributing to all student service functions." Zunker's survey of the use of paraprofessionals revealed that "a majority of the institutions ... reported that student paraprofessionals make effective and positive contribution to their institution's student personnel program, and a clear majority reported that they plan to continue using them" (Zunker, 1975).

Combined in the RA position are duties and responsibilities which have historically been carried out by a host of principals. Central to the RA position is the decided purpose of promoting the growth and development of students (Hurst and Ivey, 1971). As Jennings (1977) declares, "It is the potential contribution of paraprofessionals to assist in student development that makes their use more than simply an economic expediency." Truly, paraprofessional resident assistants are "a potent force for change ... to maximize

personal development among students" (Brown, 1972).

Hutchins, Yost and Hill (1976) concluded that "increasing evidence of paraprofessional effectiveness ... appears directly related to the future of college residence hall operation, including staffing patterns." An examination of the literature in the RA position will specify what the RA actually does, and will clarify the criteria for assessing the effectiveness of this paraprofessional position.

The Role Of The RA

"The resident assistant in the [residence] hall traditionally has been the primary paraprofessional [institutional staff member] with whom students have contact. The RA has assumed several roles including counselor, information-giver, limit-setter, and administrator" (Delworth, 1974). A seemingly endless list of descriptions of the RA role is available in the literature. Of the two most recent exhaustive examinations of the RA position, one identifies the following RA roles: role model, counselor/advisor, teacher, and student (Bliming and Miltenberger, 1981); the second outlines the primary expectations of the RA:

1. provide personal help and assistance;
2. manage and facilitate groups;
3. facilitate social, recreational and educational programs;
4. inform students or refer them to appropriate informational sources;
5. explain and enforce rules and regulations, and

6. maintain a safe, orderly, and relatively quiet environment (Upcraft, 1982).

"The concept of resident assistant evolved to encompass more than a person who merely monitors student behavior" according to Layne, Layne and Schoch (1977). They continue:

"Greenleaf's (1974) survey of residence hall objectives on a number of campuses concluded that the responsibilities of resident assistants range from assisting residents in developing guidelines for living in a group environment to balancing job responsibilities and personal life to encouraging self-growth as well as growth for residents" (Layne, et al, 1977).

The common denominator which surfaces for all descriptors, role definitions, and expectations of the RA is the relationship of the RA with the student. This essential function of the RA role is a reflection of the somewhat outdated but ever-true position of the "Student Personnel Point of View" in which the personnel are regarded as "the most important element in any organization and any enterprise" (Williamson, 1961). Glick (1970) updates this notion by pointing out that students wish to be treated as persons, not personnel. The primary focus of the RA as student development paraprofessional is the student resident.

The Effectiveness Of The RA

Building helpful and meaningful relationships is not a simple task for the paraprofessional who must not only respond to student needs but also initiate interactions, confront problems, and intervene in any variety of situations

in order to fulfill the responsibilities of the position. The RA faces difficulties of role conflict, intense and prolonged work-related association with students and environmental ambiguity characteristic of residence halls (Winkelpleck and Domke, 1977; Dickson, 1977). The RA must also attempt to combine the contemporary role of "guidance counselor" (Hipple, et al, 1975) or "peer helper" (Ender, et al, 1979) with the more traditional "disciplinary posture" (Packwood, 1975) while occupying the lowest position within the unique bureaucracy of higher education.

These circumstances notwithstanding, a constant principle -- and one which is reflective of the student affairs profession -- is "helping." This helping relationship is rooted in the earliest of student personnel work (Lloyd-Jones, 1929, 1934, 1953), underlies the current theme of student development (Miller and Prince, 1976), and seems to be a common trend in the myriad of professional helping models which inform and substantiate the paraprofessional role. Burns Crookston (1975) characterized the student development relationship as "collaborative," "developmental" and "encountering."

A variety of approaches to assessing the RA's effectiveness are described in the literature. Personal orientation, as measured by the "Personal Orientation Inventory (POI)" has been examined as a predictor in RA effectiveness (Atkinson, Williams and Garb, 1973; Scott, 1975). The

authors concluded that the effectiveness of RAs in working with students toward developmental objectives is enhanced by the orientation of the RAs to associating with and caring for others. Biggs (1971) further specified job viewpoints and interpersonal attitudes as operative in the effectiveness of residence hall staff. Zirkle and Hudson (1975) found that "administrator-oriented RAs" had less productive effects on students than did "counselor-oriented RAs."

Emphasizing the managerial roles of the RA, Frierman and Frierman (1981) nonetheless cited human relationships as the "bottom line" of the RA's effectiveness. Interpersonal communication skills are commonly regarded as the vehicle necessary to achieve meaningful helping relationships of RAs and students. Newton (1974) demonstrated the positive effects of systematic communication skills training. Similarly, Schroeder (Schroeder, et al, 1973) cites positive outcomes of systematic human relations training for RAs.

A training course on personal development (Schilling, 1977) implies that the passive, role model functioning of the RA is enhanced by the growth and maturity of the individual in the RA position. Similarly, Schroeder (1977) has emphasized the importance of personal and interpersonal effectiveness to the successful performance of the RA role. Graff and Bradshaw (1970) found that dormitory assistant effectiveness is related to self-actualization.

Empathy and warmth, two factors essential to the helping professional's success with clients, have also been linked to the effectiveness of the RA (Wyrick and Mitchell, 1971). Other significant variables which have impact upon the effectiveness of the RA include personality types (Ponikvar, 1978; Wachowiak and Bauer, 1976), personality variables (Thomas, 1979), personal preferences (Van Pelt, 1968), authoritarianism (Hefke, 1969), assertiveness (Layne, et al, 1977; Shelton and Mathis, 1976), and leadership orientation (MacDonald, 1968). Carey and Schaening (1974) developed a measure of RA Effectiveness in five dimensions: Personal Involvement, Floor-Social Involvement, Sensitivity, Self-Concept, and Communication Skills.

German (1979) concluded that "investigations seeking a relationship between scales on personality inventories and effective performance have not proved fruitful. Research, however, can seek improved rating procedures for evaluating effectiveness ..."

A common theme in the literature concerning paraprofessional effectiveness is the involvement of the RA with the students in his or her charge. Carey and Schaening (1974), for example, identified two dimensions of effectiveness which were explicit measures of involvement, two which implied involvement, and one which concerned self-concept. Of six dimensions of the RA role identified by Dickson (1975), four focus directly on interactions with others, while two

deal with either internal or external conflicts.

The key to RA effectiveness lies in the ability of the RA to interact meaningfully with others. Carl Rogers maintains that "it is the quality of the interpersonal encounter with the client which is the most significant element in determining effectiveness" (in Mosher, 1964).

While it is not assumed that the encounter of and involvement with the student is the sole measure of effectiveness, it is assumed that personal involvement of RAs with students implies concern for the students (Jackson, et al, 1969) and that personal involvement is, therefore, indicative of the relationship of the RA with the students.

Involvement is, of course, a phenomenon which is not easily measured in a qualitative sense. "Good quality" and "poor quality" are difficult to measure; often the measure used is a measure of quantity (Maslach, 1981). Maslach (1981) acknowledges that "the problems involved in assessing the quality of job performance are ones that people have struggled with for years."

One noteworthy effort in measuring both the quantity and quality of involvement is the investigation of Jackson, Silberman, and Wolfson (1969). Their research, which is used as a basis for one component of the present investigation, incorporated a realistic-type of interview of elementary school teachers in which the degree and quality of personal involvement with students was measured and

evaluated. Most teachers would "probably concede," maintain the authors, "that they are more personally involved with some students than with others. Moreover, this involvement may have either positive or negative overtones" (Jackson, et al, 1969). This method is presented in more detail in the chapter on methodology (Chapter III). It is important to reiterate, with reference to the concept of burnout (discussed below) that "the quality of client contact is so central to burnout that it is imperative that it be clearly defined and well-measured" (Maslach, 1981).

In summary, the RA as paraprofessional is a key member of the student affairs staff on most campuses. Many roles and responsibilities are documented for the RA, but the primary function is to develop helpful relationships with student residents. Perceptions of the RA role sometimes mitigate the student development relationship between the RA and the student; but the success of the paraprofessional is based on personal and interpersonal effectiveness.

Many of the correlates of RA effectiveness are presumed, and in some instances demonstrated, to be characteristics attributed to the individual who occupies the RA role. There is no dearth of literature, however, which acknowledges the function of environmental perceptions and conditions which influence the RA.

Environmental Considerations

The focus on the individual RA -- his or her personality, values, motivations, and limitations -- offers only a partial

view of the realities of being a resident assistant. Equally important is an understanding of the environment in which the RA lives and works. It is possible that "properties of the environment may account for more of the variance in behavior than measures of trait qualities or even biographic and demographic background data" (Insel and Moos, 1974).

It is not the purpose here to establish that one or the other -- the person or the environment -- is greater or more influential; on the contrary, the objective of this review is to demonstrate the reciprocity and the interdependence of the two.

"An ecological perspective overcomes the one-sidedness of ... other perspectives. The essence of the ecological perspective is the transaction between the student and his or her environment. This perspective, therefore, incorporates the influence of environments on persons and persons on environments. The focus of concern is not solely on the student characteristics or environmental characteristics but on the transactional relationship between students and their environments" (Banning and Kaiser, 1974).

Lewin's (1935, 1936) theories of personality and of topological psychology provided a sound basis for recognition of the interdependence of personal and environmental variables, their interactions, and their reciprocal effects on one another (Carroll and White, 1981). "Henry Murray (1938) first conceptualized the dual process of personal needs and environmental press ... Murray's model for studying behavior thus consisted of the interaction between personality needs and environmental press" (Insel and Moos,

1974). Dewey and Bentley (1949) introduced the term "transaction" to describe this phenomenon of reciprocal causation.

"Stern, Stein, and Bloom (1956) amplified Murray's contribution. They demonstrated that behavior could be predicted much better when the setting in which the behavior occurred was clearly defined so as to include the social demands of the situation" (Insel and Moos, 1974). Pervin and Lewis (1978) further clarify and define the concept of "transactions" as regarding objects as being in a continuous state of influencing and being influenced by other objects. The authors describe three essential properties of the "transactional view":

(a) Each part of the system has no independence outside the other parts of the system or the system as a whole. In other words, no one constituent of a relationship can be adequately specified without specification of the other constituents. (b) One part of the system is not acted upon by another part, but instead there is a constant reciprocal relationship. There are not cause-effect relationships but transactions that occur over time. (c) Action in any part of the system has consequences for other parts of the system" (Pervin and Lewis, 1978).

The Resident Assistant's Environment

Both the residence hall environment and the work environment are operative for the RA as student-staff member. "Residence halls provide an optimum type of housing arrangement for some types of students while they have little appeal for other students" (Duvall, 1969). The RA apparently finds the housing accommodations of residence halls sufficiently appealing to seek a paraprofessional position. A required qualification of every RA applicant is experience

residing on campus in a residence hall. The effects of the residence hall environment are significant to the RA as well as to the students, and often the effects are quite similar.

The developmental issues encountered by students in a co-ed residence hall (Brown, et al, 1973) or in a single-sex residence hall are issues for the RA as well. Findings indicate that living in co-ed residence hall units may be more stressful than living in single sex units (Moos and Otto, 1975) and the RA is by no means immune from stress.

The RA experiences the various impacts of the residence hall (Chickering, 1967) no less than the resident who is not a staff member. High-rise residence halls may impede the focus upon the individual student due to their layout and structure (Gores, 1963; Sinnott, et al, 1972), and the RA who lives and works in this type of facility is not protected from such a liability.

Likewise the benefits which accrue from living in the residence community (Greenleaf, 1965) are available to the RA as well as to the resident. Self-actualization of students is enhanced by living in co-ed residence halls (Schroeder and LeMay, 1973) for the RA as well as for the residents in his or her charge. The residence hall is a "locus for learning" (Hardee, 1964; Brunson, 1963) for the RA, too. Dressell and Lehman (1965) cite association with different people in the residence hall as "the most significant experience in the college lives of students" and noted that

"informal interaction within living groups was a potent factor in shaping the attitudes and values of students." The RA must be counted among the many students who benefit from the educational (Riker and DeCoster, 1971) and developmental (Montgomery, et al, 1975) benefits of living in residence halls.

Issues of person-environment "fit" or congruence addressed in other employment settings may have implications for the RA as a paraprofessional staff member (Argyris, 1954, 1957; Porter, Lawler, and Hackman, 1975; Pervin, 1968; Stern, 1970). The objective of the ecological model described by Banning and Kaiser (1974) is "to produce more optimal person-environment fits." Some historical background may clarify this issue for the reader.

The human relations approach, in reaction to the mechanistic view of organization exemplified in scientific management, attempted to take into account the psychological and social needs of the persons who make up an organization (Roethlisberger and Dickson, 1939). This approach incorporated an effort toward balancing the focus on the organization with a focus on man. Theorists such as Likert (1955), McGregor (1960), and McMurry (1958) cast the problem into a more traditional, practical view of the organization and of man and provided a basis for the optimistic views articulated by Argyris (1957).

Residence hall environments can very likely pose barriers to the "self-actualization" of the RA by accentuating

phenomena and circumstances which are debilitating (Gores, 1963; Sinnett, et al, 1972). Likewise, the needs of the group (organization) may be so opposed to the needs of the RA that the situation is counter-productive rather than "optimizing" (Argyris, 1957, 1962; Gerst and Moos, 1972).

Discussion and measurement of the environment necessitates a definition. Defining "environment" is almost as elusive a task as defining "reality." The basic problem which is addressed by most literature reviewed is the problem of subjective environment versus objective environment, sometimes regarded as psychological environment versus physical environment. The investigator does not presume to resolve the issue; rather, the assumption that the behavioral environment is defined "according to the individual's perceptions of it and his reactions to these perceptions" (Pervin, 1968a and Stern, 1970, as cited by Walsh, 1973) will hold sway in this discussion.

"Pervin operationally defined the environment in terms of each individual's self-reported perception. The environment is defined as it is individually perceived" (Walsh, 1973). Conyne and Clark (1981) emphasize that "what people think is true is true for them, and that is reality." The environmental variables which comprise the situation in which the RA is located are identified in the University Residence Environment Scale (URES) by Moos and Gerst (1974). The URES consists of three dimensions -- relationship,

personal development, and system maintenance and system change -- which "must all be accounted for in order for an adequate and reasonable complex picture of the environment to emerge" (Insel and Moos, 1974). A general principle posited by Insel and Moos (1974) is that "the way one perceives his surroundings or environment influences the way one will behave in that environment." The URES is discussed in greater detail in the chapter which describes the methodology of this investigation.

As mentioned previously, the RA also must operate within the work environment in which he or she is employed. With respect to the organization in which RAs are employed, Schroeder (1979) claims that

"All too often staff are expected to adjust and accommodate themselves to the prevailing social environment, and they are rarely provided opportunities to change or redesign the student affairs environment in order to make it more responsive to their own needs and personal growth goals. For staff, the results may be low morale, marginal productivity, and, in some cases, high attrition."

In another article Schroeder (1979) describes a staff-oriented approach implementing democratic principles as a means of managing the environment to achieve ideal environments for staff and ultimately for students.

The orientation of the administrator in charge of RAs is a dominant factor in the type of work environment which exists (Eberle and Muston, 1969). Murphy (1964) held that the principal function of residence hall staff was to maintain order and control. The effects of such a position on

staff attitudes and actions may be quite different from, for example, the impact of an administrator who sought self-actualization of RA as a priority of the residence hall program (Graff and Bradshaw, 1970).

While RA perceptions of the organizational environment are not included in this investigation, a description of the explicit objectives of the organization for the RA is presented in Appendix A. Clearly, an open systems approach (Katz and Kahn, 1966) which characterizes the university housing organization does not allow for measurement of all relevant environments; it is the judgment of the investigator that the preponderance of environmental press derives in the living unit, and it is this environment which is the concern of the URES.

The Role Of The Environment

"The organism which adapts well under one condition would not survive under another. If for each environment there is a best organism, for every organism there is a best environment" (Cronbach, 1960). The organism is usually defined in terms of needs and behaviors of the individual while the environment is normally regarded as the properties or characteristics -- the press -- which exert a directional influence on the participants. "Just as needs are inferred from the characteristic modes of response of an individual ... so press are the characteristic demands or features as perceived by those who live in the particular environment"

(Pace and Stern, 1958).

The interpersonal environment can be defined in terms of the characteristics or perceptions of its members. Stern (1970) used a method of aggregating the perceptions reported by participants and deriving a consensus, thereby producing a "reasonable estimate of the psychological interpersonal environment" (Walsh, 1973). For Pervin, however -- and likewise for this investigation -- "the environment is defined as it is individually perceived" (Walsh, 1973).

The spectrum of evaluating person-environment fit is one of congruence-dissonance, which is interpreted in terms of complementarity of the needs-press combination (Stern, 1970). According to Walsh (1973) "the distance from needs to press serves as a quantitative measure of dissonance." While the distance is not quantified in this investigation, other variables may be regarded as ramifications of dissonance. "The press of [the] ... environment represents what must be faced and dealt with by the student" (Pace and Stern, 1958).

Dissonance might "stimulate a modification of the press, withdrawal of the participants, or tolerance of it" (Walsh, 1973). Likewise efforts to modify the environmental press, withdrawal, or tolerance might imply dissonance. Wilkenson (1960) suggests that subjects may respond to the environmental press as a challenge or that "unpleasant environmental effects may occur together ... What may provoke one stress may evoke

another." The complications of sorting out the nature of stress is reflected in the statement, "Stress, in addition to being itself, and the result of itself, is also the cause of itself" (Wallis, 1983).

Just as environmental press may prove debilitating, so may it be growth-producing. "The climate of environments in which people function relates to their satisfaction, mood and self-esteem and to their personal growth. Environments shape adaptive potentials as well as facilitate or inhibit initiatives and coping behavior" (Insel and Moos, 1974). Pervin (1967) acknowledges the role of individual differences in assessing the environment by speculating that "it may be that some individuals are more tolerant of differences and are more flexible in adapting to them than others." Banning and Kaiser (1974) emphasize that the ecological perspective "assumes that different people respond differently in different types of environments and that there should be an optimum fit between people and their environment for growth and development." Pervin originally stated that for each individual there are environments which tend to match or fit the individual's personality" (Walsh, 1973).

It is clear that the objectives of the ecological perspective are colored by certain values. "Social ecology has an explicit value orientation in that it is concerned with promoting maximally effective human functioning" (Insel

and Moos, 1974). Pace and Stern (1958) suggest that "it is possible that the total pattern of congruence between personal needs and environmental press will be more predictive of achievement, growth and change than any single aspect of either the person or the environment."

In their study of college and university residences, Gerst and Moos (1972) proposed that "it may be that the immediate living environment ... may have significant impacts on students in areas such as ... changes in subjective mood state, and the development of psychiatric symptomatology." Gerst and Moos continue:

"The press of the external environment (including the behavior of other persons and ecological variables) suggests the direction a resident's behavior must take if he is to function with a minimum of stress and a maximum of satisfaction with his particular living group ... When the environmental regulators of behavior are more fully documented it may be possible ... to enhance an individual's coping skills necessary for acceptable behavior in particular interactive domains" (Gerst and Moos, 1972).

Summary

Environmental considerations in this review acknowledge the influence of the environment on the RA, but the emphasis is placed on the transactional relationships between the person and the environment. The residence hall environment is more complex from the point of view of the RA than from the perspective of the resident because it is the RA's work environment as well as a place to live. RAs are affected by the environment in much the same manner as residents, but

the RA must also function within the environment as a worker. Residence hall environments should be self-actualizing.

Defining "environment" is no small task. The living unit is identified as the primary environment on which this investigation focuses. In this particular environment (as in any other environment) stressors may be either debilitating or growth-producing. The concern of the ecological perspective is to attain an optimum "fit" between the RA and the environment.

This investigation is in part a type of social ecological study. Social ecology has a "special emphasis on the identification of maladaptive responses and their relationship to environmental variables" (Gerst and Moos, 1972). According to an ecological perspective, "burnout is viewed as a form of ecological dysfunction" (Carroll, 1980; Carroll and White, 1981). "Signs of burnout may appear anywhere within the ecological system or life space, including the person and the various component parts of the individual's environment" (Carroll and White, 1981). Burnout is explored in depth in the following section.

Burnout

A review of the literature concerning burnout reveals many settings and manifestations of the phenomenon. Most of the work environments in which burnout has been investigated are human service organizations, the type of organization

in which the concept originated (Freudenberger, 1974). "Burnout" was coined to describe the experience of emotional exhaustion and depletion of personal resources of the helping professional by Freudenberger and his associates (1974) in the free clinic movement.

Freudenberger (1975) acknowledged from the beginning that the phenomenon was not restricted to helping and human services professionals; but he emphasized that the effects of burnout were more readily apparent and accelerated in the type of environment where the worker seeks to benefit others in a highly visible organization with constant requirements for sacrifice.

Some of the more common settings in which burnout has been noticed and investigated include public welfare agencies (social security administrators, social workers, police, security officers, protective services agents, and prison staff), education (school teachers, college teachers, special education teachers, librarians, child care/day care workers, death educators), health services (nurses, psychotherapists, mental health workers, hospital administrators, physicians), counseling (rehabilitation counselors, drug counselors, youth counselors, geriatric counselors, career development specialists), and other professions such as clergy, lawyers, and business executives.

Shinn (1981) admonishes students and researchers of burnout to "be wary of over generalizing from one occupation,

work place, or role to another." As the brief listing of settings above suggests, this caution has been heeded quite well by investigators concerned about the nature of the burnout phenomenon in a specialized type of work setting; a majority of the articles studied by this investigator were descriptive or prescriptive treatises on the state of burnout in a particular situation or type of work. Nevertheless, generalizations are made, and many of the more prevalent ideas form the foundation for significant progress in the development of the theories of burnout.

While burnout is regarded as "a subtle pattern of symptoms, behaviors, and attitudes that are unique for each person" (Mattingly, 1977), there is ample evidence to draw some conclusions as to what the burnout syndrome entails. The literature reviewed below is organized into four categories: Sources of burnout, symptoms of burnout, characteristics of burnout, and implications of burnout.

Sources of Burnout

Like stress and anxiety in general, burnout has its origins within the individual who experiences burnout and in the environment in which he or she lives and works. "Assume that there is a continuum of variables that contribute to job stress and burnout. At one extreme there are individual variables such as personality characteristics, job skills, and job expectation. At the opposite extreme are organization variables such as working conditions,

workload, and time pressures. In the middle of the continuum there are interactions between the factors at the two extremes" (Wilder and Plutchik, 1981).

Lazarus and Launier (1978) state that stress refers to events "in which environmental or internal demands (or both) tax or exceed the adaptive resources of an individual." The implications of stress are not exclusively negative, however. "The word stress has to be understood as something that can bring out the potentialities in people. The experience of stress is itself a sign of growth" (Katz, 1975). Burnout is negative, however, and it is pervasive, both in its origins and in its manifestations. "Both causes and effects occur at all levels from the biological through the societal" (Paine, 1981).

Among the psychological models of stress that seem most relevant to burnout, according to Sweeney (1981), is that of "Learned Helplessness" (Abramson, et al, 1978; Seligman, 1975; Diener and Dweck, 1978; Dweck, 1975). "Learned helplessness" refers to the individual's perceptions and expectations of failure and their subsequent changes in performance and achievement, which result in self attribution of helplessness or perception of loss of control. The individual no longer perceives the connection between his own behavior and outcomes within his environment.

Some personal characteristics which are regarded by Mattingly (1977) as potential sources of burnout are the

need to be successful, the need to give combined with the sense that one cannot give enough, and a variety of role conflicts which seem to derive in personal needs. Another personal source of burnout is likely to be "inadequate training and education needed to do the job. This is especially true among paraprofessionals who, more often than not, have the greatest amount of direct contact" (Carroll and White, 1981). One of the more descriptive terms used by Mattingly (1977) to identify environmental conditions which are sources of burnout is "pressure cooker." This source may include such factors as having to process enormous amounts of information with great speed, having to make many decisions, and engaging in interactions which are extremely intense.

Other environmental factors which operate as sources of burnout include visibility to supervisors, colleagues, and/or clients, awareness of one's function as a role model, exposure to harm, not being allowed to cope with one task at a time, and terminations of association with clients (Mattingly, 1977).

The quantity of work alone is not regarded as a source of burnout. "Longer work hours are correlated with more stress and negative staff attitudes only when they involve continuous direct contact with patients or clients" (Maslach, 1978).

Freudenberger (1974) identifies unfulfilled expectations as a source. "A Burn-Out," he says, referring to someone who is experiencing burnout, is "in a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward. Whenever the expectation level is dramatically opposed to reality and the person persists in trying to reach that expectation, trouble is on the way." Maslach (1976) asserts that "many of the causes of burnout are located not in permanent traits of the people involved, but in certain social and situational factors."

One situational factor which has many implications for the worker is ambiguity. Kahn (1974) defines ambiguity as "discrepancy between the amount of information a person has and the amount required to perform." Of course ambiguity occurs at more levels than just that which concerns information. White's (1981b) twelve role conditions which are believed to contribute to burnout make the concept of ambiguity much more explicit, and the nature of the ambiguity is presented as affective as well as cognitive.

According to Shinn (1981), many aspects of the work environment can contribute to burnout. The fact that they are interdependent makes patterns of causality difficult to determine. Wilder and Plutchik (1981) recognize that "many factors in the job situation can make burnout more likely or less likely to occur." Cherniss (1980) found eight

workplace factors which distinguished between the most and least burned-out workers," and "Kafry (1981) reports thirty-seven relationships of environmental conditions and burnout" (Shinn, 1981).

Sweeney (1981) advises that "with chronic stress as the common environmental element, the etiological chain producing burnout is multi-factorial. For this reason, each situation should be examined, at some point, on an individual basis."

"Typically burnout occurs whenever a person with inadequate stress management and need-gratifying skills must work in a stressful and need-frustrating work environment" (Carroll and White, 1981). Carroll and White (1981) continue by emphasizing the "dynamic, complex interaction of personal and environmental sources of stress and frustration." The end result is that these interacting factors "detract from the person's ability to do his or her work" (Carroll and White, 1981).

Selye (1980) indicated that "stress at some level is necessary for adequate adaptive functioning." Because "individuals ... vary in the level of stress that is optimal for them," Sweeney (1981) asserts, "chronic stress may be necessary, but it is not always sufficient, to produce the signs and symptoms of burnout." "Burnout must be seen as a result of a complex interplay between environmental influences and individual susceptibility to them" (Sweeney, 1981).

Two final factors which are identified as sources of burnout in human services work are clients and peers. The role of the client is central to staff burnout (Maslach, 1978). Shinn (1981) describes work in human services as different from work in profit-making organizations "because of the emotional demands posed by clients" (Maslach, 1978), "the giving of oneself required in a helping relationship" (Berkeley Planning Associates, 1977) and "the constellations of unrealistic expectations ... held by workers and clients alike" (Cherniss, 1980b). "Being close enough to help, in short, implies the possibility of hurting and being hurt" (Golembiewski, 1981).

"Primary among situational factors suggested as mediators of the effects of life stress is a broad range of social relationships conceptualized as providing social support" (Sandler, 1979). Peers of the helpers can either provide or withhold support of the worker; likewise the worker can choose whether or not he will seek support from his peers. While "social support includes but refers to more than the mere presence of others" (Golembiewski, 1981), empirical data has been reported on the negative relationship of social support with burnout (Pines and Aronson, 1981; Shinn, et al, 1981). This idea is explored more fully in the section concerning implications of burnout.

Symptoms of Burnout

"The person who is burning out is usually aware of only a vague and inarticulated personal distress for which he has no name" (Mattingly, 1977). A more specific definition of burnout is provided by Pines and Maslach (1978): "Burnout can be defined as a syndrome of physical and emotional exhaustion, involving the development of negative self-concept, negative job attitudes, and loss of concern and feeling for clients." Specific physical symptoms which have been cited in various articles on the burnout syndrome range from insomnia to fatigue and include such problems as headaches, gastro-intestinal disturbances, inability to "shake" a cold, and loss of weight. Freudenberger regards these types of symptoms as "psychosomatic complaints" (1978).

Emotional exhaustion is a more pervasive yet elusive category of burnout symptoms. Depression, anger (temper flare-ups), and irritability are some of the more familiar symptoms, as are feelings of hopelessness and feeling trapped. Emotional exhaustion is also manifested in loneliness, negative self-concept, suspicious attitudes, rigidity, cynicism, "craziness," and feelings of omnipotence. Some of these symptoms may result in behavior such as sudden changes in verbosity and extraordinary risk-taking (Freudenberger, 1975; Maslach, 1978).

Pines (1981) has expanded the definition of burnout to include mental exhaustion in addition to physical and

emotional exhaustion. Corresponding symptoms include self-perception of worthlessness, disillusionment and resentment. Sweeney (1981) points out that "there is major overlap of the symptoms of burnout and the symptoms of depressive disorder." Freudemberger (1981) considers it "difficult to draw a composite sketch of a burned out human being."

Characteristics of Burnout

"There is general agreement that burnout occurs at an individual level. Second, there is general agreement that burnout is an internal experience that is usually psychological in nature (feelings, attitudes, motives, expectations). Third, there is general agreement that burnout is a negative experience for the individual, in that it involves problems, distress, discomfort, dysfunction, and/or negative consequences" (Maslach, 1981).

To identify all of the characteristics would be not only impossible, but, also misleading. Sweeney (1981) identifies some of the more general characteristics of burnout as

"lowered motivation, decreased gratification and fulfillment in the work setting, pervasive apathy, and the self-perception of being ineffectual. Decreased energy, greater irritability, and growing cynicism are also often associated with burnout."

The characteristics of burnout are a function of the traits of the individual experiencing burnout combined with the characteristics and requirements of the environment in which burnout occurs. Four general categories (Maslach and Pines, 1979), however, will provide a framework for identifying some of the possible characteristics of burnout.

Detached Concern

For the worker engaged in a helping relationship and experiencing burnout, a loss of concern can be quite detrimental. Loss of emotional feelings can be detected in a worker's detachment or distancing from clients. The more common expressions and behaviors associated with helping may continue on a superficial level, and the concern for the client may seem to continue; but the worker is not invested in the relationship when he is experiencing burnout.

The burnout phenomenon is apparent "across a wide variety of work settings" (Maslach, 1974). Techniques of detachment are verbal and nonverbal ploys "to make the client seem less human, more like an object or a number" (Maslach, 1974).

Actual behaviors which are cited as ways of physically distancing oneself include standing farther away, avoiding eye contact, and keeping a hand on the door knob while continuing minimal conversation.

Intellectualization

The use of descriptive terms or labels is evidence of either intellectualization or detached concern. Pines and Maslach (1978) discuss the recasting of "a volatile situation in more intellectual and less personal tones" as a characteristic of burnout. "Describing things as precisely and scientifically as possible" is a means of intellectualizing a situation and "serves the purpose of distancing

the person from a client who is emotionally upsetting in some way" (Pines and Maslach, 1978).

Compartmentalization

According to Maslach (1974) compartmentalization entails making a sharp distinction between one's job and personal life. For example, the worker neither discusses personal affairs with coworkers nor discusses experiences on the job with family and friends. Generalizing about one's job or even refusing to tell people what one's job is is characteristic of burnout. An even more subtle yet common indicator of compartmentalization is the person's thoughts which arise and the feelings of anxiety when the telephone rings at home.

Withdrawal

Each of the characteristics discussed above may be means of attempting to withdraw from an anxiety-producing or anxiety-provoking situation. Yet withdrawal is in some ways a distinct characteristic of burnout. The worker experiencing burnout may withdraw by "communicating with clients in impersonal ways" such as use of superficial generalities, stereotypical responses, or even form letters. Key indicators of the characteristic of withdrawal are "spending less time with clients who are problematic" and "spending more time with clients where achievement or success is indicated" (Maslach, 1974). Another method, particularly in bureaucratic organizations which may lend

themselves to this type of withdrawal, is "going by the book (to short-circuit personal involvement)" (Maslach, 1974). In some work settings burnout can result in the "transformation of a person with original thought and creativity into a mechanical, petty bureaucrat" (Maslach, 1978). Finally, the use of humor can be a dehumanizing indicator of withdrawal as the worker jokes or laughs about a stressful event. Maslach (1978) emphasizes that "Opportunities for withdrawing from a stressful situation are critically important ... However, the type of withdrawal that is available may spell the difference between burnout and coping." In summary, burnout results in "emotional self-protection" of the worker "at the expense of clients" (Maslach, 1978).

Implications of Burnout

What are the implications of burnout? Christina Maslach (1981) identifies the most frequently addressed implication:

"Most conceptualizations of burnout have hypothesized a direct link between experienced burnout and a deterioration in the quality of service or care provided to clients. Presumably, the person who is burned out and has negative feelings and attitudes about clients will not be inspired to try harder for them, and will provide a minimal level of care at best (and probably even poor care)."

Most literature on burnout, however, is not based on empirical research; therefore, links between experienced burnout and deterioration of quality of service or care

remain hypothetical (Maslach, 1981).

The potential effects upon the clients -- students in this investigation -- can be linked with many of the characteristics already noted. Ranging from impersonal treatment to dehumanizing service and attitudes, the effects of a helper experiencing burnout can be considerably damaging to the client.

Implications for the worker, of course, are more immediate but are also more elusive. The worker may not realize that he or she is experiencing burnout until altered perceptions of clients or the job have already had a negative effect on someone else (Cherniss, 1980; Maslach and Jackson, 1978). Obviously some of the physiological symptoms of burnout would be noticed by the worker; however, the worker may not associate the complaint or problem with burnout. Disillusionment, frustration, and a sense of failure or incompetence (Cherniss, 1980; Edelwich and Brodsky, 1980) are some of the effects which may be diagnosed and addressed more readily; these symptoms, however, are also personal concerns which the worker is least likely to acknowledge (Mattingly, 1977).

Not only the worker and the client, but also the organization at large (as a unit as well as in its various components) is affected by burnout. The worker who does not go to work may avoid having negative effects on the clients, but it is the organization which must fill the gap.

Absenteeism and job turnover are the two most obvious effects on the organization; but neither of these problems occur suddenly, and the circumstances which precede them are probably as pervasive as their actual effects. The drain on other workers is also an area of organizational impact, as is the role of burnout on morale.

Probably the single most noticeable effect of burnout on the client, the worker, and the organization is the quality of the contact with clients (Maslach, 1981). The worker who inadequately serves the clients contributes to his or her own sense of failure and frustration while neglecting his or her responsibility to the organization. The process is so cyclical and the effects so interconnected that it is difficult to specify a single, most important effect or a definite origin. One descriptive scenario may offer some insight, but that same situation would also suggest a myriad of other possibilities. The term "ecological dysfunction" (Carroll and White, 1981) sums up the scope of burnout, its origins, and its effects, in a graphic manner. "Both causes and effects occur at all levels from the biological through the societal" (Paine, 1981).

It is important to note that the implications may be realized in a manner similar to that manner in which burnout is thought to occur, i.e., in stages (Golembiewski and Munzenrider, 1981). The more advanced the burnout, the more advanced the implications. This aspect brings into focus

the final implication to be reviewed in this chapter -- the challenge of burnout for the researcher and the practitioner.

Most burnout research is directed, ultimately, toward treating, moderating, or preventing burnout. Efforts are made in a variety of dimensions to help reduce, eliminate or avoid burnout. The most comprehensive summary of efforts to deal effectively with the burnout stress syndrome is found in the "Proceedings of the First National Conference on Burnout" (Paine, 1981). The conference presenters approached the issue by first examining the burnout stress syndrome in its historical and political (Cherniss, 1981) and economic and legal (Minnehan and Paine, 1981) contexts. An obvious key to effectiveness in dealing with burnout is to attain a greater understanding of the phenomenon in the context in which it occurs.

The presenters at the conference -- all experts in their own fields and leaders in the study of burnout -- dealt with the ongoing difficulties of taking burnout seriously as a stress syndrome (Sweeney, 1981). Burnout is recognized as a popular term in an era of popular psychology (Maslach, 1981) and it has the potential of being disregarded as a new name for old conditions unless examined in the context in which it occurs (Carroll and White, 1981). One problem which continues to plague the efforts to understand burnout is the lack of empirical research on the phenomenon.

Warnings about using information on burnout are well-founded due to the abundance of descriptive articles which are based on informal observations and which are usually quite specific to the settings in which the study occurred (Shinn, 1981).

Coping strategies range from prevention to therapy. An emphasis on adequate preparation of workers whose occupation is burnout-prone as well as on training in dealing with some of the potential sources of burnout in the work setting are likely preventives. Wilder and Plutchik (1981) assume that

"there is a continuum of variables that contribute to job stress and burnout. At one extreme there are individual variables such as personality characteristics, job skills, and job expectations. At the opposite extreme are organizational variables such as working conditions, workload, and time pressures. In the middle of the continuum, there are interactions between the factors at the two extremes."

Methods of helping the individual range from training the individual in the skills which best suit the individual and the situation (Tubesing and Tubesing, 1981) to designing interventions which may be implemented both on and off the job (Edelwich and Brodsky, 1981). The coping skills play a significant part in the quality of help a worker experiencing burnout is able to provide (Freudenberger, 1981). Edelwich and Brodsky (1980) note that burnout is a "natural process of adaptation to experience" and therefore believe that it is "unrealistic to think in terms of preventing it."

Golembiewski (1981) identifies the potential of Organization Development (OD) interventions in dealing with the burnout stress syndrome while "creative supervision" is

posited as an "antidote for burnout" (Shapiro, 1981). Paine (1981) suggests interventions which may focus on or be targeted to specific sites or levels. "The four most important sites are: (1) Individual; (2) Interpersonal; (3) Workplace; and (4) Organizational" (Paine, 1981).

Ayala Pines (1981) concludes that a work environment without burnout is an impossible goal. She identifies psychological, physical, social, and organizational features of the work environment which may be managed in ways to prevent and/or counteract burnout.

In summary, the literature reveals that burnout is a function of the person, the environment, and the interaction of the two. Likewise, any strategies of prevention or intervention must take into account all relevant factors in order to prove helpful.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter delineates the methods employed in designing and conducting the investigation. A description of the subjects who comprised the research population is the first topic. Second is a description of the data collection procedures and research instruments, including the development and implementation of the interview, the Burn-out Measure, and the University Residence Environment Scale (URES). The chapter closes with an explanation of the methods of data analysis.

Subjects

A total of one hundred forty-nine (149) resident assistants (RAs) are employed at the University of Georgia. All RAs are employed based on a comprehensive selection process which includes statements of interests and qualifications, personal references, and a series of interviews. RAs are trained through a combination of methods including a College of Education academic course, a workshop held prior to the beginning of the school year in the fall, and in-service training programs. RAs are the staff who are directly responsible for a residence hall living unit which accommodates approximately forty college students. The RA position requires twenty hours of work per week, yet the RA is considered "on call" at any time. A position description

may be found in Appendix A.

The subjects for this investigation were selected from the total resident assistant staff employed during the 1982-83 academic year. Selection of subjects for this investigation was based on three criteria which served as controls:

- (a) Time on the job: RAs who began their employment at the start of fall quarter, 1982. At the time of the first step of the investigation the subjects had been in their positions for eight months.
- (b) Training: RAs who were enrolled in the initial training program (a College of Education academic credit course entitled "Students Helping Students") in the spring quarter, 1982, and who attended the fall, 1982, staff workshop for RAs.
- (c) Type of Assignment: RAs who were assigned to a single-sex living unit rather than a coeducational unit.

The criteria for selecting subjects and the timing procedures of the investigation combined to provide for maximum homogeneity of the population without detracting from the representativeness of the population of students who hold the RA position in general.

The data collection commenced at the beginning of the third week of spring quarter. Interviewers were given three weeks to complete all components of the data collection. A time relatively late in the school year was selected in order

to allow for maximum familiarity of RAs with students. The particular time of the quarter was selected because it was regarded by the investigator as a period without any extreme academic or work-related pressures for staff (e.g., mid-term examinations, check-in/check-out of residents).

A total of fifty-seven (57) subjects were identified and invited by the investigator to participate voluntarily (Appendix B). Each subject was then contacted by a trained assistant and arrangements for participation in the investigation were made. Before data collection began, the purposes of the investigation and the rights and responsibilities of the investigator and the subjects were explained. Each subject who agreed to participate signed a statement of consent in accordance with the research on human subjects regulations of the University of Georgia (Appendix C).

Data Collection

The data collection procedures consisted of three components in which each subject participated. Explanation of the investigation and consent to participate (described above) provided an introduction to the first component. The first component of data collection was a personal interview with an interviewer who was selected, trained and supervised by the investigator. Second was a printed measurement instrument administered by the interviewer immediately following the interview. Several demographic items were included on the cover sheet of the measurement instrument, primarily to

verify that each subject met the criteria of selection and to provide for accurate records. Finally each subject completed a printed survey instrument which was mailed to him or her one week after the interview. Each of these components is described in detail below.

The Interview

A personal interview with each subject was employed as the measure of "personal involvement" of the RA with the students in his or her charge. The interview was based on an investigation conducted by Jackson, Silberman and Wolfson (1969) in which the authors measured the personal involvement of elementary school teachers with their students. Three dimensions of "personal involvement" were adapted for use in this investigation and are defined below:

1. Preference: The RA's choice of students with whom he or she "most prefers to associate," and those with whom he or she "least prefers to associate." Two students were identified for each category.
2. Degree of Involvement: The evidence of personal involvement reflected in the frequency of certain descriptive comments about individuals; and
3. Quality of Involvement: The evidence of personal involvement reflected in the emotional tone of the descriptive comments about individuals.

The interview procedures were developed through pilot interviews conducted by the investigator with resident assistants who were not included in the research population. These pilot interviews allowed the investigator to refine the interview procedures and resulted in the development of the standard procedures for conducting the interviews and evaluating the responses of the subjects (Richardson, et al, 1965).

The interview consisted of two steps, as follows:

Step One: Identifying individual students: this step provided for each subject to identify the two students with whom he or she most preferred to associate and the two students with whom he or she least preferred to associate from among the students living in the group in his or her charge.

Step Two: Describing individual students: this step was designed to provide a realistic situation in which the RA described each of the four individuals previously identified.

Appendix D outlines the interview procedures in greater detail.

Interviews were conducted by six student affairs workers who were selected, trained, and supervised by the investigator. All interviews were audio tape recorded and then transcribed for scoring by the investigator. The investigator

also listened to the tapes of each interviewer to determine if appropriate interview techniques were used and protocol was followed. Each transcript was rated using the following classification of statements.

1. **Admiration or disdain:** a statement in which the RA clearly expressed admiration or disdain for some aspect of the individual's behavior. For example, "He is one of the most creative and witty people that I've been associated with," and "She couldn't understand why she couldn't scream at four o'clock in the morning and be drunk and beat on doors."
2. **Judgment:** a statement which contained a judgment of worth -- positive or negative -- of the trait identified or described. Examples are, "She's not a real outgoing person, but she gets to know everybody," and "She's very wealthy which I have nothing against, but she's never had to learn to respect other people."
3. **Pleasure or frustration:** a statement in which the RA indicated personal pleasure or frustration in working with the student. For example, "I just find her an excellent type person to be around," and "He's pretty easy to get along with, except that he does smoke pot and I can't ever catch him at it."

Statements which were judged to be in any one of these three classifications were identified and were then evaluated to determine if the emotional tone expressed was positive or negative. Statements which were not counted were statements which reiterated or repeated statements already made, statements which were used as fillers in the conversation (e.g., "She's a nice person" or "He's a great guy"), and statements which were descriptive of a group. The tense of all interviews was not the same. Because of the nature of the interview and the differences among individuals, some responses were in the past tense, some in present tense, and some in future tense.

After all statements were classified and evaluated, the total number of statements made about the most preferred students indicated the degree of involvement with those students; likewise the total number of classifiable statements made about least preferred students indicated the degree of involvement with those students. Both figures combined to indicate the degree of involvement of the RA with students in his or her charge.

Quality of involvement was determined by computing the ratio or proportion of positive statements to the total number of classifiable statements. This computation yielded a quality score ranging from 0 to 1.0. Three scores -- for most preferred students, least preferred students, and combined students -- were derived to indicate quality of involvement.

Independent scoring of randomly selected transcripts by additional judges established the reliability of the scoring procedures. The percentage of agreement between two independent raters scoring the same randomly selected transcripts was 81.7%. This figure represents the average of the percentages of agreement of the judges in identifying and categorizing the indicators of personal involvement for each description.

Burnout Measure

Burnout was measured by a paper and pencil questionnaire which measures "a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion which results from long-term involvement with people in situations which are emotionally demanding" (Pines, 1981). The "Burnout Measure" (Pines and Aronson, 1980) is a twenty-one item questionnaire in which respondents indicate on a seven-point frequency scale their experience of a particular feeling or condition (Appendix F). Permission to use the instrument was granted to the investigator by Ayala Pines, Ph.D, of the University of California, Berkeley (Appendix G).

The items of the "Burnout Measure" may be clustered into three specific components which were integral to the construction of the measure. These components are not used separately in the analysis of the data because they are not regarded as factors in their own right and because burnout

as a total score is particularly appropriate for this investigation. It may be of interest to note, however, that burnout as measured by the "Burnout Measure" represents physical exhaustion (i.e., feeling weak, tired, rundown), emotional exhaustion (i.e., feeling depressed, trapped, hopeless), and mental exhaustion (i.e., self perception of worthlessness, disillusionment, and resentment) (Pines, 1980). As defined by the author, a score of four (4) or more on a scale of 1 - 7 represents a state of burnout.

In research with over five thousand (5000) subjects of various ethnic backgrounds and in numerous work settings, the "Burnout Measure" was found to have test-retest reliability of .89 for a one-month interval, .76 for a two-month interval, .66 for a four-month interval. Alpha coefficients of internal consistency ranged from .91 to .93. All of the twenty-one (21) individual items correlated with the composite score at the .001 level of significance (Pines, 1981).

Construct validity examinations revealed significant correlations between burnout as measured by the "Burnout Measure" and several measures of satisfaction (e.g., with life, work, oneself), job turnover, hopelessness, and a variety of health problems.

The cover sheet for the "Burnout Measure" contained several demographic items. These items were included as a means of verifying that each subject met the criteria of

selection. Four items from the cover sheet were regarded as additional data for use in the investigation, including "sex," "academic classification," "number of students in the living unit," and "intentions to return as a resident student" (Appendix E).

The University Residence Environment Scale

The University Residence Environment Scale (URES: Moos and Gerst, 1974, Appendix H) was the standardized instrument used to measure the environment in which the RA lives and works. The URES is a one hundred item survey of the residence hall environment. The respondent reads each item which describes a particular aspect of the residence hall environment and then responds on a separate answer sheet indicating whether the description is "true" or "false" for his or her living unit.

The URES measures the social climate of the residence hall living unit. Each item identifies a characteristic of the environment which exerts a press toward three categories of dimensions of the living unit of "house" -- Relationship dimensions, Personal Growth or Development dimensions, and System Maintenance and System Change dimensions (Moos and Gerst, 1974).

There are ten (10) subscales of the URES, five of which were included in this investigation.

Relationship Dimensions

Involvement	Degree of commitment to the house and residents; amount of interaction and feeling of friendship in the house.
Emotional Support	Extent of manifest concern for others in the house; efforts to aid one another with academic and personal problems; emphasis on open and honest communication.

Personal Growth or Development Dimensions

Intellectuality	Emphasis on cultural, artistic and other scholarly intellectual activities in the house, as distinguished from strictly classroom achievements.
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System Maintenance and System Change Dimensions

Order and Organization	Amount of formal structure or organization (e.g., rules, schedules, following established procedures, etc.) in the house; neatness.
Innovation	Organizational and individual spontaneity of behaviors and ideas; number and variety of activities; new activities.

Temporal stability of the instrument was measured and reported in two ways. Test-retest correlations yielded average reliability coefficients (for the ten subscales) of .72 for a one-week interval and .68 for a four-week interval (Moos and Gerst, 1974). Intraclass correlation (Haggard, 1958) coefficients were .96 after one week and .86 after one month for men, and .96 after one week and .98 after one month for women (Moos and Gerst, 1974).

Subscale internal consistencies were deemed acceptable (range: .77 to .88) and the average subscale intercorrelations were measured at around .20, "indicating that the subscales measure distinct, albeit somewhat related, aspects of university living group environments" (Moos and Gerst, 1974).

Administration of the URES was by mail. Each subject received the survey one week after he or she completed the interview and the "Burnout Measure." A cover letter (Appendix J) contained instructions for completing and returning the instrument. Instructions are also included in the test booklet.

A lapse of one week between the first two and the third components of the investigation was arranged to avoid the association of particular individuals and/or difficulties with the descriptions of the environment. It was the investigator's view that this procedure would minimize bias in data collection for any of the three components.

Surveys were returned to the investigator via campus mail and were scored by the investigator using the transparent score key provided by the publisher.

The scores for all three components - Personal Involvement, Burnout, and Residence Environment -- were then compiled on a master chart in preparation for data analysis.

Hypotheses and Data Analysis

There were nineteen null hypotheses to be tested through the data analysis. Each of these NULL hypotheses is stated below. The data analysis procedures are described in the section following the statement of the hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: There is no relationship between the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students and measured burnout.

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students and measured burnout.

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between an RA's perception of the involvement characteristics of the living unit and measured burnout.

Hypothesis 4: There is no relationship between the RA's perception of the emotional support characteristics of the living unit and measured burnout.

Hypothesis 5: There is no relationship between the RA's perception of the intellectuality characteristics of the living unit and measured burnout.

Hypothesis 6: There is no relationship between the RA's perception of the order and organization characteristics of the living unit and measured burnout.

Hypothesis 7: There is no relationship between the RA's perception of the innovation characteristics of the living unit and measured burnout.

Hypothesis 8: There is no relationship between the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of involvement characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 9: There is no relationship between the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of emotional support characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 10: There is no relationship between the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of intellectuality characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 11: There is no relationship between the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of order and organization characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 12: There is no relationship between the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of innovation of the living unit.

Hypothesis 13: There is no relationship between the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of the involvement characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 14: There is no relationship between the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students

and the RA's perception of the emotional support characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 15: There is no relationship between the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of the intellectuality characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 16: There is no relationship between the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of the order and organization characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 17: There is no relationship between the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of the innovation characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 18: There is no significant interaction effect of burnout and preference for students on the degree of personal involvement of the RAs with students; the variables are not related.

Independent Variable: Burnout

Moderator Variable: Preference

Dependent Variable: Degree of Personal Involvement

Hypothesis 19: There is no significant interaction effect of burnout and preference for students on the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students;

Independent Variable: Burnout

Moderator Variable: Preference

Dependent Variable: Quality of Personal Involvement

Hypotheses one through seventeen each involve two variables which are reported in interval measures. Each of these hypotheses was tested with the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (Tuckman, 1978). The investigator sought the predictability of either variable given the other for each hypothesis. Indication of covariation was provided quantitatively as well as with scattergrams. The latter enabled the investigator to visually evaluate the degree of relationship and to identify any outliers and evaluate them appropriately.

The significance level of each correlation was obtained and reported. Because the population was assumed to be representative, the confidence level was set at 90 per cent; any null hypothesis was rejected at the .10 level of significance (Tuckman, 1978). The basic formula for calculating the correlation coefficient is
$$r = \frac{\sum (X - \bar{X})(Y - \bar{Y})}{N S_x S_y}$$

Hypothesis eighteen and nineteen were tested with a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine the interaction effects of the independent and moderator variables on the dependent variable. The independent variable -- Burnout -- was an interval measure which was split at the median to give two levels: high and low. The median-split technique was required as a prerequisite to the ANOVA (Tuckman, 1978). The moderator variable -- Preference -- was already a nominal measure: most and least. Hypothesis

eighteen stated that the variables were not related in their effect on the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students. Hypothesis nineteen concerned the quality of involvement of RAs with students. Either hypothesis was to be rejected if the F value for the two-way ANOVA exceeded the value for the appropriate degrees of freedom (Tuckman, 1978). The level of significance was set at the .05 level for rejection of the null hypothesis.

All statistical tests were completed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software package (SPSS) at the University of Georgia. A detailed descriptive account of all data regarding personal involvement, burnout, and the residence hall environment is presented in the first section of the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

This investigation measured three general categories of variables among a population of fifty-two (52) resident assistants selected from the total RA staff (N=149) at the University of Georgia. In this chapter the investigator delineates some demographics of the subjects, summarizes the results of the research instruments and the interviews of the subjects, and presents the results of each of the nineteen null hypotheses. The results of the post hoc analyses of the data conclude the chapter.

From the total population of one hundred forty-nine resident assistants at the University of Georgia for 1982-83, a research population was selected on the basis of three criteria which served as controls for the investigation. The three criteria were as follows:

1. Time on the job: RAs who began their employment at the start of the fall quarter, 1982. At the time of the first step of the investigation the subjects had been in their positions for eight months and were in their third quarter of employment as RAs.
2. Training: RAs who were enrolled in the initial training program (a College of Education academic credit course entitled "Students Helping Students")

in the spring quarter, 1982, and who attended the fall, 1982, staff workshop for RAs.

3. Type of Assignment: RAs who were assigned to a single-sex living unit rather than a coeducational unit.

The Research Population

Fifty-seven (57) RAs met all three criteria and were identified by the investigator. Five of the subjects either refused to participate or were not contacted by interviewers in time to be included in the investigation; therefore, the actual number of subjects in the investigation was fifty-two (52). As a part of the investigation several demographic factors were specified, including gender, academic classification, academic major, number of residents for whom the RA was responsible, grade point average for the quarter prior to the investigation, cumulative grade point average, and intent to return in 1983-84 as a resident assistant. These factors were included in order to provide a basis for describing the population and to offer some additional consideration for possible analysis.

Gender of Subjects

Among the total RA staff at the University of Georgia there were eighty-seven females (58%) and sixty-two males (42%). The research population consisted of thirty-two women (62%) and twenty men (38%). (Table 1)

Academic Classification of Subjects

A student must be a sophomore or above in order to be appointed as a resident assistant. Because of the criterion that subjects would be in their first year of employment, it was expected that a majority of the population would be sophomores. Twenty-seven of the RAs (52%) included in the research population were sophomores. There were thirteen juniors (25%) and twelve seniors (23%). (Table 1)

Academic Majors of Subjects

The RA position is commonly regarded as a job which offers skills and opportunities applicable to a variety of future careers. The administrative and interpersonal training and experiences combine with the responsibility entailed in the position to afford the RA with competencies which enhance his or her qualifications for future employment. A wide range of academic interests and majors are represented within the research population. Table 2 summarizes the categories of academic majors represented among the population.

Number of Students in the RA's Charge

At the outset of this investigation the number of residents for whom the RA was responsible was identified as a criterion for inclusion in the research population and was intended to serve as a control variable. This factor was originally selected as a control variable because it was

assumed to represent "workload," a factor which is sometimes considered to be associated with burnout. Because RAs do not have a workload, per se, based on numbers of students (except at certain times of the year like check-in or check-out of residents) the investigator reconsidered this factor as a control and elected to disregard it as a criterion for selection. This decision allowed for a greater number of subjects to be included in the research population.

In addition, the number of residents was not determined to have any statistically significant relationship to any of the variables included in the investigation. RAs were divided into two groups with respect to number of residents in their charge using the median-split technique (median = 36 residents per RA). A series of t-tests revealed no statistically significant differences in mean scores of the eight primary variables between the two groups. The numbers of students for whom RAs are responsible are reported as another demographic variable for descriptive purposes (Table 1).

The number of residents in the living units supervised by the RAs in the research population ranged from twenty (20) to fifty-four (54), and the average number of residents per RA was thirty-eight (38).

Grade Point Averages

Grade point averages were available for the RAs in the research population because records are kept as a means of verifying that each RA maintains the minimum GPA required

TABLE 1

SUMMARY OF SELECTED DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION

Gender of Subjects

Females n=32

Males n=20

Academic Classification of Students

Sophomores n=27

Juniors n=13

Seniors n=12

Distribution of
Number of Students in the RA's Charge

Students	n=	Students	n=	Students	n=
20	1	32	5	42	2
24	1	34	3	44	3
26	1	35	2	45	1
27	2	36	4	46	1
28	1	38	4	48	5
29	3	39	1	50	3
30	4	40	2	54	3

x = 38

Median = 36

TABLE 2

ACADEMIC MAJORS REPRESENTED BY THE RESEARCH POPULATION

Business Administration	16
Journalism/Communications	8
Agriculture	4
Education	4
Pre-Medicine/Pre-Veterinary	3
Art	3
Psychology	3
Biology	1
Criminal Justice	1
Economics	1
English	1
Home Economics	1
Political Science	1
Social Work	1
Undecided	2

for employment. The minimum GPA required for RAs is 2.2 on a 4.0 scale. For the quarter immediately prior to the investigation the averages for the RAs ranged from 1.5 to 4.0 and the mean quarterly GPA for the population was 3.04. Cumulative GPAs ranged from 2.04 to 4.0, and the mean was 3.03. GPAs lower than the minimum allowed normally result in a probationary status for the RA involved, and this was the case with the two individuals whose GPAs were in the range below the minimum allowed.

Pearson Product-Moment Correlations resulted in no statistically significant correlation coefficients of GPA with burnout, degree of personal involvement, or quality of personal involvement.

Intent to Return

Each subject was asked to indicate whether or not he or she planned to return as a resident assistant for the 1983-84 academic year. Forty of the fifty-two subjects indicated that they did in fact intend to return. Of the twelve RAs who indicated that they did not plan to return, ten were seniors who were about to graduate. The number of subjects (two) who were eligible to return and who indicated that they did not intend to return as RAs was insufficient for any meaningful analysis; therefore, there were no implications for any of the three primary variables with respect to intent to return.

Results of the Research Instruments

There were three measures used in this investigation to assess personal involvement of RAs with students in their charge, burnout, and RA perceptions of the residence hall environment. The results of each of these measures are presented below.

Personal Involvement of RAs with Students in Their Charge

The personal involvement of the RAs with students in their charge was measured through analysis of transcripts of individual interviews with each subject. Each RA was asked to identify four individuals who resided on his or her floor -- two residents with whom the RA most preferred to associate and two residents with whom the RA least preferred to associate. Once the four students were identified, the interviewer asked the RA to describe each of the four individuals. The descriptions were tape-recorded, and the recordings were transcribed and analyzed by the investigator. Each transcript was assigned six scores, as follows:

Degree of Personal Involvement with Most Preferred Students

Degree of Personal Involvement with Least Preferred Students

Degree of Personal Involvement with All Students Described

Quality of Personal Involvement with Most Preferred Students

Quality of Personal Involvement with Least Preferred Students

Quality of Personal Involvement with All Students Described

TABLE 3
SUMMARY OF PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT SCORES
FROM INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

<u>DEGREE OF PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT</u>				
	RANGE	MEAN	MEDIAN	S.D.
Most Preferred Students	2.0-28.0	12.08	11.25	5.74
Least Preferred Students	0-21.0	10.12	10.00	4.49
ALL Students	5.0-45.0	22.21	21.75	8.72

<u>QUALITY OF PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT</u>				
	RANGE	MEAN	MEDIAN	S.D.
Most Preferred Students	.66-1.0	.964	.998	.068
Least Preferred Students	0- .60	.150	.082	.025
ALL STUDENTS	.18-1.0	.591	.610	.162

Table 3 summarizes the scores of the transcripts. The degree of personal involvement score reflects the number of classifiable statements made about the individuals being described. Each classifiable statement was analyzed to determine whether or not it was positive or negative in its emotional tone. Quality of personal involvement scores were derived from the proportion of positive classifiable statements to the total number of classifiable statements. A score of degree of involvement represents the sum of statements made about both students in the two categories (most and least preferred). The quality of involvement score represents the average quality score of the two descriptions in each category.

Five transcripts were not available due to technical difficulties; therefore, the number of subjects included in the personal involvement measure was forty-seven (47).

Burnout

The "Burnout Measure" (Pines and Aronson, 1980) measures "a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion which results from long-term involvement with people in situations that are emotionally demanding" (Pines, 1981). Administration of this twenty-one item instrument requires the respondent to indicate, on a seven-point frequency scale, his or her experience of the particular experience of condition mentioned. The authors of the instrument consider a total score of "4" or above to indicate a state of burnout.

The scores of the research population ranged from 1.86 to 5.81, and the mean score was 2.92. The scores were distributed in a manner similar to the scores of other populations with which this instrument has been used, including teachers, police officers, and nurses. Table 4 summarizes the burnout scores of the resident assistant population and presents the comparisons with scores of the three groups of workers mentioned.

The importance of the similarity of measured burnout among the population of resident assistants with results among other populations is that RAs experience burnout with a similar intensity to that of workers who are frequently discussed in burnout literature. Burnout is an actual experience for RAs and is therefore regarded in this investigation as a phenomenon which merits extensive investigation.

University Residence Environment Scale (URES)

The social climate of the living unit within the residence hall was measured with the University Residence Environment Scale (URES). The one hundred items are divided into ten subscales which each measure one of three dimensions of the residence hall environments, including "Relationship" dimensions, "Personal Growth or Development" dimensions, and "System Maintenance and System Change" dimensions. The respondent indicates whether each item included in the instrument is "true" or "false" for the living unit in which he or she resides.

TABLE 4

BURNOUT SCORES OF THE POPULATION OF RESIDENT ASSISTANTS AND
COMPARISON WITH SCORES OF OTHER RESEARCH POPULATIONS

Resident Assistants' Burnout Scores				
n=52				
Range				
Mean				
1.86 to 5.81				
2.92				
VARIABLE	RAs	TEACHERS	POLICE OFFICERS	NURSES
	n=52	n=110	n=267	n=352
Tired	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.6
Depressed	3.1	3.4	3.0	3.5
Good Day	5.5	3.0	2.8	3.1
Physical Exhaustion	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.7
Emotional Exhaustion	3.7	3.9	3.2	3.8
Happy	5.7	2.8	2.6	2.8
Wiped Out	2.9	3.1	2.7	3.3
Burned Out	3.1	3.2	2.7	3.0
Unhappy	2.7	3.0	3.0	3.2
Rundown	3.3	3.5	3.1	3.7
Trapped	2.3	3.2	2.4	2.7
Worthless	1.9	2.4	1.8	2.7
Weary	3.1	3.8	2.7	3.5
Troubled	3.5	3.4	2.7	3.2
Resentful	2.7	3.0	2.9	3.2
Weak	2.2	2.6	2.2	2.5
Hopeless	1.8	2.4	1.8	2.2
Rejected	2.4	2.6	1.9	2.4
Optimistic	5.4	3.2	3.4	3.2
Energetic	5.1	3.2	3.2	3.4
Anxious	4.6	3.6	4.0	3.6
Overall Mean Score	2.9	3.2	2.9	3.2

Columns 2, 3 and 4 reprinted from Pines, A. "The Burnout Measure," Paper Presented at the National Conference on Burnout in the Human Services, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November, 1981.

Results of this instrument among the research population indicate a wide range of perspectives about the residence hall environments in which the subjects live and work. Table 5 summarizes the results of the five subscales which were included in this investigation.

Results of Tests of Hypotheses

There were five general hypotheses made at the outset of this investigation. Each of these hypotheses is restated below.

Hypotheses one through seventeen each concerned a relationship between two interval variables. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used as the indication of covariation (Tuckman, 1978). Both correlation matrices and scatter diagrams were prepared in the data analysis. A significance level of .10 was selected for testing each null hypothesis. The likelihood of a Type I error was greater with this level of significance; the investigator, however, regarded the benefits of identifying trends to both research and practice as greater than the liabilities of a possible Type I error (Ary, et al, 1972; Tuckman, 1978).

Hypotheses eighteen and nineteen were investigated in order to evaluate the interaction of burnout and preference for association with students on degree and quality of personal involvement, respectively. A two-factor ANOVA was selected for analysis of these two hypotheses (Tuckman, 1978). A .05 level of significance of the F-ratio was set for rejection of the null hypothesis regarding interaction effects.

TABLE 5

SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF THE UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE ENVIRONMENT SCALES
USED IN THE INVESTIGATION

	n=	POSSIBLE RANGE	ACTUAL RANGE	MEAN	MEDIAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
INVOLVEMENT (INV)	52	0-10	2-10	7.9	8.7	2.3
EMOTIONAL SUPPORT (SUP)	52	0-10	0-10	7.2	7.7	2.4
INTELLECTUALITY (INT)	52	0- 9	0- 8	3.4	3.1	2.2
ORDER AND ORGANIZATION (OO)	52	0-10	2-10	6.5	6.8	2.0
INNOVATION (INN)	52	0-10	0- 9	5.4	5.6	2.1

First General Hypothesis

Burnout is associated with (a) lower degrees of personal involvement with students (b) lower quality of involvement with students, and (c) fewer reported environmental characteristics indicative of involvement, emotional support, intellectuality, order and organization, and innovation. Table 6 summarizes the coefficients of these correlations.

Hypothesis 1: It was hypothesized that burnout would be associated with lower degrees of personal involvement of the RA with students. The results of the correlation analysis were significant ($r = -.2504$, $df = 45$, $p < .10$), indicating that there is an inverse relationship between burnout and degree of personal involvement. RAs who have a higher burnout score exhibit a lower degree of personal involvement with the students in their charge. The null hypothesis can be rejected at the .10 level of significance.

Hypothesis 2: The second hypothesis -- that burnout would be associated with a lower quality of personal involvement of the RA with students -- was also confirmed ($r = -.2733$, $df = 45$, $p < .10$). The inverse relationship between these two variables indicates that RAs who have a higher burnout score also exhibit a lower quality of personal involvement with students. The null hypothesis, therefore, can be rejected at the .10 level of significance.

Hypothesis 3: This hypothesis predicted that there would be an inverse relationship between burnout and the RA's perception of the involvement characteristics of the environment. The correlation coefficient ($r = -.4314$, $df = 50$, $p < .001$) allows for rejection of the null hypothesis and indicates that as RAs perceive their environment as having more characteristics of involvement, their burnout scores are lower. Conversely, as RAs report higher burnout scores, they identify fewer involvement characteristics in their living unit.

Hypothesis 4: Burnout is also associated with fewer reported environmental characteristics indicative of emotional support. The correlation coefficient ($r = -.3071$, $df = 50$, $p < .05$) allows the investigator to reject the null hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. Lower burnout scores are associated with perceptions of more characteristics indicative of emotional support in the environment. Likewise, higher burnout scores are associated with fewer emotional support characteristics of the living unit.

Hypothesis 5: Hypothesis five stated, in the null format, that there was no relationship between the RA's perception of the intellectuality characteristics of the living unit and measured burnout. The correlation coefficient was too small to reject the null hypothesis ($r = -.1826$, $df = 50$). A negative correlation had been predicted by the investigator.

Hypothesis 6: Burnout and Order and Organization in the living unit were the variables of hypothesis six. A relatively high level of significance of the correlation coefficient ($r = -.3509$, $df = 52$, $p < .05$) allowed for rejection of the null hypothesis that there was no relationship between Burnout and Order and Organization. This finding indicates that the fewer characteristics of an orderly, organized environment are associated with higher degrees of measured burnout. Likewise, lower burnout scores are associated with perceptions of the environment as more orderly and organized.

Hypothesis 7: The seventh null hypothesis was retained. The correlation coefficient of burnout and environmental characteristics of innovation was not statistically significant ($r = -.1563$, $df = 50$); therefore, the inverse relationship anticipated by the investigator is not supported.

Second General Hypothesis

Degree of personal involvement of RAs with students is associated with an increase in reported environmental characteristics indicative of involvement, emotional support, intellectuality, order and organization, and innovation.

Hypothesis 8: Degree of personal involvement of RAs with students is, as was hypothesized in number eight, associated with involvement characteristics of the living unit ($r = .2557$, $df = 47$, $p < .10$). The null hypothesis that there would be no relationship is rejected

at the .10 level of significance. RAs who demonstrate a higher degree of personal involvement with students characterize their environment as having higher degrees of commitment, interaction, and feelings of friendship.

Hypothesis 9: The ninth null hypothesis is also rejected at the .10 level of significance. A correlation coefficient of .2630 ($df=47$, $p<.10$) indicates a positive relationship between the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students and environmental characteristics indicative of emotional support. RAs who perceive fewer indicators of emotional support in the living unit indicate lower degrees of personal involvement with students.

Hypothesis 10: The investigator predicted a positive association between degree of personal involvement and environmental characteristics indicative of intellectuality. A low correlation of .067 ($df=47$), however was the basis for retaining the null hypothesis that there would be no relationship between the two variables.

Hypothesis 11: The eleventh null hypothesis -- that there is no relationship between the degree of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of order and organization characteristics of the living unit -- was also retained on the basis of a very low correlation coefficient of .045 ($df=47$). The investigator had anticipated a positive relationship between these two variables.

Hypothesis 12: The final hypothesis concerning degree of personal involvement predicted a relationship with environmental characteristics of innovation. This null hypothesis was retained, however, with a coefficient of .07 ($df=47$), indicating that the association is not significant.

Third General Hypothesis

Quality of personal involvement of RAs with students is associated with an increase in reported environmental characteristics indicative of involvement, emotional support, intellectuality, order and organization, and innovation.

Hypothesis 13: In null format hypothesis thirteen stated that there is no relationship between the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students and the RA's perception of the involvement characteristics of the living unit. The correlation coefficient ($r=.2813$, $df=47$, $p < .05$) allows for rejection of the null hypothesis at the .05 level of significance. There is an association of quality of personal involvement and environmental characteristics indicative of involvement.

Hypothesis 14: This hypothesis predicted that the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students would be associated with an increase in emotional support characteristics of the living unit. A highly significant correlation ($r=.5189$, $df=47$, $p < .0001$) allowed the investigator to reject the null hypothesis. The RA's perception

of emotional support in the environment is directly correlated with the quality of his or her personal involvement with students.

Hypothesis 15: Intellectuality in the living unit is positively associated with the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students ($r=.4022$, $df=47$, $p<.005$). The null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that either quality of personal involvement or intellectuality may be predicted based on the status of the other variable. This correlation is highly significant.

Hypothesis 16: The null hypothesis concerning the relationship of quality of personal involvement of RAs with students and order and organization characteristics of the environment was retained with an insignificant correlation coefficient of $.1509$ ($df=47$). The relationship predicted by the investigator was not supported.

Hypothesis 17: Quality of personal involvement of RAs with students is not associated with environmental characteristics of innovation as evidenced in the low correlation coefficient of $.217$ ($df=47$). The null hypothesis, therefore, was retained.

Fourth General Hypothesis

There are significant interaction effects of burnout and preference for students on degree of personal involvement.

Hypothesis 18: The investigator predicted that RAs with higher burnout scores would indicate a higher degree of

personal involvement with most preferred students than with least preferred students. The null hypothesis stated that "there is no significant interaction effect of burnout and preference for students on degree of personal involvement of RAs with students." A two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run (burnout X preference for association) for the dependent variable degree of personal involvement. The results of the ANOVA did confirm the main effect of burnout on degree of involvement ($F=8.9648$, $p < .01$) demonstrated in hypothesis one. No interaction effect of burnout and preference for association was demonstrated (see Table 6), however, and the null hypothesis was retained.

Fifth General Hypothesis

There are significant interaction effects of burnout and preference for students on quality of personal involvement.

Hypothesis 19: It was predicted that RAs with higher burnout scores would indicate a higher quality of personal involvement with students with whom they most preferred to associate than with least preferred students. In null format the hypothesis stated that "there is no significant interaction effect of burnout and preference for students on quality of personal involvement of RAs with students." With burnout as the independent variable and preference for association as the moderator variable, a two-way ANOVA revealed a significant effect of preference

TABLE 6
CORRELATION MATRIX FOR THE EIGHT PRIMARY VARIABLES
OF THE INVESTIGATION

	BURNOUT	DEGREE OF PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT	QUALITY OF PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT
Degree of Personal Involvement	-.2504*		
Quality of Personal Involvement	-.2733*		
URES: Involvement	-.4314++	.2557*	.2813*
URES: Emotional Support	-.3071**	.2630*	.5189++
URES: Intellectuality	-.1826	.0667	.4022+
URES: Order and Organization	-.3509**	.0457	.1509
URES: Innovation	-.1564	.0708	.2173

* p < .10
 **p < .05
 + p < .01
 ++p < .005
 +++p < .001

on quality of involvement ($F=12.917$, $p<.01$) but no interaction effect was demonstrated (see Table 7). Consequently the null hypothesis was retained.

Post Hoc Analyses

Preparation of a correlation matrix containing all six variables of personal involvement, all ten subscales of the URES, and the single variable of burnout provided a concise picture of any significant relationships for which no hypotheses were formulated. This section of post hoc analysis summarizes all of the statistically significant correlations which were determined. The level of significance for including unhypothesized relationships was set at .10. Although .10 is a relatively low level of statistical significance, the investigator set this level as a means of isolating trends in relationships among the variables. The reader is urged to interpret the findings accordingly.

Item One: Degree of Personal Involvement with Most Preferred Students and URES Involvement

A correlation coefficient of .366 ($df=45$) is statistically significant at the .025 level. This rather high level of significance indicated that the perception of the environment as having a high "degree of commitment to the house and residents; amount of interaction and feeling of friendship in the house," or Involvement, is associated with the RA's degree of involvement with students with whom he or she most prefers to associate. Item one differs from hypothesis eight

TABLE 7

SUMMARY OF ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA) FOR HYPOTHESES EIGHTEEN AND NINETEEN

Source	df	Degree of Personal Involvement		Quality of Personal Involvement	
		MS	F	MS	F
A (Burnout)	1	229.83	8.97*	1.79	.005
B (Preference)	1	28.87	1.13	4561.39	12.92*
A B	1	-9.64	-.38	5.28	.015
Within Groups	43	25.64		353.14	

* $p < .01$

by specifying "most preferred students" rather than students in general and in yielding a higher correlation coefficient.

Item Two: Degree of Personal Involvement with Most Preferred Students and URES Emotional Support

These two variables are correlated at a very significant .005 level ($r=.41$, $df=45$), indicating that Emotional Support is associated with degree of personal involvement with most preferred students. Emotional Support is described as "extent of manifest concern for others in the house; efforts to aid one another with academic and personal problems; emphasis on open and honest communication."

It should be noted that, like URES data available for other populations, this investigation revealed a significantly high correlation (.62) between Involvement and Emotional Support subscales of the URES. This is exactly the same correlation coefficient as was found among the original population of students with whom the URES was developed. The investigator highlights this point because of the similarity of correlation of both of the URES subscales with the degree of personal involvement with most preferred students.

Item two is also similar to the original hypothesis nine in that it correlates degree of involvement with Emotional Support. The distinguishing element is that "most preferred students" are specified, whereas hypothesis nine concerned students in general.

Item Three: Quality of Personal Involvement with Most Preferred Students and URES Student Influence

Student influence refers to the "extent to which student residents (not staff or administration) perceive they control the running of the house; formulate and enforce the rules, control use of the money, selection of staff, food, room-mates, policies, etc." A correlation coefficient of $-.28$ ($df=45$, $p < .10$) indicates an inverse association of quality of personal involvement with most preferred students and student influence in the living unit.

Item Four: Quality of Personal Involvement with Most Preferred Students and URES Innovation

Innovation refers to "organizational and individual spontaneity of behaviors and ideas; number of and variety of activities; new activities." The negative correlation between these two variables is very significant ($r = -.32$, $df=45$, $p < .05$), and indicates an inverse relationship between these two variables. Hypothesis seventeen revealed no significant relationship between these variables with respect to students in general. Quality of involvement with most preferred students, however, introduced an element which resulted in a significant finding.

Item Five: Quality of Personal Involvement with All Students and URES Student Influence

As indicated in item three, there is an inverse relationship between student influence and quality of personal involvement of RAs with most preferred students. When personal

involvement with all students is considered, however, with respect to student influence, the correlation is positive, and it is highly significant ($r=35$, $df=45$, $p<.025$). As there is an increase in the "extent to which student residents (not staff or administration) perceive they control the running of the house; formulate and enforce rules, control use of the money, selection of staff, food, roommates, policies, etc." there is also a significant increase in the positive quality of personal involvement of RAs with students.

Item Six: Quality of Personal Involvement with All Students and URES Traditional Social Orientation

Traditional Social Orientation reflects the "stress on dating, going to parties, and other 'traditional' heterosexual interaction." A correlation of .25 ($df=45$, $p<.10$) indicates a positive association between the perceived traditional social orientation of the living unit and the quality of personal involvement of the RA with students.

Item Seven: Quality of Personal Involvement with All Students and URES Independence

The quality of personal involvement of RAs with students increases systematically with the RA's perception of the environment as characterized by "diversity of residents' behaviors allowed without social sanction, versus socially proper and conformist behavior," or "Independence." The correlation is quite significant ($r=.39$, $df=45$, $p<.025$).

Item Eight: URES Competition and Four Factors of Personal Involvement with Students

Competition is "the degree to which a wide variety of activities such as dating, grades, etc. are cast into a competitive framework." There is a systematic negative association of competition in the living unit and four specific factors of personal involvement, as follows:

Correlation with Degree of Personal Involvement of RAs with Most Preferred Students ($r = -.38$, $df = 45$, $p < .025$)

Correlation with Quality of Personal Involvement of RAs with Least Preferred Students ($r = -.27$, $df = 45$, $p < .10$)

Correlation with Degree of Personal Involvement of RAs with All Students ($r = -.33$, $df = 45$, $p < .05$)

Correlation with Quality of Personal Involvement of RAs with All Students ($r = -.31$, $df = 45$, $p < .05$)

It could be hypothesized that perceived competition in the environment exerts a negative effect on these variables of degree and quality of personal involvement. One might also hypothesize that the lower degree and lower quality of involvement of RAs with students results in a perception of the environment as competitive.

Additional Analyses

The final set of post hoc analyses attempted to account for gender of subjects as a meaningful variable for burnout,

TABLE 8

SUMMARY OF STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT UNHYPOTHEZIZED CORRELATIONS

	INV	SUP	IND	TSO	COM	SI	INN
Degree of Personal Involvement - Most Preferred Students	.37**	.41***	-	-	-.38***	-	-
Degree of Personal Involvement - All Students	-	-	-	-	-.33**	-	-
Quality of Personal Involvement - Most Preferred Students	-	-	-	-	-	-.28*	-.32**
Quality of Personal Involvement - Least Preferred Students	-	-	-	-	-.27*	-	-
Quality of Personal Involvement - All Students	-	-	.39***	.25*	-.31**	.35**	-

* $p < .10$ ** $p < .05$ *** $p < .01$

degree of personal involvement, and quality of personal involvement. A t-test was conducted for each of these three variables to measure the difference between mean scores of men and women for each of the three factors (Table 9).

Burnout and Gender of Subjects

For women RAs the mean score on the Burnout Measure was 3.10. The mean score for men RAs was 2.63. A t-test was conducted to ascertain if this apparent difference in means was statistically significant. With fifty degrees of freedom, the t-value of 2.73 was statistically significant at the .01 level, indicating that women RAs' burnout scores were significantly higher than the scores of the male RAs.

Degree of Personal Involvement with Students and Gender of RA

Forty-seven cases -- twenty-eight women and nineteen men -- were available for analysis of the difference between mean scores of degree of personal involvement with students. The t-value computed was not statistically significant, indicating that there is no significant difference in the degree of personal involvement with students between male RAs and female RAs in the population.

Quality of Personal Involvement with Students and Gender of RA

A t-value of 2.0 (df=45) indicates that the difference in the mean quality score of personal involvement of RAs with students is statistically significant between male RAs and female RAs. The quality of personal involvement of women RAs

TABLE 9
SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE TESTS BETWEEN FEMALES AND MALES
FOR THREE FACTORS

FACTOR	t
Burnout: Females vs. Males	2.73 **
Degree of Personal Involvement: Females vs. Males	-.53
Quality of Personal Involvement Females vs. Males	2.00 *

* $p < .10$

** $p < .01$

is significantly greater than the quality of personal involvement of men RAs at the .10 level of significance.

Summary

An analysis of nineteen hypotheses derived from variables measured through individual interviews and two printed measures resulted in a number of statistically significant findings. Additional analyses of the available data revealed thirteen statistically significant findings which were relevant to the investigation.

The research population was representative in several respects to other populations, although three criteria were used in controlling the homogeneity of the population. The male:female ratio was quite similar to the male:female ratio of the population from which the subjects were selected, i.e., approximately 40% male and 60% female. A diversity of academic majors and a wide range of grade point averages suggest that the subjects are not atypical of college students in both of those respects. The Burnout scores of the research population were found to be similar to the measured scores of other research populations. More than one half of the subjects were college sophomores, a factor which resulted from the criteria of selection which specified that subjects would be in their first year of employment.

The measure of "Personal Involvement" was found to be a measure which differentiated subjects from one another. Degree and quality of involvement were the two basic concerns,

and both were measured in terms of most preferred students, least preferred students, and combined scores reflecting involvement with students in general.

Burnout also discriminated among the subjects. The scores reported indicate a wide range of experienced burnout among the subjects. The presence of the burnout phenomenon within the population was clearly established in this investigation, and the relationship of burnout with other variables confirms that the condition of burnout among resident assistants merits study.

Environmental conditions affect the RA as a student, a resident, and a worker. The University Residence Environment Scale (URES) provided a basis for having each RA characterize his or her own particular environment -- the living unit. The subjects' descriptions of their environments varied in a manner similar to reports of other research populations, and significant correlations with other variables were detected.

Of the nineteen null hypotheses in this investigation ten hypotheses were rejected. Seventeen of the hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation, and a two-way ANOVA was used for testing the last two null hypotheses.

Burnout was found to be significantly correlated with five other variables. Burnout is associated with both degree of personal involvement and quality of personal involvement at the .10 level of significance. Both of the correlations

were negative, as predicted by the investigator. URES subscales correlated with burnout included Involvement, Emotional Support, and Order and Organization, all three of which were negative correlations.

The degree of personal involvement of RAs with students was found to be significantly correlated with URES subscales of Involvement and Emotional Support. Both of these positive correlations were significant at the .10 level.

Quality of personal involvement of RAs with students was found to be positively correlated with the URES subscales Involvement ($p < .05$), Emotional Support ($p < .0001$), and Intellectuality ($p < .005$).

Post hoc analyses revealed eleven relevant and significant items of correlation. In addition, the gender of the RA was found to be a statistically significant factor in both burnout and quality of personal involvement of RAs with students. Females scored significantly higher ($p < .01$) than males on the burnout measure. Furthermore, it was found that the quality of personal involvement with students was statistically significantly greater (more positive) among women RAs than among men RAs.

In the final chapter the investigator draws conclusions from these results and makes recommendations for research and practice.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This investigation was conducted to explore the relationships between personal involvement of RAs with students, burn-out, and the perceived characteristics of the residence hall environment. From the total population (N=149) of Resident Assistants (RAs) at the University of Georgia, fifty-two (52) RAs were selected on the basis of their time on the job (eight months), their training, and their type of assignment. Data collection involved individual interviews with each subject and the administration of two measurement instruments.

Nineteen null hypotheses were formulated and tested. Nine were retained while ten hypotheses resulted in findings which were statistically significant. An additional thirteen findings which were not hypothesized were also statistically significant.

The specific purpose of this investigation was to answer the following questions: What is the degree and quality of personal involvement of Resident Assistants with students in their charge? What is the extent of measured burnout among selected RAs? How do RAs perceive the residence hall environment in which they live and work? What are the relationships among the variables of personal involvement, burnout, and environmental characteristics?

Each of these four questions is answered below through delineation of the results of the interviews, the measurement instruments, the hypothesis tests, and the post hoc analyses. Conclusions based on the findings are discussed, implications for practice are identified, and recommendations for further study are made.

Summary of Findings

Personal Involvement of RAs with Students

Resident assistants vary considerably in their degree of personal involvement with students. An inspection of the interview transcripts confirms the interviewers' reports that the length of the interviews ranged from as short as five minutes to as long as thirty minutes. In general, the shorter interviews indicated a lower degree of involvement score simply because there were fewer statements made about individuals; however, there were some rather lengthy interviews which were of little substance in terms of classifiable statements. For example, some RAs responded to the request to describe a student with long descriptions of a particular incident which served as background for their descriptions of an individual.

The degree of personal involvement of RAs with students ranged from 5 to 45. The mean involvement score was 22.2. These scores indicate the total score of the subjects, i.e., the combined number of classifiable statements made regarding both most preferred and least preferred students.

Quality of personal involvement scores reflect the proportion of positive classifiable statements to the total number of classifiable statements. Correlation coefficients indicated no statistically significant relationship between quality of personal involvement and degree of personal involvement.

The quality of involvement scores ranged from .18 to 1.0. The average quality of involvement score for all four students described by each RA was .59.

A review of the interview transcripts suggests that positive statements reveal perceived similarity of the student to the RA, helpfulness in the living unit, involvement of the student with the floor, and orderliness and approachability of the individual. Negative statements seem to focus on behavior problems such as alcohol-related behavior and incidents, noise and anti-social or non-involvement behaviors.

Burnout

Burnout exists in varying degrees among the RA population. A score of "4" or above on the seven-point scale indicates a condition of "burnout." The scores of the subjects in this investigation ranged from 1.86 to 5.81, and the average score was 2.92. Similar scores have been found among other, more extensively researched populations of workers.

The extent of RA burnout, therefore, is regarded as similar to the extent of burnout among other populations and is

demonstrated to be a viable construct for investigation among resident assistants.

The Residence Hall Environment

Five subscales of the University Residence Environment Scale (URES) were used in this investigation, although all ten subscales were administered. The results from the five URES subscales indicate that the subjects' perceptions of the living unit environments span almost the entire range of possible scores for each subscale. Involvement scores were from 2 to 10 ($\bar{x} = 7.9$), Emotional Support ranged from 0 to 10 ($\bar{x} = 7.2$), Intellectuality measured from 0 to 8 ($\bar{x} = 3.5$), Order and Organization scores were from 2 to 10 ($\bar{x} = 6.5$), and Innovation ranged from 0 to 9 ($\bar{x} = 5.4$). The variations indicated by these ranges provided a useful basis for conducting the correlational studies which were a major component of the investigation.

Results of Hypothesis Tests

The first general research hypothesis was confirmed in five of its seven components. Burnout was found to be significantly and inversely associated with degree of personal involvement, quality of personal involvement, and the URES subscales of Involvement, Emotional Support, and Order and Organization. The two variables which were not found to correlate with burnout were Intellectuality and Innovation.

The second general hypothesis predicted relationships between degree of personal involvement and each of the five

URES subscales. Two of the five subscales were significantly associated with degree of personal involvement: Involvement and Emotional Support. Order and Organization, Intellectuality, and Innovation were not correlated with degree of involvement at a significant level.

Quality of personal involvement was expected to be correlated with each of the five URES subscales in the third general hypothesis. Significant correlations were measured between quality of involvement and three of the subscales: Involvement, Emotional Support, and Intellectuality.

Interaction effect of burnout and preference for association on degree of personal involvement was measured in the fourth general hypothesis. While the main effect of burnout on degree of involvement was confirmed, no interaction effect was determined.

The fifth general hypothesis considered the interaction effect of burnout and preference for association on quality of personal involvement. While preference for association was significant as a single effect, there was not a significant F value to demonstrate an interaction effect.

Post Hoc Analysis

Analysis of available data revealed thirteen additional relevant findings which were incorporated into the conclusions. In most instances these findings reflected the effect of preference for association on degree and quality of involvement with respect to a number of the URES subscales. The effect of the gender of the subject was also explored.

The following section contains the conclusions drawn from both original and post hoc analysis of the data.

Conclusions

It was apparent in this investigation that RAs vary in their degree and quality of personal involvement with the students with whom they work. Although the degree and quality of involvement were not significantly related to each other, variation in the quality of their involvement with students is related to the RA's preference for associating or not associating with the student.

The range of measured burnout scores indicates not only that a meaningful construct is being assessed, but also that the experience of burnout among RAs is evident to greater and lesser degrees among the population. Likewise, variations in perceptions of the residence hall environment suggest that environments differ and/or RAs' perceptions of environments differ greatly from one living unit to another.

Conclusion 1: RAs who are experiencing burnout are more detached from students in their charge.

This conclusion is based on the finding that RAs who are experiencing burnout indicate a lower degree of personal involvement with students. Degree of personal involvement of RAs with students declines as burnout increases. This finding is consistent with the view expressed in much of the burnout literature and is the basis for the first conclusion.

While neither burnout nor degree of personal involvement is regarded as a cause of the other, both cause-and-effect possibilities are plausible. Burnout may result in the detachment from students which is reflected in lower personal involvement of the RA. Similarly, a low degree of personal involvement with students may be an origin of burnout due to lack of emotional support from others, frustrations with relationships, and, possibly, concomitant criticism from peers or supervisors for unacceptable performance in the RA role.

Conclusion 2: RAs experiencing burnout are less effective in their relationships with students.

Based on the finding that RAs who are experiencing burnout indicate a lower quality of personal involvement with students, this conclusion links quality of involvement with effectiveness in the RA role.

Whereas degree of personal involvement may be a manifestation of burnout which might go undetected for a time, quality of involvement would more likely affect the RA and/or the students in the living unit. Lack of involvement may be disguised and may even go unnoticed for some time, but negative or poor quality of involvement is much more likely to have a direct and obvious impact on all parties concerned. Feelings and attitudes are the substance of the qualitative measure, and are therefore less likely to be subtle aspects of the RA's effectiveness or ineffectiveness, as the case may be.

In summary, degree and quality of personal involvement with students are either origins or consequences of burnout, and both factors are central to the effectiveness of residence hall staff.

Conclusion 3: RA burnout is lower in residence hall environments characterized by involvement, emotional support, and order and organization.

Tests of hypotheses three, four and five revealed that RAs who are experiencing burnout perceive fewer environmental characteristics indicative of involvement, emotional support, and order and organization in the living unit.

While causes cannot be ascertained in this investigation, it may be concluded that either the environment has served as a cause of the degree of burnout of the RA, or that the RA's perception of the environment is in part a function of the extent of burnout. Because there are seven other social climate subscales of the URES for which data was available and which were found to be unrelated to burnout, and among which there is no systematic variation, it would seem that burnout could more likely be a function of the circumstances of the living unit rather than perceptions being a function of burnout. The only conclusion of which the investigator is certain, however, is that relationships exist and that there are highly significant relationships between burnout and the three URES subscales cited.

Conclusion 4: Personal involvement of RAs with students is higher in both degree and quality in residence hall environments characterized by positive interaction and support.

The results of tests of hypotheses six, seven, eight, nine, and ten combined with a number of the findings of the post hoc analyses support this conclusion.

Personal involvement with students can be discussed more extensively than burnout with regard to the social climate of the living unit. Degree of personal involvement is directly related to two URES subscales, namely, Involvement and Emotional Support. Negative correlations of degree and quality of personal involvement with the subscale of Competition lend support to the finding since Competition as defined here is counterproductive to interaction and support.

The type of environment which is supportive of persons, in which interaction and friendship are evident, and where cooperation is the norm, appears to be conducive to greater involvement of the RA with students. From a different perspective, the situation may be that the RA who is involved with residents to a greater degree perceives the environment as supportive and non-competitive. Conversely, a competitive environment in which interaction is either negative or limited is the type of environment in which RAs demonstrate lower degrees of personal involvement.

The RA's perception of the social climate of his or her living unit is significantly related, in many respects, to

both burnout and personal involvement with students. Characteristics of the environment which are directly related to personal involvement are usually inversely related to burnout.

Conclusions three and four could be summarized by acknowledging that the relationship between the RA and the residence hall environment is "transactional" with respect to burnout, degree of personal involvement, and quality of personal involvement. The environment does not "make or break" the RA, in terms of his or her degree of involvement; neither does the RA have absolute impact on the environment with students. Both aspects of the relationship between the variables are operative at all times. Furthermore, once a negative condition is established in the RA's environment, a vicious circle may become operative and, like other factors related to stress syndromes, may never be comprehended with total clarity.

Conclusion 5: Quality of personal involvement of RAs with students is integrally linked to the characteristics of the residence hall environment.

The most extensive array of results of this investigation is based on findings concerning the quality of personal involvement of RAs with students. When involvement with all students is considered, significant correlations exist between quality of personal involvement and seven URES subscales. Quality of personal involvement is negatively related to perceived Competition in the living unit. Any conclusions regarding the quality of personal involvement suggest that it

is a variable which is either influenced by the environment, influential in the RA's perceptions, potent as a source of variation within the environment, or all three of these possibilities combined in some manner.

Eight significantly correlated subscales out of the total of ten subscales evaluated imply that for students in general the quality of personal involvement of the RA with students is heavily rooted in the environment of the living unit.

Pace and Stern (1958) offer the general principle that "the way one perceives his surroundings or environment influences the way one will behave in that environment." The RAs in this investigation perceive their environments in ways which are highly significant in relation to their quality of personal involvement with the students with whom they work. Following is a summary of each of the eight URES subscales which were found to be statistically significant in relation to quality of personal involvement.

1. URES: Involvement. The "degree of commitment to the house and residents" and the "amount of interaction and feeling of friendship in the house" (i.e., Involvement) is very significant as a correlate of quality of personal involvement of the RA with students. RAs perceive the environment in a certain way and respond by developing a certain quality of involvement with students, or RAs develop a perception of and/of influence the environment in a certain way as a result of their quality

of personal involvement. Once again, the origin and the outcome are elusive.

2. URES: Emotional Support. A similar situation exists with the variable Emotional Support of the URES. "Social support includes but refers to more than the mere presence of others. Not every collectivity is a support group, and some collectivities can be socioemotional millstones" (Handy, 1980).

Emotional Support is the "extent of manifest concern for others in the house" and includes "emphasis on open and honest communication." The RA needs emotional support, and one may conclude that in order to realize or attain such support, an RA may seek to establish a high quality of involvement with his or her residents. Reliance on emotional support when it exists may also contribute to the quality of involvement of the RA with students. Clearly the RA who does not perceive the environment as supportive will be less likely to engage in "quality" relationships; likewise the RA who avoids the risk of getting close enough for positive relationships may never perceive support within his or her environment.

3. URES: Independence. The "Independence" subscale is also associated with quality of personal involvement. "Independence" refers to "diversity" versus "conformity." A reasonable explanation is that "Independence" characteristics of the environment offer more opportunities for meaningful interactions which lead to better quality of relationships between the RA and residents. Diversity also offers a much-needed outlet for expressive and creative contacts for the RA to have with students.

4. URES: Traditional Social Orientation. "Traditional Social Orientation" is seemingly out of place among the variables related to quality of involvement. A possible interpretation is that "stress on dating, going to parties, and other 'traditional' heterosexual activities" affords a degree of security for the RA while offering a medium (a context) for the conversations which are essential to the RA in building and maintaining involvement with floor members.

5. URES: Intellectuality. "Emphasis on cultural, artistic, and other scholarly intellectual activities" or "Intellectuality" is a variable associated with quality of RA involvement with students. This type of emphasis in the living unit would encourage expressiveness on the part of students and would focus on elements such as increasing awareness, understanding, and cooperation among floor members. These are characteristics which are growth-producing and which may therefore contribute to the quality of involvement, not only between RA and students but also among students themselves.

6. URES: Order and Organization. Order and Organization refers to the "amount of formal structure or organization in the house." and "neatness." Certain unwritten "rules" for RAs emphasize a clean and orderly environment and student involvement in organizing the floor as criteria for success as an RA. This correlation between Order and Organization and quality of personal involvement suggests that the RA can

better afford to engage in relationships which are positive and of high quality once the floor is established and "running smoothly," whereas the RA who is struggling with a "difficult" floor may either lack the time or the initiative for high quality involvement.

7. URES: Student Influence. "Student Influence" is the extent to which student residents perceive they control the running of the house, and may be regarded as a phenomenon which frees the RA to establish and maintain positive involvement with residents. Similarly, when Student Influence is low or absent, so may quality of involvement also be lacking, because the RA may be cast into a more authoritarian, controlling role.

8. URES: Competition. The eighth URES variable which is significantly related -- though the correlation is negative -- is Competition. Competition refers to "the degree to which a wide variety of activities ... are cast into a competitive framework." This finding is certainly consistent with those seven described above. The conclusion is that Competition is counter-productive to quality of personal involvement and/or quality of personal involvement determines, as it decreases, the perception of increase in competitiveness in the living unit.

Conclusion 6: Quality of personal involvement with students changes with the RA's preference for association with students.

Although null hypothesis nineteen was retained, the two factor ANOVA did reveal that preference for associating with students was statistically significant in its effect on quality of personal involvement with students.

The RA's preference for associating with certain individuals plays a definite role in the quality of involvement with students. This conclusion suggests that the RA experiencing burnout who also demonstrates relatively high positive involvement is probably associating with a more exclusive group, namely those students with whom he or she most prefers to associate. Sandler (1979) maintains that "primary among situational factors suggested as mediators of the effects of life stress is a broad range of social relationships conceptualized as providing social support." For the RA, those one or two persons with whom he or she most prefers to associate may provide the basis for his or her social support in the living unit. A result of this phenomenon could be withdrawal or detachment from other students, an outcome which also has significant implications for the RA's effectiveness in the position.

Some examples from interviews may exemplify the relationship between personal involvement and preference for association:

RA with low burnout score describing a most preferred student: He definitely knows the ropes; he knows what it's like to be in charge of a group of people, and

because of that he's a great asset to the hall." (Note: this description represents an appreciation of the individual due to his contribution to the group rather than due to direct, personal support of the RA).

RA with low burnout score describing a least preferred student: "She is really active and most of the people like her. We're just really different. She's very artistic and she's involved in most of the things that the floor does, and she's a hard worker."

RA with high burnout score describing a most preferred student: "As I got to know her well she opened up to me. She's in my area of study which makes it neat. So we started studying together and started going out together. We had a lot of things in common. She's become one of my best friends." (Note: this description represents a progressive and multi-faceted attachment to the student which is more personally significant than a typical RA-student relationship).

RA with high burnout score describing a least preferred student: "She's the biggest two-face I ever met in my life. She's going to act real sweet to everybody and everybody's going to love her, but don't take anything she says seriously. She's probably going to drive you crazy, expect you to be 'Miss Perfect,' do nothing wrong, and every time you do something wrong she's going to let you know." (Note: this description

represents considerable detachment from the individual and also reflects an undermining of the social support system of the RA, i.e., "everybody's going to love her.")

When preference for association is brought into the scheme of quality of personal involvement, there are also several statistically significant variations in the RA's perception of the environment. The URES subscale of Student Influence, while positively associated with quality of personal involvement with all students, is inversely related to quality of personal involvement with most preferred students. An explanation could be that the RA perceives Student Influence as a factor which improves the residence hall environment when exerted by students in general, but the RA views Student Influence as compromising personal relationships when exerted by his or her most preferred residents.

Innovation is significantly correlated with quality of involvement with most preferred students only. This finding appears to contradict the correlation concerning Student Influence. The Innovation subscale, however, is characterized more by creativity than by influence or power, and thus may actually enhance the RA's personal relationship with most preferred students.

Least preferred students appear as a significant factor in the negative relationship of Competition and quality of personal involvement. The quality of personal involvement with least preferred students decreases significantly as

perceived Competition increases. The implication is either that Competition further alienates the RA from least preferred students, or that declining quality of involvement of RAs with least preferred students results in perceptions of Competition.

Conclusion 7: Women RAs are more likely to experience burnout than men RAs.

Post hoc analysis of the difference between burnout scores of male RAs and female RAs indicated a statistically significant t-value.

This conclusion is consistent with Ryerson and Marks' (n.d.) suggestion that burnout "may especially characterize women, who are said to be more likely to have idealistic motives and hence are more vulnerable to acute disappointment." If women do in fact have more idealistic motives than men then the dissonance created by the environments may contribute to burnout. RA expectations were not measured explicitly in this investigation, but the interviews do provide some direction in identifying the expectations held by the subjects.

The comments made about most preferred students suggest that female RAs have a tendency to emphasize personal support and friendship in their descriptions of students. Male RAs, on the other hand, seem to emphasize support of the hall and support of their jobs.

Some examples from the interviews will demonstrate some of the differences of emphasis in RAs' descriptions of students.

Example (female RA): "We've gotten to be real good friends, but she's also a very caring person and... easy to talk to."

Example (male RA): "He's the kind of guy you like to have around to help you out if you ever have a problem. He can sort of take up the slack if there's ever any trouble."

Example (female RA): "She's just great. She walks in the door and she'll give you a hug in the morning and you'll feel good all day long."

Example (male RA): "He's real involved with everybody. He gets along good with everybody on the hall. He's our intramural representative, and he's done a real good job with that. He goes to all the meetings... He would do a lot for your hall, or any hall, really."

Conclusion 8: Quality of personal involvement with students is higher for women RAs than for men RAs.

A t-test for differences between quality of personal involvement scores revealed a significant difference between men's scores and women's scores.

Quality of involvement implies closeness. Insofar as burnout is a function of closeness to others -- as suggested in conclusion number seven -- women may be inclined to

value their interpersonal relationships with students more than men value theirs. Consequently the risk of closeness may result in greater stress manifested in higher burnout scores, and this would be consistent with the seventh conclusion.

The eighth conclusion is actually based on the number of positive statements in proportion to the total number of statements. Therefore this conclusion may only reflect that women make fewer negative classifiable statements or more positive classifiable statements, or both, than men make. It should be noted that there was no significant difference found between women and men in degree of personal involvement with students.

One of the more significant variables included in this investigation was the gender of the subjects. Male and female RAs were selected from single-sex floors only because of the difficulty in controlling some of the more complex variables associated with coeducational units. Nevertheless, all other variables being equal, female RAs scored significantly higher on the burnout measure and demonstrated a higher quality of personal involvement with students than did male RAs.

Summary

The statistically significant relationships among the variables measured are indicative of the complexity of the RA position. This investigation brought into focus some of the more fundamental relationships between persons in the

RA role and their perceptions of the residence hall environment. The variation among the constructs which were considered in this investigation are even more complex. Conclusions which have been reached are all subject to reconsideration and to more detailed analysis. Particular attention should be given to the following implications and recommendations.

Implications

Implications of this investigation can be summarized in terms of the three general dimensions which comprise the study -- the RA's personal involvement and effectiveness with students, the phenomenon of burnout as manifested among residence hall staff, and the conditions or social climate of the residence hall environment as it is perceived by RAs.

Personal Involvement of RAs with Students

The first issue addressed is the RA's personal involvement with students. RAs differ in their approach to their job, and each RA has his or her own "style" as a paraprofessional staff member. Similarly each environment into which RAs are assigned differs from every other living unit and has a "personality" all its own.

Individuals who are inclined to invest their energy in the living unit and take the initiative to build and maintain relationships may be more likely to exhibit a greater degree and quality of personal involvement, not because they are gregarious, but because they contribute to the involvement characteristics of the living unit. This investigation did

not measure variables of personality or personal orientation at the individual level; nevertheless the findings demonstrate a clear, direct relationship between personal involvement variables and the type of environments in which people interact with one another. In this regard the RA is viewed in his or her role as a member of the living unit rather than as a staff member. Insofar as the RA influences the hall environment, the RA as a role model could increase his or her likelihood of higher degree and quality of involvement. The RA can, through his or her example, effect behaviors which are characteristic of the type of environment which is related to higher degree and quality of involvement. The RA who does not model these behaviors may not actually demonstrate lower degree and quality of involvement; but he or she will not have an active role in making the environment one in which involvement and emotional support exist.

Enhancing Personal Involvement of RAs with Students

RA selection processes attempt to identify individuals who have the most potential to be successful in the role. If a measure of "personal involvement potential" were used in the selection of RAs, administrators could choose to hire individuals who are more likely to engage in personal involvement with students at higher levels of degree and quality. Individuals who are selected could be assigned specific duties and responsibilities which increase the likelihood of personal involvement with students. Placement of RAs in certain living

units could be done in a manner which would balance their own characteristics with characteristics of the living unit in such a way that personal involvement could occur at an optimum level.

The supervisor of the RA could also monitor the personal involvement of the RA to ensure that the RA is keeping his or her involvement with students high in both degree and quality. In this respect the interview method used in this investigation could be particularly useful. During encounters with individual RAs a supervisor could analyze the comments of a resident assistant for degree and quality of personal involvement.

Personal involvement may be an elusive quality which cannot be taught; nevertheless behaviors which characterize personal involvement could be identified, and emphasized and reinforced by a supervisor. Once the RA begins to actually engage in personal involvement with students at a high degree and high level of quality, other factors -- such as stress or burnout and/or counter-productive environmental conditions -- may come into focus.

Resident Assistant Burnout

RA burnout is a real phenomenon. Whether or not it is detected is the responsibility of the housing administrator. Once detected, the only alternatives are to intervene with appropriate remedies or to ignore. Even better, however is an approach which acknowledges the potential problem for the

paraprofessional and endeavors to prevent and/or minimize the effects of RA burnout.

Because burnout is a process, burnout remediation is essentially the application of preventive measures to an existing condition which might have been avoided. Therefore preventive measures only will be discussed; when and where these and other approaches to prevention are used is left up to the practitioner.

It is essential to recognize that burnout prevention is the responsibility of both the RA and the organization in which the RA lives and works. One measure which is implied in this investigation and which may result in lower burnout is to increase the RA's concern for and interaction with students. The support available within the living unit is a resource for the RA who builds and maintains effective interpersonal relationships. Risk, however, is a factor of close interpersonal encounter, and the RA must not be encouraged to enter such relationships unaware of the risk involved. An equally important support group which is not addressed in this investigation is the staff in a residence hall. RAs cannot and should not attempt to find all of the support they need in their jobs within the living unit, and this is where their RA peers can play a crucial role.

Stress management techniques could be helpful for RAs from the beginning of their tenure in the job. Skills training is a normal part of most RA education programs, and instruction in stress management could easily be incorporated

into existing programs. Continuing education programs may also focus on difficulties faced by RAs throughout the year and on coping with the many pressures which result in disillusionment and exhaustion.

Prevention of burnout also derives from effective, productive management of the environment in which the RA lives and works. Environmental characteristics of involvement, emotional support, and order and organization are negatively correlated with burnout. While the direction of the environment is a primary concern of the RA, hall-wide programs and administrative policies and procedures can have impact on the environment of each particular living unit. Efforts which facilitate the growth of an involved, supportive, and organized environment should be identified and implemented by parties who have more extensive influence than the RA. This is the topic of the third dimension for which implications are identified, i.e., the conditions or social climate of the residence hall environment.

The Residence Hall Environment and the RA

How the RA perceives the environment is often the basis of numerous decisions which directly affect that environment. Housing administrators listen to their staff and respect their viewpoints. There must be some acknowledgement, however, that RAs' perceptions are sometimes colored by their expectations, and their reactions to incidents and situations can sometimes be extreme.

As emphasized at the beginning of this investigation, an RA is usually the type of person who expects and needs to be helpful to others. Furthermore the RA is usually a student who has derived sufficient satisfaction from residence hall living to choose to become a resident assistant. This choice alone reflects an interest and a commitment which often surpasses that of the typical undergraduate student.

The presence of burnout also suggests that the RA may be more susceptible in some cases to overreaction to stress in the environment. Therefore, in addressing the environmental issues identified in this investigation, one must regard the information as viable insofar as it is reported by RAs while recognizing the unique point of view of the RA.

Residence hall environments, like other physical and social environments, can be monitored, evaluated and managed. Changes can be made, although not always with great ease. The first step is environmental assessment. Through the assessment conducted in this investigation, the object of change and intervention is apparent, i.e., the perceived environmental conditions of involvement, emotional support, independence, traditional social orientation, competition, intellectuality, order and organization, student influence, and innovation. The influence of these characteristics in the individual RA can be moderated to some degree through increased understanding of the environment and its various

components. Teaching and supervision are two effective means of accomplishing this objective of increasing RA understanding.

Perceptions also change as the actual conditions change, and intervention with the environment could be most productive. Numerous resources in environmental assessment and management are available to the researcher and practitioner.

The findings, conclusions and implications discussed above suggest several areas of this investigation which merit further, more specific analysis. Five recommendations are made in concluding this investigation.

Recommendations for Future Research

Probably the most conspicuous and frustrating problem to which a recommendation could be addressed is the issue of cause-and-effect. An experimental study in which sources of personal involvement and burnout could be identified would resolve many of the either-or dilemmas of the present investigation. Certainly this investigation may serve as a beginning for experimental research designs. Furthermore this investigation could also be used as the foundation for longitudinal research which could also identify causes of personal involvement and burnout, as well as effects of selected interventions.

Secondly the investigator recommends that further research of these variables employ a measure of the involvement which taps the consensus of the residence hall population as additional information concerning the environment. While the RA's perceptions of the environment are valid for him or her, the

perceptions of others who live in the residence hall would contribute to greater understanding not only of the environment but also of the RA's perceptions and experiences.

A third recommendation concerns the measurement of burnout. The Burnout Measure is not work-related in its language and was selected for this investigation because burnout is not necessarily a function of work only, nor is it manifested solely on the job. Validation of the burnout score for the RA as worker, however, could be accomplished by either employing an additional measure or by having someone familiar with the RA in his or her staff role rate the RA's work behavior on a burnout scale. Such a measure would help to ensure, with greater certainty, that the condition of burnout is being assessed in the context of the work environment. This consideration is very important in light of the complexity of the environment in which the RA functions in so many different roles.

RAs' perceptions of their roles and responsibilities were assumed to be similar within the population. A fourth recommendation is to control for this assumption through the use of a measure of RA understanding of their function as a staff member. Expectations are very important in the experience of stress and burnout; likewise the RA's concept of his or her role has some bearing on the degree of involvement he or she may engage in with students. This recommendation would take into consideration this variable which would very

likely have an impact on personal involvement and burnout.

Finally the investigator recommends that further attention be given to the issues of this investigation in both research and practice. RA burnout reduces effectiveness. RA effectiveness is essential to the success of every housing program, and attention to the conditions which enhance success reflects responsible, conscientious management.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE HOUSING ORGANIZATION

Purpose

The Department of University Housing provides residence hall accommodations for approximately 6300 undergraduate and graduate students and family housing units for 545 families. In addition to providing residential accommodations, a variety of social, educational, and recreational programs are provided to promote individual growth and development.

The overall goal of the Department is to provide the best possible housing for students at the least possible cost. This goal is realized by effectively integrating services to students, sound financial management, and educational/developmental student oriented programs and activities.

Objectives

- To provide residence hall accommodations.
- To provide a variety of social and educational programs to promote individual development in residence students.
- To provide opportunities for leadership through residence activities and student staff positions.
- To provide student and professional staff to advise, counsel, and interact with individuals, and groups of students.
- To maintain residence facilities through daily custodial care, routine maintenance, and renovation.
- To complement the instructional and cultural programs of the University by offering additional opportunities for educational, social, and recreational experiences.
- To encourage and promote out-of-class contact between and among faculty, students, and administrators.
- To stimulate and cultivate friendships among students.



RESIDENT ASSISTANT

Job Description

The Resident Assistant (RA) is an integral, vital member of the Department of University Housing Staff. A student too, the RA lives and works with a group of 30 to 70 other students in one of six residential communities.

The specific qualifications, requirements and responsibilities for the Resident Assistant position are outlined below.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Interest in working with students in an advisory capacity in a residential community.
2. Academic classification of sophomore or above at the time of employment.
3. Minimum cumulative average of 2.2 at the time of employment.
4. Resident of University of Georgia residential community for at least one quarter preferred.

REQUIREMENTS

1. An RA may carry an academic course load maximum of 16 hours during the first quarter of employment. After the first quarter, the RA may carry a maximum of 18 hours. No exceptions will be granted during the first quarter. Any exception for subsequent quarters must be approved in writing by the Graduate Resident and Residence Life Coordinator prior to registration.
2. An RA must maintain a cumulative and quarterly grade point average of 2.2 during the period of employment.
3. An RA must not engage in part-time work (including work/study) or hold an assistantship while serving as an RA. Participation in student teaching responsibilities or extracurricular activities must be discussed and approved in writing by the Graduate Resident and the Residence Life Coordinator prior to involvement.
4. An RA must limit his/her time away from campus and the community to one weekend per month.

5. An RA must successfully complete the three hour credit course for Resident Assistants (ECP-400) and participate in the on-going training activities scheduled throughout the term of employment.
6. An RA must remain in the community until all students have left for a vacation period (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring Break, Summer Closing) and return to open the community after a vacation period. Requests to leave early or return late must be approved in advance by the Graduate Resident and the Residence Life Coordinator. Resident Assistants will be expected to provide staff supervision when communities remain open during vacations or quarterly breaks. Staff responsibilities begin prior to the opening of the communities for Fall Workshop and continue through the closing of the communities.
7. An RA must remain on his/her floor or neighborhood in the residence hall or colony one or more nights per week and assigned weekends according to the duty schedule.
8. An RA is expected to support and enforce University Policies and Regulations.
9. An RA is expected to participate in and support departmental staff recruitment, selection, and evaluation processes.

RESPONSIBILITIES

A. TIME COMMITMENT

The RA position is the RA's principal non-academic activity. Extra-curricular activities should not conflict with the time needed to perform effectively as an RA throughout the entire year. The RA is expected to be available and accessible to students on the floor or neighborhood throughout the year.

B. ADVISING

The RA should be aware of students' needs and provide appropriate consultation and referral. The RA is expected to:

1. Listen to others with an attitude of concern and support.
2. Discuss potential referrals with the Graduate Resident and/or Residence Life Coordinator.
3. Explain the various referral options within the University to the student seeking help. Whenever appropriate, the RA should utilize the full time Housing staff as a referral option.
4. Recognize the limits of his/her training and experience as a counselor.

C. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

The RA is expected to promote an atmosphere for individual and group development by encouraging programs in the residential community. In providing a learning atmosphere, the RA is expected to:

1. Encourage student interaction with faculty, campus ministers and other members of the University Community by involving them in programs within the halls or colonies.
2. Encourage residents to contact resource people and assist in developing special interest programs.
3. Attend scheduled floor and neighborhood activities including intramural sports, social events, meetings and educational activities.
4. Actively participate in and support residence hall government by encouraging qualified students to volunteer for office.
5. Communicate regularly with community officers and interest groups concerning their activities.

D. STAFF EDUCATION PROGRAM

The RA is expected to participate in the staff educational program which is designed to develop skills to meet the job expectations. Therefore the RA is expected to:

1. Complete the Spring Quarter staff training program.
2. Complete the staff training workshop held prior to the beginning of the Fall Quarter.
3. Read and study the Resident Assistant Manual.
4. Attend all staff meetings in your hall or colony.

E. UNIVERSITY POLICY: COMMUNITY CONCERNS

The RA is expected to support and enforce University Policies and Regulations. The RA will serve with other staff members in evaluating and establishing departmental policies. The RA serves as a model for others which includes assuming responsibility for creating an environment in which optimum personal and social growth may occur. In order to maximize the effects of the hall environment upon student development, the RA is expected to:

1. Encourage, by example, the principles of individual responsibility and respect for others' development.

2. Explain, support and follow the regulations, and policies outlined in the University Student Handbook and Community: A Guide to Residence Hall Living.
3. Respond in a positive and helpful manner when confronted with behavior or infractions which disrupt the environment. All University violations and all infractions reviewed by the RA must be discussed with the Graduate Resident.

REMUNERATION

Resident Assistant appointments are made on an academic year basis subject to quarterly evaluations. Remuneration for the Resident Assistant position is based upon quarters of service. The salary for the academic year (September to June) is \$2,465.60 for RAs with one to three quarters of service and \$2,539.20 for RAs with four or more quarters of service. A limited number of RA positions are available for Summer Quarter. The Summer Quarter RA salary is proportional depending on length of previous service. The RA is responsible for payment of housing rent and normally will occupy a room with a roommate.

APPENDIX B



DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY HOUSING

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
RUSSELL HALL
ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602

(404) 542-1421

During the month of April I will be conducting a research project with a group of Resident Assistants who are in their first year of employment. I am writing to request your cooperation and assistance.

You will be contacted by an interviewer (named below) who will arrange a meeting with you at your convenience. In this meeting you will complete a brief questionnaire followed by an interview. A tape recording of the interview will be made. Within one week after your interview you will receive a survey to complete and return to me.

This research project is strictly confidential and is designed to provide information which will be used to improve the RA position. You will not be identified for any purpose other than to ensure that I can match your responses on the questionnaire, the interview, and the survey. Your responses will be destroyed once converted to statistical data and you will not be associated by name with the results.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Once again, thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Bob Harris
Assistant Director of Housing
542-7295

/so

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C

CONSENT STATEMENT

I, _____, agree to participate in the research project entitled "Personal Involvement and Burnout Among Resident Assistants" which is being conducted by Bob Harris. I understand that my participation is voluntary.

The following points have been explained to me:

1. The purpose of this research is to measure the relationship of the personal involvement of RAs with students, burnout of RAs, and the residence hall environment. While there are no direct benefits which I will receive by participating in the project, my participation will provide information which may prove useful to future RAs in college and university housing.
2. There are three components in which I will participate - an interview, a questionnaire, and a survey. The first two components will be completed today. The survey will be completed within two weeks.
3. There are no potential discomforts or stresses which I will experience by participating in this research.
4. There are no risks to me whatsoever as a result of my participation in this research.
5. The results of my participation will be confidential and will not be released in any individually identifiable form. My name is used only to ensure accurate records. All identifiers will be removed from the questionnaire and the survey by June 1, 1983. The audio tape of the interview will be erased by June 1, 1983. Only the investigator, Bob Harris, will have access to any of the research materials, and said materials will be used exclusively for the purposes of the investigation.
6. The investigator, Bob Harris, will answer any further questions about the investigation either now or during the course of the investigation.

(Signature of Investigator)

(Signature of Participant)

(Date)

(Date)

Please sign two copies. Retain one copy and give one copy to the interviewer.

Investigator: Bob Harris, Department of University Housing, 542-7295.

APPENDIX D

APPENDIX D

Interview Procedures

Purpose: The purpose of the interview is to measure the personal involvement of the subject (RA) with the students in his or her charge.

Variables: Degree of Personal Involvement - The evidence of personal involvement indicated by the frequency of certain descriptive statements about a student.

Quality of Personal Involvement - The evidence of personal involvement indicated by the emotional tone of the descriptive comments about a student.

Targeted individuals - Individuals identified as most preferred and least preferred by the RA.

STEP ONE: Briefly explain the purpose of the investigation. Highlight the six points of the consent form. Ask the RA to read the consent form and sign two copies. Keep one copy and give the other copy to the RA.

Note: Introduction of the investigation and use of the consent form should be sufficient to set the stage for the interview.

STEP TWO: The interview consists of two parts - (a) targeting individual students and (b) describing individual students. Only part (b) is tape recorded.

Targeting Individual Students: "For most RAs there are always students on the floor/neighborhood with whom the RA prefers to associate while there are others with whom the RA may not choose to associate. Think about the students who live on your floor/neighborhood. (Pause). I would like for you to identify the two students you most prefer to associate with and give me their first names. (Pause; write the names on your interview record sheet.) Now, identify the two students you least prefer to associate with and give me their names." (Enter these names).

STEP THREE: Describing Individual Students (Begin tape recording):
"Assume that I am the RA on another floor/neighborhood and _____ (name of one student) is moving to my floor. Tell me about him/her."

The interviewer gives these instructions for all four students identified above. Alternately, from one interview to the next, interviewers shall name "most preferred students" first and "least preferred students" last, and vice versa.

NOTE: This interview requires a minimum amount of active interviewing. It is essential, however, that interviewers employ their best attending skills in order for the setting to be as realistic as possible. You might regard this process as role-playing. Once the RA begins to describe an individual, however, you are not to prompt, respond, or clarify.

STEP FOUR: Closing the Interview begins when you turn off the tape recorder following the description of student number four. Explain that the interview is completed and that there is a brief questionnaire to be completed. Give the questionnaire to the RA and ask him or her to complete it and seal it in the envelope provided.

When the RA completes the questionnaire, thank him or her for participating in the investigation. Remind him or her of the following:

1. Any questions or concerns should be directed to Bob Harris as noted on the consent forms;
2. In about a week a survey will be sent in the mail. This survey should be completed as soon as possible and returned to Bob Harris.

Information for Interviewers

The purpose of this investigation is to measure the relationship of personal involvement of RAs with students, burnout, and environmental conditions. As an interviewer you are responsible for arranging an appointment with each subject assigned to you. In this meeting, you will secure the RA's consent to participate, conduct an interview, and administer a questionnaire.

Each RA has already been contacted by letter (attached) and is anticipating a telephone call from you. A list of names, addresses, and phone numbers is attached. Please contact each RA on the list and, with reference to the letter from me, ask to arrange an appointment. After you agree to a time (allow one hour, although less than an hour will be required), suggest that the interview could be conducted in their room if that setting would provide for confidential conversation; otherwise, another location may be selected (study room, office, apartment, etc.)

Because participation is voluntary, anyone who refuses to participate should be thanked and this should be noted on the interview record sheet. Do not ask the RA if she or he is willing to participate -- refusal to participate is also voluntary!

The interview is introduced with the explanation of the investigation and the consent statement. Explanation of the project and the procedures should provide sufficient casual conversation for you to become familiar with one another and to create a relaxed atmosphere. Use the consent statement as an outline for explaining the investigation. You need not read the statement word for word; simply highlight the six points on the statement and build the confidence of the subject in you as an interviewer.

Interviewer procedures are outlined on another sheet. Please note that the interview is relatively passive as far as you are concerned. Your role is to attend to their responses and to listen. Please use the interview record sheet during the interview as a guide for completing all the necessary steps.

The maximum time for the responses of the RA is 45 minutes (one side of a cassette tape). The anticipated length of the total interview is 25 minutes, and only part b is tape recorded. Please remember to test the tape recorder to be certain it is working properly. Your cue to activate the recorder is the instruction, "Assume that I am the RA on another floor/neighborhood ..." The recorder should run continuously through the remainder of the interview.

Finally as you administer the questionnaire, your instruction should be, "Now I would like for you to complete this brief questionnaire and seal it in the envelope. When you finish, I will be happy to respond to any of your questions."

INTERVIEW RECORD SHEET

Interviewer's Name: _____

Subject's Name: _____ Phone _____

Subject's Address: (Hall and Room#) _____

Date Contacted: _____

Date and Time of Interview _____

Location of Interview _____

Investigation and Consent Procedure Explained: _____

Consent Forms Completed: _____ (one copy to RA)

Individual Students' Names

Most Preferred

Least Preferred

In this interview, which students were described first? _____

Tape Number: _____ Side: _____

Comments and Notes:

Approximate Time Required: _____

Questionnaire Returned: _____

Survey Returned: _____

Please return this form with the tape, consent form, and completed questionnaire to Bob Harris. Thank you.

APPENDIX E

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please respond to each item. When you have completed both pages of the questionnaire, seal it in the envelope provided and return it to the interviewer.

Your Name _____ Sex: M F
Campus Address _____ Phone _____
Date of Birth _____
Academic Classification: Sophomore Junior Senior Graduate
Academic Major: _____
Expected Date of Graduation _____ Degree _____
Number of Students Living on your Floor/Neighborhood _____
Did you take ECP 400 (RA Course) during Spring Quarter, 1982? Yes No
Did you attend the Fall, 1982, RA Staff Workshop? Yes No
What quarter did you begin working as a Resident Assistant? _____
Do you plan to return as a Resident Assistant for 1983-84? Yes No

PLEASE GO TO THE NEXT PAGE

APPENDIX F

APPENDIX F

How often do you have any of the following experiences? Please use the scale.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never	Once in a great while	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Usually	Always

- _____ 1. Being tired
- _____ 2. Feeling depressed
- _____ 3. Having a good day
- _____ 4. Being physically exhausted
- _____ 5. Being emotionally exhausted
- _____ 6. Being happy
- _____ 7. Being "wiped out"
- _____ 8. Feeling "burned out"
- _____ 9. Being unhappy
- _____ 10. Feeling rundown
- _____ 11. Feeling trapped
- _____ 12. Feeling worthless
- _____ 13. Being weary
- _____ 14. Being troubled
- _____ 15. Feeling disillusioned and resentful about people
- _____ 16. Feeling weak
- _____ 17. Feeling hopeless
- _____ 18. Feeling rejected
- _____ 19. Feeling optimistic
- _____ 20. Feeling energetic
- _____ 21. Feeling anxious

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APPENDIX G



DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY HOUSING

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
RUSSELL HALL
ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602

(404) 542-1421

November 2, 1982

Dr. Ayala Pines
University of California
Berkeley, California

Dear Dr. Pines:

I am writing in regard to your paper "The Burnout Measure" which was presented at the National Conference on Burnout, November 1981. In particular, I am interested in the self diagnosis instrument as a research tool.

My objective is to use this instrument and the supporting statistical data in my research on burnout among para-professional student personnel workers on a college campus. The purpose of my research is to investigate the relationship between personal involvement with clients and measured burnout. I am engaged in research as a Ph.D. Candidate at Michigan State University, and I am conducting the research at the University of Georgia.

Your assistance in this matter by granting me permission to use the instrument for the stated purpose, with whatever conditions and/or costs required, will be most appreciated. Let me clarify that the only publication of this instrument of which I am aware is the example included in the aforementioned paper. If the instrument is already published and available for purchase, then I need only information about obtaining copies.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bob Harris
Assistant Director of Housing
University of Georgia
Russell Hall
Athens, Georgia 30602

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

Dear Bob,

You have my permission to use the
measure on the condition that you share
with us whatever data you obtain using it.

Best wishes

Ayala P.H.

APPENDIX H

UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE ENVIRONMENT SCALE

FORM R

MARVIN S. GERST & RUDOLF H. MOOS



INSTRUCTIONS

There are 100 statements in this booklet. They are statements about university living groups. You are to decide which statements are true of your living group and which are not.

Using the separate answer sheet, make an X in the box for T (true) if you think a statement is true or mostly true of your living group. Make an X in the box for F (false) if you think the statement is false or mostly false of your living group.

Please use a lead pencil and erase if you make a mistake. Do not make any marks on this booklet.

If you live in a large hall or complex which has 100 or more residents, then your living group, for purposes of this questionnaire, should be the floor or corridor on which you live. If you live in a building or complex of less than 100 people, then your living group is the whole building.

Some of the statements make the distinction between "staff" and "students". For these items, "staff" are faculty, administrative personnel, graduate or undergraduate assistants living in the house. Please be sure to answer every statement.

71. There are a lot of spontaneous social activities here.
72. In this house people rarely show affection for one another.
73. People in the house tend to fit in with the way other people do things here.
74. In this house people would rather go on a date than do something with others in the residence.
75. Intellectual one-upmanship is frowned upon here.
76. Around here people who are "academic grinds" are looked on with amusement.
77. Discussions around here are generally quite intellectual.
78. House officers are regularly elected in the house.
79. The students do not take part in staff selection.
80. Constantly developing new ways of approaching life is important here.
81. Very few people here participate in house activities.
82. Most people here tell one another their personal problems.
83. People around here don't worry much about how they dress.
84. Being popular with the opposite sex is not very important here.
85. People here always seem to be competing for the highest grades.
86. In the evening many people here begin to study right after dinner.
87. The people in this house do not have a great deal of intellectual curiosity.
88. This is a pretty disorderly house.
89. The students here determine the times when meals will be served.
90. Things rarely "just happen" around here.
91. People around here don't often go out of their way to be with one another.
92. It is sometimes difficult to approach the house staff with problems.
93. People here tend to rely on themselves when a problem comes up.
94. Around here very little of people's extra-curricular lives is concerned with dating matters.
95. Academic competition is frowned upon here.
96. There are a lot of study groups around here.
97. People here rarely read or talk about serious matters (e.g., world affairs, philosophy, etc.).
98. There is a great deal of confusion during house meetings.
99. The students here determine who their roommates will be.
100. There is a methodical quality about this house.



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INSTRUCTIONS



FORMER

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE

1.	There is a feeling of unity and cohesion here.	18.	The jobs of house officers are not clearly defined.	37.	There is not much appreciation here for classical music, art, literature, etc.	55.	People here try to appear more intellectual than others in the house.
2.	People here are concerned with helping and supporting one another.	19.	The students formulate almost all the rules here.	38.	House activities are pretty carefully planned here.	56.	Most people plan activities other than studying for weekends.
3.	People here tend to check on whether their behavior is acceptable to others in the house.	20.	Innovation is not considered important here.	39.	House finances are handled exclusively by students here.	57.	Around here people tend not to value ideas for their own sake.
4.	Dating is a recurring topic of conversation around here.	21.	In this house there is a strong feeling of belongingness.	40.	Doing things in a different way is valued around here.	58.	Around here the staff usually sets an example of neatness and orderliness.
5.	Around here discussions frequently turn into verbal duels.	22.	Trying to understand the feelings of others is considered important by most people in this house.	41.	Most of the people in this house know each other very well.	59.	Around here the staff decide who gets the single rooms.
6.	People around here hardly ever seem to be studying.	23.	Around here people are not interested in up-holding social conventions.	42.	The people here are often critical of others in the house.	60.	Around here there is a minimum of planning and a maximum of action.
7.	People around here talk a lot about political and social issues.	24.	People here consider other types of social activities to be more important than dating.	43.	Most people here know and use the commonly accepted rules of social conduct.	61.	People in the house often do something together on weekends.
8.	The house officers function in a somewhat haphazard manner.	25.	In this house people tend not to compete with each other.	44.	Nearly everyone here tries to have a date on weekends.	62.	People here tell others about their feelings of self-doubt.
9.	The staff here decide whether and when the residents can have visitors of the opposite sex in their rooms.	26.	People here work hard to get top grades.	45.	In this house people don't try to be more "cool" than others.	63.	Around here people try to act in ways that will gain the approval of others in the house.
10.	New approaches to things are often tried here.	27.	People here very rarely discuss intellectual matters.	46.	People around here tend to study long hours at a stretch.	64.	Having exchanges and parties is a high priority activity in this house.
11.	Very few things around here arouse much excitement or interest.	28.	House procedures here are well established.	47.	The people in this house generally read a good deal about intellectual material other than class assignments.	65.	People who have lots of dates tend to let others in the house know.
12.	Around here people tend to hide their feelings from one another.	29.	The staff here have the last say about student discipline.	48.	Meetings and activities follow a pretty regular schedule in the house.	66.	Around here people don't let studies interfere with the rest of their lives.
13.	People here pretty much act and think freely without too much regard for social opinion.	30.	In this house people often do unusual things.	49.	Students enforce house rules here.	67.	The people here are generally pretty interested in cultural activities.
14.	Some people here spend a lot of time preparing for dates.	31.	Most people here have a strong sense of loyalty toward the house.	50.	The people here seem to be doing routine things most of the time.	68.	House finances are handled in a pretty loose fashion.
15.	People don't try to impress each other here.	32.	People here try to make others feel secure.	51.	This is a rather apathetic house.	69.	Rules about social conduct are sometimes enforced by the staff.
16.	Around here studies are secondary to most activities.	33.	Behaving correctly in public is pretty unimportant in this house.	52.	People around here are not very considerate of the feelings of others.	70.	There is a sense of predictability about this house.
17.	There is a good deal of concern about intellectual awareness in this house.	34.	In this house dating is not important.	53.	Behaving properly in social situations is not considered important here.		
		35.	People around here are always trying to win an argument.	54.	Few people in this house go on dates.		
		36.	Most people here consider studies as very important in college.				

UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE ENVIRONMENT SCALE

DIRECTIONS

Look at your test booklet and check the Form printed on it here:

Form R____E____I____

Please provide the information requested below.

Name_____ Age_____ Sex M F
(circle)
Living group_____ Corridor/floor_____ Room_____

Are you a (circle one) student? staff? Title_____

Year in college (circle one) Fr. So. Jr. Sr. Grad.

Did you choose this living group as your (circle one) 1st choice 2nd choice 3rd choice 4th or lower choice No choice

Circle all quarters/semesters you have lived here This year: Fall Winter Spring Summer
Last year: Fall Winter Spring Summer

Would you like to live here again next year? 1. Yes 2. Probably 3. Neutral
4. Probably not 5. No

Today's Date_____ Other_____

Now, please read each statement in your booklet and then, in the boxes on the other side of this sheet, mark T.(true) if you think the statement is true of your living group, and F (false) if the statement is not true of your living group.

Use a heavy X, as in the example: Please use a pencil with an eraser, not a pen. Be sure to match each number in the booklet with each one on this sheet.

EXAMPLE ONLY

T	X	
F		X

Designed by Rudolf H. Moos

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START
HERE

T	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	T
F											F
T	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	T
F											F
T	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	T
F											F
T	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	T
F											F
T	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	T
F											F
T	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	T
F											F
T	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	T
F											F
T	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	T
F											F
T	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	T
F											F
T	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	T
F											F

do not mark below this line

	Inv	S	Ind	TSO	C	AA	Int	OO	SI	Inn
R/S										
S/S										

APPENDIX I



DEPARTMENT OF UNIVERSITY HOUSING

THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
RUSSELL HALL
ATHENS, GEORGIA 30602

(404) 542-1421

Enclosed is a questionnaire about your floor. This is the third and final step of my research project.

Please complete the questionnaire according to the instructions and return both the answer sheet and the booklet to me as soon as possible. Affix the enclosed mailing label over your name on the envelope and return via campus mail at your community office.

NOTE: The questionnaire uses the term "house" to describe a living unit. House refers to the specific area (floor or floors) for which you are directly responsible as the RA.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Sincerely,

Bob Harris