A Study of Upper-Class Housing at the

University of Wisconsin-Stout

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to research pre-living perceptions and post-living experiences and perceptions of upper-class students who were housed as part of the North Campus Experience program at UW-Stout. Data for this study was collected through a pre-test survey in August, 2005 and a post-test survey was distributed in January, 2006.

The objectives of this study were to determine whether there is a relationship between preconceived perceptions of 1) a new campus living environment and ownership of student behavior at the upper-class residence halls; 2) a new campus living environment and alcohol usage following the move; 3) a new campus living environment and development of interpersonal relationships in the residence hall communities; and 4) a new campus living environment and academic success following the move.

The data analysis indicated statistical significance for all items at the .001 level except for one item which was found at the .05 level. This led to rejection of all four null

hypotheses. It was also found that the means for all items were higher in the pre-tests compared to the post-tests leading to the conclusion that students' preconceived perceptions of the North Campus Experience were more positive than what they experienced in actuality. The results tend to indicate that there is a need for improvement in the upper class residence halls which may lead to bridging the gap between students' expectations and their actual living experiences.

Recommendations suggested by this researcher include a review of the North Campus Experience program in its current state as well as development of future strategies for residence hall programming based on andragogical and cognitive development theories.

Limitations of this study include possible sample bias due to lack of paired sample between the pre-test and the post-test. Also, data analyzed for this study was collected during August, 2005 and January, 2006, thereby limiting the scope of this research to six months only.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Residence halls are complex human educational environments whose features are a function of their physical structure and design, the characteristics of individuals who live in them, the way residents organize themselves, and their collective perceptions of the living environment. The perceptions, in turn, influence how residents evaluate and respond to these features (Strange, 1993).

The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) for Student Services (1986) observed "the residence life program is an integral part of the educational program and academic support services of the institution" (p. 51). By establishing the CAS Standards, the Council also defined goals for such a program which must provide 1) a living – learning environment that enhances individual growth and development 2) facilities that are well-maintained, safe, and hygienic 3) management services that ensure orderly and effective administration of all aspects of the program, and 4) food, dining facilities, and related services that effectively meet institutional and residential life goals for programs that include food services. These goals primarily focus attention on the personal development of residents and help create programs and environments to promote desired outcomes. Mable (1987), however, argued that the focus on student development in residence halls has the "momentum of a vague vision" (p. 1) with creditable research evidence published, indicating many residence life programs fall short of achieving the desired outcomes.

A typical college student spends about forty-eight hours a week in classes and direct academic-related work (Strange, 1993). Boyer (1987) observed that most traditional students spend fifty hours per week in sleeping and time beyond that is spent

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in a residence hall environment where students engage in "human interaction, communication, individual differences, and communal living" (p. 159). The impact of environmental components on students living in residence halls is significant and Moos (1979) delineated five different, but inter-connected notions of the way the environment works. These are based on a positive - negative continuum with attributes like stimulation, challenge, and facilitation of personal and social growth indicating a strong positive environment. The negative environmental factors, on the other end, limit, resist, and inhibit positive growth and cause stress. In the middle are environments that select and favor certain organisms. Moos (1974) also promulgated the social climate model through which the application of environmental factors within a residence life community can be programmed to achieve desired outcomes. Strange (1993) argued that enhancing environmental competence is the basic purpose of higher education and the residence hall experience fulfills a critical function of this competence. Research by Kitchener, King, Wood, and Davidson (1989) and Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) showed that students with a positive residential life experience in college emerged with a more complex view of the world, appreciated and understood differences better, and were in an advantageous position to interpret information to make adequate judgments about life and the environment surrounding them. It is therefore imperative that residence life programs understand the importance of creating conducive environments, which limit stress and become a positive influence on students' lives with various sub-environments stimulating and challenging them individually to grow personally and socially.

Blocher (1978) and Banning (1980) observed that college campuses are like ecosystems and student services are an integral part of the campus ecology to promote optimal growth. The effectiveness of these services should be measured through environmental assessments, and Aulepp and Delworth (1978) suggested a team approach towards such assessments.

The University of Wisconsin – Stout is a member campus of the University of Wisconsin System. The system has 13 four-year campuses, 13 two-year campuses, and a statewide UW Extension. Its flagship campus is in Madison, Wisconsin. System wide enrollment for the year 2005-2006 was 160,703 (UWSA, 2006a). Stout is located in Menomonie (Population: 15,000), in Dunn County in western Wisconsin. The nearest metropolitan area is Minneapolis / St. Paul, Minnesota, 60 miles west. Interstate 94 connects Menomonie with Minneapolis / St. Paul and Madison, Wisconsin. Eau Claire (Population: 62,000), Wisconsin, 30 miles east, is the nearest city with a population exceeding 50,000. Enrollment at UW-Stout for the academic year 2005 – 2006 was 8,257 with 4,046 males and 4,211 females (UWSA, 2006b). In terms of ethnicity, 94% were Caucasian, 1.3% African Americans, 0.6% Native Americans, 0.8% Latino / Hispanic, 2.1% Asian / Southeast Asian Americans, and 1.2% International students (UWSA, 2006c).

The campus has ten residence halls, five on the South Campus and five on the North Campus, with a total capacity of 3,050 occupants. The Department of University Housing operates residence halls on a "cost center" basis and income above expenditure is treated as auxiliary resources and used for capital expenditure funding. The department does not receive any funding from the state for residence halls, they are operated similar to a self-funded business.

Traditionally, one residence hall on each end of campus was designated as a freshmen hall, housing the "Fresh Success" program. These two halls also had live-in student academic mentors responsible for providing academic support to freshmen. Upper-class students were housed in all other buildings on both ends of campus.

In keeping with the mission of the university, beginning Fall, 2005 the Department of University Housing decided to create two new residence life programs. The First –Year Experience (FYE) was targeted towards incoming freshmen, creating an intensive experience by designating all residence halls on South Campus as "freshmen only", except for North Hall. North Hall was excluded since it houses special student populations like international students, students with disabilities, and athletes. FYE involves more faculty – student interaction and its goal is to increase retention as well as graduation within a 4-year timeframe.

For upper-class students, the Department of University Housing created the North Campus Experience (NCE) which includes all five residence halls on the North Campus, including the all-suites residence hall which opened during Fall, 2005. The purpose of NCE is to create an upper-class environment with physical separation from freshmen and freshmen-oriented programming. The goal of NCE is to promote responsibility, civility, and ownership amongst students through passive programming which will help them get ready for facing the challenges of the real world once they graduate. Such programming would include bulletin boards, brochures, and other marketing collateral aimed at helping students improve their academic as well as social skills.

These changes in residence life were expected to have a significant impact on student life; therefore these programs require evaluation on a continuous basis to

ascertain whether they are meeting their desired objectives or not. This study aims to investigate the North Campus Experience program by researching the perceptions vis-àvis actual living experiences of upper-class students housed in five residence halls on the North Campus. The goal is to ascertain strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for this program and how it could become a better strategic fit for the students it is designed to serve.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to research pre-living perceptions and post-living experiences and perceptions of upper-class students who were housed as part of the North Campus Experience program at UW-Stout. Data for this study was collected through a pre-test survey in August, 2005 and a post-test survey was distributed in January, 2006., four months after the students became part of the North Campus Experience.

Hypotheses of the Study

The study is based on the following null hypotheses:

- 1. There is no relationship between perceptions of campus living environment and ownership of student behavior.
- 2. There is no relationship between perceptions of campus living environment and alcohol use by students.
- 3. There is no relationship between perceptions of campus living environment and development of interpersonal relationships among students.
- 4. There is no relationship between perceptions of campus living environment and academic success.

Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumed that since the pre-test and post-test instruments complied with anonymity, there was no inherent bias for or against any particular group of respondents.

Definition of Terms

Terms used in this study have been defined in this section.

Andragogy – Greek word meaning "Adult-leading." A term originally used by Alexander Knapp, a German educator in 1833 and subsequently developed into a theory of adult education by American educator Malcolm Knowles (Knowles, 1984, p.129).

Cognition – The process of knowing (Bruning, Schraw, Norby, & Ronning, 2004).

North Campus Exprerience (NCE) – A residential living program designed by the Department of University Housing at UW-Stout reassigning all upper-class (sophomore and above) students to the North Campus residence halls. First implemented in September, 2005.

Satisfaction - 1: the act or fact of satisfying. 2 : the quality or state of being satisfied.(Merriam-Webster Dictionary of Law, 1996)

Schemata – mental frameworks used to organize knowledge. Knowledge is organized into complex representations called schemata that control the encoding, storage, and retrieval of information in the brain (Marshall, 1995).

University Housing – The Department at the University of Wisconsin- Stout which operates and manages all residence halls on campus. Formerly known as Department of Housing and Residence Life. University of Wisconsin System Administration (UWSA)-The apex body with administrative and financial oversight responsibilities for all University of Wisconsin campuses and extensions in the state of Wisconsin.

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations for this study were identified:

1. The researcher acknowledges that there are a large number of factors other than the four hypotheses proposed that contribute to perceptions and living experiences of students residing in the North Campus residence halls.

2. The data analyzed for this study was collected during the academic year 2005-2006, thereby limiting the scope of this research to only six months. The researcher acknowledges that a longer timeframe would have certainly improved the quality of data and helped in determining significant trends that may or may not have emerged.

3. The pre-test and post-test instruments used in this study were not tested for validity or reliability.

4. The researcher acknowledges possible sample bias due to lack of paired sample between the pre-test and the post-test.

5. The study is quantitative in nature and therefore is limited to numerical statistics and does not include qualitative analyses.

Methodology

This study was based upon data collected through a two-part mailed survey administered by the Department of University Housing during August, 2005 and January, 2006. The instruments were mailed to all upper-class students living in North Campus residence halls. Data analysis for this study was based on 19 items which were similar both for the pre-test and as the post-test. The 19 item responses were then collected and differentiated into four homogenous groups, according to the four hypotheses which are listed under "hypotheses of the study." Details of this selection and grouping are discussed in Chapter III.

The objective of data analysis for this study was to find if the individual item scores had any significanct differences between test times (pre-test and post-test), and any consequent relationship between the preconceived perceptions of students about their campus living environment and their actual living experiences on the North Campus.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter includes a comprehensive discussion on residence halls and their impact on student development in college. The sections addressed in this chapter are: student development in college, educational potential of residence halls, student services in residence halls, and a summary of the review of literature.

Student housing is now part of a larger dynamic on campuses known as "Student Life" (Ratcliff, 2003, p.26). It used to be commonplace for campus architects to contact a colleague and ask for a building to accommodate a given number of students, but with no program for student life. Today, the development of a residence hall is far more complex and requires that the facility support a wide range of student needs and activities beyond solely physical needs. It is now expected that residence halls will include space for social gathering and areas for recreation, food, study, and computer support. Campus stakeholders are at the table during the design process – housing administration, student representatives, campus architects and engineers, personnel from the university food service, risk and safety, and campus security, and the building and ground staff – providing input for reaching consensus on what the new development must include to become a viable part of student life.

A good example of this process was the planning for the new residence hall at UW-Stout which opened in Fall, 2005 during which housing administration consulted people from various other departments on campus and recognized their inputs. Residence halls are human environments and it helps when more stakeholders are in agreement with the development that is being planned. This can be further achieved by empowering stakeholders to have a greater say in matters that affect perception. Campus architects

nowadays have to pay attention to the web of life; otherwise they create additional stress for students who inhabit the structures they design. As Johnson (1972) observed, student housing has come a long way from the fraternity houses of the 1800s, and the residence hall building boom of the 1920s. As research by Van der Ryn and Silverstein (1967) showed, poor student life design can create immense negative synergies, which can undermine the objectives of the institution itself.

Pike (2002) argued that campus residence halls provide a powerful environment for encouraging openness to diversity. They offer extended opportunities for students to interact with peers and staff to implement programs that expose students to multicultural issues (Hughes, 1994). Previous studies by Astin (1993) and Blimling (1993) found that living in residence halls, as opposed to commuting from home was related to increased tolerance and openness to diversity. Studies also identified gains in openness to diversity when residence hall environments were designed to encourage positive interactions among residents about multicultural issues. Lacy (1978) found that students in livinglearning communities at the University of Michigan interacted more frequently with faculty, staff, and other students compared to students in traditional residences. These findings are consistent with similar research done by Chang (1999) and Hurtado (1997). *Student Development in College*

The term "student development" is widely used in student affairs practice and is universally regarded as a positive approach (Evans, Forney, & Guido-DiBrito, 1998). However, Parker (1974) observed that often student affairs professionals attach vague and non-specific meaning to this term, making it a catchphrase, with little application to their area of work. Sanford (1967) defined development as "the organization of

increasing complexity" (p. 47). According to him, development was a positive growth process in which the individual becomes increasingly able to integrate and act on many different experiences and influences. He also distinguished between development and change, which he referred to as an altered condition, which may be positive or negative. It may be progressive or regressive, and differs from growth, which refers to expansion but may be favorable or unfavorable to overall functioning. Rodgers (2003) defined student development as the process in which a student grows, progresses, or increases his or her developmental capabilities as a result of enrollment in an institution of higher education. It is also a philosophy which guides student affairs practitioners and serves as a rationale for programs and services rendered. A related application of student development is programmatic and, as Miller and Prince (1976) suggested, it is an application of human development concepts in post-secondary settings to enable all concerned to master increasingly complex tasks, achieve self-direction, and interdependence.

Modern student development theories identify specific aspects of development and examine factors that influence its occurrence. Knefelkamp, Widick, and Parker (1978) listed four questions that should be pertinent to student development. They are: 1) what interpersonal and intrapersonal changes occur while the student is in college 2) what factors lead to this development 3) what aspects of college environment encourage or retard growth and 4) what developmental outcomes should we strive to achieve in college? Also, Chickering and Reisser (1993) identified a series of personal growth issues, such as developing competence and managing emotions which can be described as part of the college experience and can be linked to cognitive development theory

proposed by Perry (1968), which suggested that some students exhibit dualistic thinking. Heisler (1961) proposed an equilibrium between the student and the institution to create an environment of growth, and Sanford (1966) recommended that environmental disturbances influenced learning capabilities of students. Grant (1974) stated that five environmental elements are necessary to support the growth of human beings – stimulation, security, order, freedom and territoriality. Crookston (1973) observed that these elements should be part of student development in a college setting.

Colleges make a significant impact on students (Jacob, 1957). Student development focuses on intellectual growth as well as affective and behavioral changes during the college years. As suggested by Ruml (1959), it also encourages collaborative efforts of student service professionals, including University Housing staff and faculty in enhancing student learning. Finally, student development aims at maximizing positive student outcomes in higher education settings.

Educational Potential of Residence Halls

According to Schroeder and Mable (1994), college residential facilities, originally referred to as dormitories, were rooted in the English universities on which American higher education was modeled. At institutions like Oxford and Cambridge, residence halls were an integral part of the educational enterprise, and they "were designed to bring the faculty and students together in a common life which was both intellectual and moral" (Brubacher & Rudy, 1968, p42). In early colonial colleges, dormitories became an essential aspect of what was known as the collegiate way of life and stemmed from the fact that a curriculum, a library, a faculty, and students are not adequate to create a true institution (Rudolph, 1962). In England, faculty was responsible for instruction, while porters and other officials focused their attention on student supervision and discipline. British instructors formed friendships with their students through activities like tutorials and dining together.

Unlike their British counterparts, American faculty had the responsibility to instruct, supervise, and discipline their students. The concept of in loco-parentis, a student-institutional relationship based on strict procedures and rigid enforcement, and a paternalistic form of control was the way colleges were administered during that time (Boyer, 1990). Following the Civil War, a number of American intellectuals traveled to Germany to study and earn advanced degrees. However, German universities operated on the sole objective of teaching and research, without much consideration for the collegiate way of life as practiced by Cambridge and Oxford (Brubacher & Rudy, 1968). This affected the thinking of young scholars who returned from Germany to assume major educational roles in the United States and did not consider residential life as an integral part of the educational experience. Their perspective resulted in a widening gap between the college life of the classroom and the extracurricular life of the campus and was evident in developing research institutions of that time, like the University of Michigan.

The nineteenth century brought many changes in higher education and the role of faculty members. With the creation of land grant colleges, the notion of service to the missions of both public and private higher education was established. As a consequence, faculty members were expected to serve the external public and participate in scientific research, leaving little time for them to manage every aspect of their students' engagement with the institution. This led to the distinguishment and separation between the in-class and out-of-class aspects of the college experience and a new discipline to

manage affairs of students other than academics began emerging. According to Cowley (1937), President Eliot of Harvard College divided the deanship of the college, making one dean responsible only for student relations outside the classroom. This administrative change at Harvard signaled a significant trend with responsibilities for student relations made separate from instruction.

According to Winston, Anchors, and Associates (1993), college residence halls exist to provide relatively low-cost, safe, sanitary, and comfortable living quarters and to promote the intellectual, social, and moral development of students who live in these facilities. They also supplement and enrich students' academic experiences. Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates (1991) described several schools where informal residential college contact has positive results for faculty, who report improved teaching skills developed from such experiences. Finally, the students are the ones who benefit, having higher satisfaction with their collegiate experience (Stark, 1993), and demonstrating more autonomy, intellectualism, and personal growth. They also develop stronger multicultural expression and sensitivity (Cornwell & Guarasci, 1993).

Studies reported by Brown (1965), Brown and Bystryn (1956), Brown and Datta (1959), and Webster (1958) confirmed the impact of the living environment on students during their college years. Wispe (1951) and Gross (1959) suggested that student performances increased when the environment conformed to their preferences. Interdependence between atmosphere and individual personality was recorded in studies done by Haythorn (1956) and Schutz (1955). Stern (1965) commented that there is a strong connection between the intellectual growth of students and the college residence

halls, thereby emphasizing the enormous potential of residence halls in student development.

Student Services in Residence Halls

Residence halls usually provide a range of services and facilities, with multiple living options depending upon the varying needs of the student population. First year programs for incoming freshmen paired with roommates they may or may not have signed up with and single-room apartment style living for upper-class students who prefer a quieter, more private atmosphere are common examples of such options. Most schools also offer wellness related options like substance-free floors, which are increasingly becoming popular among the many students recognizing the perils of substance abuse. A typical residence hall usually provides structured services, amenities, and facilities in line with institutional policy, which may include a broad range of hospitality services custodial, maintenance, information, and utilities. Amenities may include a supply of trash bags and cleaning consumables as well as facilities to check out services for equipment, games, tools, and public areas like kitchens, game rooms, fitness rooms, computer labs, meeting lounges, and study rooms. According to DeCoster and Mable (1980), living options are "limited only by the creative and critical thinking of students and resident educators"(p50).

New residential alternatives are based on four premises; the first is the environment in which students live, which has a direct effect on their development. However, not all students respond in the same manner to a given environment. The second premise, variations in housing designs and programs, provides opportunities for achieving developmental goals. The third premise deals with monolithic programs and

designs for college and university housing, which are no longer relevant for today's hightechnology oriented students whose ways of learning and reacting to information are far different from their counterparts even a decade ago. Finally, (fourth), research has proven that variety in styles and types of accommodation and availability of services increases the appeal of residence hall living to a greater number of students.

Astin, Green, and Korn (1984) observed that residence halls and the services they provide to student living made a real difference to students' achievement and well being in college. These differences are also reiterated by Evans (1983) and Banning and Kaiser (1974), who concluded that the ecological perspective is based on a trans-sectional view of persons and their environment. Jencks and Riesman (1965), in their seminal work on residential education confirmed the usefulness of the "enriched" dormitory experiences at Harvard. This also helped create a true living-learning community (Snow, 1959). These experts also observed that the environment has an effect on people and their behavior and vice versa. This perspective assumes that different people respond differently to different types of environments. Clarke, Miser, and Roberts (1988) developed a study to look at the effects of programming variables using living-learning service concepts in housing. Riker (1965) noted that future success in providing services in student housing will depend upon how well they become integrated into the curriculum and help in the development of human behavior and relationships.

Goldman and Matheson (1989), after reviewing the literature concerning the positive effects of residence hall services, were of the opinion that a significant difference was observed in academics and personal growth among students who lived within residence life programs that offered a positive service culture. With the development of

student housing, new options like Co-Op housing, the House system, and family housing offered a better choice to students with special needs. With the dramatic increase in nontraditional students attending college (Kimble & Levy, 1989), availability of these options and matching services have encouraged such students to choose residence hall living. A review of population growth projections indicates continued growth in the nontraditional student population in colleges and universities all across the United States. Logic suggests that the need for diverse, quality residence hall services will be a determinant in the overall success of an institution's mission.

Social development theories

According to Mackeracher (2004), in the past, concerns about learning have been focused on the individual. Learning within this perspective is viewed as occurring internally, within the mind of the individual, with little attention paid to how the environment affects this process. This perspective leads to the assumption that it is possible to create a set of learning principles to help adult learners become more effective regardless of their background and circumstances (Caffarella & Merriam, 1999). However, more recently, research about learning has shifted to the environment within which learning takes place. The concepts of contextual learning and situated learning are now widely recognized as important learning tools and residence halls play a large part in facilitating these kinds of learning. Mackeracher (2004) identified five types of environment and context which facilitate andragogy. These concepts have strategic significance to student development in residence halls, and can be described in terms of 1.) the role of ergonomics and technology of learning – the physical environment 2.) the invisible nature and role of culture in learning – the cultural environment, 3.) the role of power in teaching-learning interactions – the power environment. 4.) the role of hegemony and the nature of assumptions – the knowledge environment and 5.) the role of context and situation in learning – the real-life environment.

According to Brown, Collins, and Duguid (1989), "all knowledge is contextually situated and is fundamentally influenced by the activity, context, and culture in which it is developed and used"(p.52). Residence halls create an ideal setting for such cognitive development where students learn and mature by experiencing the context while negotiating the environment on a continuous basis. This is supported by Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle which has four phases – i) concrete experience, ii) reflective observation, iii) abstract conceptualization, and iv) active experimentation.

College students undergo some significant cognitive changes (Santrock, 2005) and understanding these cognitive processes are key to formulating student development strategies in the context of university residence halls. Bruning et al. (2004) identified four cognitive development theories that are most appropriate in the andragogical perspective They are Piaget's theory, Vygotsky's Dialectical Constructivism, Rogoff's Apprenticeships in Thinking Model, and Schon's Reflective Practitioner Model.

According to Piaget (1952), adolescents are motivated to understand their environment because they adapt biologically. To make sense of their environments, adolescents organize their experiences, separating important ideas from less important ideas and then connect one idea to the other. They also adapt their thinking to include new ideas using mental frameworks known as schema. Adaptation of new ideas happens through two processes – assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation is the incorporation of new information into existing knowledge and does not change the schema. Accommodation is the adjustment of the schema to new information; the schema undergoes change in this process. Another important concept identified by Piaget (1972) was "equilibration," a shift in thought from one state to another which has great relevance to how adolescents develop cognitively.

According to Newman, Griffin, and Cole (1989), the core of Vygotsky's theory is that higher mental functions have their origin in social life when children interact with more experienced members of their community, such as parents, other adults, and more capable peers. In the context of residence halls, the interaction between peers is most significant since it emphasizes the integration of internal and external aspects of learning and social environment for learning (John-Steiner, 1997). The most influential concept developed by Vygotsky (1978) has been the zone of proximal development which can be defined as the difference between the difficulty level of a problem that a child can cope with independently and the level that can be accomplished with adult help (Bruning et al., 2004)

Following the lead of Vygotsky, Rogoff (1990) argued that cognitive development occurs when children are guided by adults in social activities that stretch their understanding of and skill in using the tools of the prevailing culture. Known as the Apprenticeships in Thinking Model, this has special relevance to programming in residence halls which has the potential to create positive social norms within the livinglearning context. In an apprenticeship, a novice works closely with an expert in joint problem solving activity (Brown et al., 1989). The apprentice also typically participates in skills beyond those that he or she is capable of handling independently. Rogoff (1990) argued that cognitive development is inherently social in nature, requiring mutual engagement with one or more partners of greater skill. Adults often engage in "guided participation" (Rogoff, 1995, p.112) with children, a process by which children's efforts are structured in a social context and the responsibility for problem solving is gradually transferred. In guided participation, children learn to solve problems in the context of social interactions.

Schon (1987) also took a dialectic constructivist perspective on cognitive development. His Reflective Practitioner Model is more closely aligned to adult learning and revolves around three concepts: knowing-in-action, reflection-in-action, and reflection on reflection-in-action. Knowing-in-action is tacit knowledge that is unarticulated but revealed in intelligent actions (Polanyi, 1967). Knowing-in-action is converted into knowledge –in-action making it part of the semantic memory (Schon, 1987). Reflection-in-action is conscious thought about actions and the thinking that accompanies them. According to Bruning et al. (2004), reflection-in-action is a form of metacognition in which both the unexpected event and knowledge-in-action that brought it on are questioned. Finally, reflection on reflection-in-action is the construction and reconstruction of cognitive worlds as individuals experience events and reflect on them (Schon, 1987). In Schon's view, students learn when they act and are helped to think about their actions (Bruning et al., 2004).

Another important aid in understanding student development in the context of residence halls is the Social Cognitive Learning Theory proposed by Bandura (1986) which is based on reciprocal determinism. According to Schunk (1991), reciprocal determinism suggests that learning is the result of interacting variables. The Social Cognitive Learning Theory has three basic components: personal, behavioral and environmental factors.

Personal factors include one's self-beliefs, affect behaviors and the interpretation of environmental clues (Bandura, 1997). Two personal factors provide powerful influences on behavior: self-efficacy and outcome expectancy. Self-efficacy is the degree to which an individual possesses confidence in their ability to achieve a goal. Outcome expectancy is the perceived relationship between performing a task successfully and receiving a specific outcome as a consequence of that performance (Bruning et al., 2004).

Summary

As evident from the review of literature, there is a strong connection between personal and academic success in colleges and the residence hall environments they provide. Residence halls play an integral part in student development, creating the ecology in which students learn, grow, and mature to face the real world. Residence halls are also positive community builders and create many leadership opportunities for students, which form the basis of their core competence in dealing with society at large.

Literature also suggests thoughtful service designs for residence halls for maximizing the desired outcome. The bouquet of services usually includes physical comfort, safety, security, leadership opportunities, and other event planning all created with a purpose to help the student excel. Managing these services is a challenge because understanding the ever-changing needs of the student population is fundamental to their success.

Therefore, institutions must engage in continuous assessment and feedback to determine the quality and the impact of residence life programming. The literature tends to agree that a superior living environment in college residence halls is a predictor of student success and institutional development as a whole.

Chapter III: Methodology

Sections addressed in this chapter include subject selection and description, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis, and limitations.

Subject Selection and Description

The population for this study included sophomores, juniors, seniors and graduate students living in five North Campus residence halls at the University of Wisconsin – Stout. One thousand fifteen (1015) surveys were mailed out for the pre-test and one thousand twelve (1012) for the post-test. A total of 458 valid surveys were returned for the pre-test of which 300 were returned by female participants and 158 by male participants. For the post-test, 275 completed surveys were returned. One hundred and seventy eight participants were females and 97 were males.

The return rate for pre-test surveys was 45.81% and for the post-test surveys was 27.76%. The difference in number of surveys sent out between the pre-test and the post-test was due to three students who discontinued living in the North Campus residence halls beginning January, 2006.

Instrumentation

The pre-test survey was titled "North Campus Perception Survey" and the posttest survey "North Campus Experience Survey." Respondents were asked to check blanks / boxes for completing the surveys. The surveys were anonymous. The instruments had 19 questions and were divided into two sections. Questions 1 through 6 involved demographic information, and Questions 7 to 19 contained Likert scale responses on student perceptions / experiences regarding their living environment. Demographic data are used to describe a population in terms of its size, structure, and distribution (Hawkins, Best, & Coney, 1983). The number of individuals in a population explains its size, while its structure describes the population in terms of age, income, education, and occupation. The questions asked on the instrument regarding demographic data were the residence hall in which the student lived in, their class standing, age, gender, number of semesters the student lived on campus, and their predominant ethnic origin.

The Likert scale questions on both instruments had a five point scale – strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree for questions 7 to 18. Question 19 had a multiple choice response option. Copies of the pre-test instrument and the post-test instrument are attached as Appendix A and Appendix.B.

Items of perception included 1) floor community keeping the common areas clean; 2) floor community being responsible for their own behavior; 3) being satisfied with the development of floor community; 4) study atmosphere on the floor being adequate for needs; 5) feeling comfortable to confront others when their behavior affects the respondent; 6) responsible consumption of alcohol, if of age; 7) taking the opportunity to meet and know more people; 8) taking the opportunity to make new friends; 9) feeling a sense of belonging to the North Campus community; 10) anticipating increase in GPA while living on the North Campus; 11) anticipating decrease in number of classes missed each week; and 12) anticipated time (hours per week) spent in studying during the school year.

Data Collection Procedures

The surveys were administered during August, 2005 and January, 2006. They were mailed through United States Postal Service by the Department of University Housing with a cover letter from the Associate Director urging students to participate in this important study. A postage paid envelope was included for returning the survey by USPS mail. The deadline for returning the pre-test surveys by mail was Friday, September 2, 2005 and for the post-test surveys was by Friday, January 20, 2006. The pre-test surveys were tallied on Friday, September 16, 2005 to determine the return rate. The same was done for post-test surveys on Friday, February 3, 2006. Thereafter, the surveys were sent for data analysis to the campus statistician.

Data Analysis

In order to match the data analysis with the null hypotheses of this study, the researcher selected a set of questions from the instruments, and then bound them into groups aligned with each hypothesis. The following groups were formed, based on items in the pre-test and the post-test questionnaires.

Hypothesis 1: There is no relationship between perceptions of campus living environment and ownership of student behavior. Items 7 through 11 were deemed appropriate for addressing this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between perceptions of campus living environment and alcohol use by students. Item 12 addressed this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between perceptions of campus living environment and development of interpersonal relationships among students. Three items (13, 14, and 15,) pertained to this hypothesis. Hypothesis 4: There is no relationship between perceptions of campus living environment and academic success. Items 16 through 19 were deemed appropriate for answering this hypothesis.

Data was analyzed by calculating frequencies, percentages, valid percentages, cumulative percentages, and means of individual items, group means, standard deviations, Chi-squares, and 2-tailed t-tests to look at differences, if any,. between pretest and post-test responses.

A 2-tailed t-test for independent means, was used for analyzing these items, since it is deemed as the most appropriate statistic to look for differences between group means. A correlated t-test was not used since the pre and post-test research instruments were not coded to identify matched pairs.

Assumptions

The researcher assumed that since the instruments complied with anonymity, there was no inherent bias for or against any particular group of respondents.

Limitations

Items were bound in groups to test the hypotheses, based on the researcher's understanding of the relevance of such questions; it is acknowledged that there may be a different permutation of questions to test similar hypotheses.

Data analyzed for this study was collected only over a period of six months, thereby generating results which may or may not indicate significant trends based on which operating decisions could be made.

The researcher acknowledges possible sample bias due to lack of paired sample between the pre-test and the post-test.

Summary

The instrumentation and data analysis for this study was based on four hypotheses. Questions were selected keeping in mind the assumptions of this study. The objective of the data analysis was to identify any relationships between groups to determine if individual items had any statistical significance. Decisions to reject or not to reject the null hypotheses were based upon these findings.

Chapter IV: Results

Results of the data analysis germane to this study are reported in this chapter. Table 1 shows statistically significant differences found in Items 1 through 6 (demographic information) and also includes Item 19. Since all seven items in this table are nominal data, Chi-square tests were used to calculate statistical significance. Table 2 shows means and standard deviations for Items 7 through 18 for both the pre-test and post-test. It also shows calculated "t" values and total number of participants for both the pre-test and the post-test.

Item Analysis

Though there was a significantly lower number of respondents for the post-test than the pre-test, the percentage of female versus. male respondents remained almost identical for both tests. However, female respondents exhibited a higher level of participation in this study, both at pre-test and post-test.

Table 1

Item No.	Item Description	Chi-squared value	df
01	Residence Hall	2.766	4
02	Class standing	4.619	6
03	Age category	10.063	3
04	Gender .	.045	1
05	Semesters lived on campus	11.349*	4
06	Ethnic origin	.456	6
19	Each school week, I plan to study	34.905***	4

Crosstabulations of Pre-test and Post-test Ratings

*.05 level of significance

*** .001 level of significance

As Table 1 shows, no significant differences were found for which residence hall the student lived in, their class standing, gender, or ethnic origin. Chi-square results could not be used for Item 03 (Age Category), since the significance value is > 20%. Also, as a natural occurrence, students' ages changed between pre-test (August 2005) and post-test (January, 2006). Statistical significance was found in Item 5 (Semesters lived on campus), since all respondents had lived one additional semester on-campus by January, 2006 when they responded to the post-test. A notable significance was observed in Item 19 (Each school week this year, I plan to study) caused by respondents indicating during the post-test that they were actually studying a lesser number of hours than they had anticipated during the pre-test. During the pre-test, 8.2% of respondents indicated 1-5 hours of studying per week. For the post-test, the number of respondents increased to 20.5% for the same hours, while the number of respondents from the pre-test to the post-test decreased from 37% to 22.3% for 11-15 hours of studying.

Table 2

Item Ratings by Time of Testing

Item N	o. Item Description	Pre-tes	it –	Post-t	est	t-value	n
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Pre	Post
07	Anticipate floor community will keep common areas clear	4.13 n	.751	3.54	.944	8.891***465	281
08	Anticipate floor community will be responsible for own b	4.20 ehavior	.779	3.80	.881	6.474***465	281
09	Anticipate being satisfied with floor community develo	4.01 pment	.721	3.29	1.069	9.985***465	281
10	Anticipate study atmosphere on floor adequate for needs	3.95	.778	3.81	.961	2.076* 462	280
11	Anticipate confronting others When their behavior affects	3.84	.862	3.55	.953	4.144***461	280
12	If of age and choose to drink, Then consume alcohol respon	4.23 nsibly	.807	3.88	.910	5.300***443	267
13	Will take the opportunity to meet and know more people	4.37	.693	3.74	.929	9.729***463	281
14	Will take opportunity to make new friends	4.40	.675	3.86	.887	8.700***464	280
15	Anticipate feeling a sense of belongingness to the North Campus community	3.99 1	.840	3.48	1.025	6.966***464	281
16	Anticipate GPA to increase when living on the North Car	3.47 npus	.870	3.18	.982	4.179***462	278
17	Average number of classes plan to miss will decrease	3.60	.943	3.12	1.046	6.402***461	278
18	Average number of hours plan to study will increase	3.69	.864	3.28	.955	6.073***464	279

*.05 level of significance

***.001 level of significance

As Table 2 shows, statistical significance was observed in all items at the .001 level, except for Item 10 (Anticipate study atmosphere on my floor to be adequate for my needs) which was statistically significant at .05 level. Comparison of the pre-test versus post-test means on Items 7 through 18 show that the means were higher for the pre-test on all items. This shows that the preconceived expectations of the students about living in the North Campus residence halls were higher than their actual experiences.

Chapter V: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Research is an ongoing process and every research project creates opportunities for further inquiry. Therefore, this study was only an attempt to add to the existing body of knowledge in the field of residential education. It is expected that findings from this study will raise new questions and, therefore, lead to further research. The sections in this chapter include discussion, conclusions, and recommendations.

Discussion

As already described in Chapter III, in order to match the data analysis with the null hypotheses of this study, select sets of questions from the instruments were grouped into alignment with each hypothesis.

The following groups were created based on the four hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is no relationship between campus living environment and ownership of student behavior. Items 7 through 11 were deemed appropriate for addressing this hypothesis. Results of the data analysis showed statistical significance in items 7 through 11. Items 7, 8, 9, and 11 were statistically significant at the .001 level, and item 10 was statistically significant at the .05 level. Hence, this null hypothesis was rejected. The results show that there was a relationship between campus living environment and ownership of student behavior. Items of perception under this hypothesis included anticipation of floor community keeping the common areas clean, floor community being responsible for their own behavior, satisfaction with the development of the floor community, study atmosphere being adequate for the respondent's needs, and feeling comfortable to confront others when their behavior affects the respondent. One possible explanation of statistical significance includes less than adequate cleanliness of the floors and hallways as experienced by respondents, compared to what they preconceived. Other possible explanations include excessive noise or similar interference during study hours.

Hypothesis 2: There is no relationship between campus living environment and alcohol use by students. Item 12 addressed this hypothesis. Results of the data analysis indicate statistical significance on Item 12 at the .001 level. Hence, this null hypothesis was rejected. The results show that there is a relationship between campus living environment and alcohol use by students.

The item of perception under this hypothesis pertained to responsible use of alcohol, if of age. Possible explanation of statistical significance includes increase in alcohol consumption due to less monitoring of students by Resident Advisors and the perceived sense of freedom in an upper-class residence hall community.

Hypothesis 3: There is no relationship between campus living environment and development of interpersonal relationships among students. Three items, 13, 14, and 15, pertained to this hypothesis. Results of the data analysis indicate statistical significance on items 13, 14, and 15 at the .001 level. Hence, this null hypothesis was rejected. The results show that there is a relationship between campus living environment and the development of interpersonal relationship among students.

Items of perception under this hypothesis pertained to meeting and knowing more people, making new friends, and anticipating a sense of belonging to the North Campus community. Possible explanation of statistical significance includes decrease in active programming in the North Campus residence halls by Department of University Housing, compared to freshmen halls. Active programs are excellent opportunities for students to meet other students and forge new friendships, and the absence of such programs in the North Campus residence halls might be responsible for the difference between preconceived perceptions and what students actually experienced in terms of social interactions.

Hypothesis 4: There is no relationship between campus living environment and academic success. Items 16 through 19 were deemed appropriate for answering this hypothesis. Results of the data analysis indicate statistical significance on items 16, 17, 18, and 19 at the .001 level. Hence, this null hypothesis, too, was rejected. The results show that there is a relationship between campus living environment and academic success.

There were four items of perception under this hypothesis. They included anticipation of increased GPA when living on the North Campus, decrease in average number of missed classes, increase in average number of study hours per week, and numbers of hours students plan to study every school week. Once again, possible explanation of statistical significance includes a sense of new found freedom in the upper-class residence hall communities. This feeling might prompt a sense of entitlement among students to study less than anticipated since they have already survived college for one or more years. Another possible explanation might be increased confidence about one's own academic skills leading to drop in number of hours students planned to study every week, between the pre-test and the post-test.

Based on statistical significance, the following additional comments are offered:

1. The pre-test means on Items 7 through 18 were higher than the post-test means on all items. This result indicates that students' perception about the North Campus Experience program were higher than what they actually experienced However, the difference between the pre-test and post-test means on many items were marginal and the researcher believes this gap could be easily bridged by making changes in programming to the North Campus experience program.

2. On Item 19 (Each school week this year, I plan to study), during the pre-test, 8.2% respondents indicated they planned to study 1-5 hours every week and 37% indicated they planned to studying 11-15 hours every week. Significant change was observed in these numbers on the post-test, with 20.5% of the respondents reporting studying 1-5 hours and 22.3% respondents reporting studying 11-15 hours. Thus, it can

be concluded that students in the North Campus Experience Program are studying lesser hours in actuality, compared to what they had imagined.

An overarching explanation for the results could be attributed to the way the North Campus Experience program was marketed to sophomores, juniors and seniors. It was talked about for more than a year before being launched and it generated significant hype, and created high expectations in the minds of the students leading to preconceived perceptions.

Conclusions

A review of the literature and the results of this study show that residence halls are living-learning communities.and the upper-class residence halls at the University of Wisconsin-Stout exhibit characteristics of being unique communities. Factors including floor communities, alcohol consumption, social interactions, and academic success are all part of this living-learning environment. However, based on this study, it may be concluded that preconceived perceptions of these factors could be higher compared to actual experience.

The researcher acknowledges the possibility that results of this study could have been different if the pre-test and the post-test were done during another time of the year. For example, if the post-test was undertaken during May, 2006 with students exposed to the North Campus Experience program for one full year compared to the six months which have been considered for this study, the results could have been different.

Also, if paired samples were used for this study between the pre-test and the posttest, that would have alleviated possible sample bias.

Recommendations

The goal of the North Campus Experience at the University of Wisconsin-Stout is to promote responsibility, civility, and ownership amongst students through residence hall programming which will help prepare them to face challenges of the real world once they graduate. This researcher recommends a review of the current program to close any gaps between what was expected by the students compared to what they actually experienced. Any review and consequent corrective action should be grounded in the concepts and constructs discussed in the review of literature and follow established models of cognitive development and andragogy.

For example, Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development could be readily used in upper-class residence hall programming by pairing sophomore students with juniors or seniors who could act as role models. Another model which could affect strategic change in the context of residence halls is Rogoff's (1990) Apprenticeships in Thinking Model. This could be used for active programming by bringing younger students and more mature students together for acquiring problem-solving skills. Similarly, understanding of the process of schemata building among college age students could help communication design and delivery, and make dissemination of information easier for students as well as the institution. Also, Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Learning theory could be adopted to design, implement, and evaluate programs which might help students in development of their personality and behavior, and aid them in negotiating the college environment at large. It is further recommended that future strategy initiatives should be clearly defined with measurable outcomes. Future research in this area should incorporate a matched groups pre-test / posttest research design, which would alleviate problems of interpretation of results. Also, keeping in mind the low post-test return rate for this study, future researchers must send multiple reminders via email or regular mail to increase the response rate. Use of incentives to complete the questionnaire is also recommended. It is hoped that expanding the scope of future research in this area would result in better understanding of the dynamics of upper-class residence halls at the University of Wisconsin-Stout, enabling more efficient design and delivery of programs and services.

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Appendix A: North Campus Perception Survey/ Fall 2005

August 10, 2005

Dear North Campus Resident,

Beginning this school year, Housing & Residence Life has created North Campus Experience

a new program which will primarily serve upper-class students living on the North Campus. We are excited that you have chosen to be a part of this program!

As we get ready to welcome you back on campus, I am writing to ask for your participation in a quick survey on your perceptions about living on the North Campus. The information gained from this survey will help us better understand what expectations you have about living in our North Campus residence halls this school year.

There will be a follow-up survey in January 2006 very similar to this one in which we will ask you to respond to your actual experiences about living on the North Campus. This will be mailed to you during Winter Break.

The survey form is on the reverse of this letter and consists of 19 questions. Participation in the survey requires approximately 10 to 15 minutes of your time. I have enclosed a postage-paid envelope for your convenience to return the survey to me by USPS mail. I would greatly appreciate if you could mail the survey back to me not later than Friday, September 02, 2005.

If you have any questions before or after participating, I will be glad to respond. I can be reached at 715-232-1688 or via e-mail at <u>ihad@uwstout.edu</u>. Or you may contact Anne Ramage, Associate Director, Housing & Residence Life who is also involved in this study at 715-232- 2407 or via e-mail at <u>ramagea@uwstout.edu</u>.

I look forward to receiving your response and I thank you in advance for your assistance in this important research.

Sincerely,

Dipra Jha Red Cedar Hall Director

Housing & Residence Life North Campus Perception Survey / Fall 2005

Demographic Data

1.	Residence Hall:	Fleming	_ Hovlid		_ JTC		Red Cedar	·Wigen
2.	Class Standing:	Freshman	_Sophon	nore _	Junior		Senior	Graduate
3.	Age:	17-18		_19-20	2	1-22	2	3 or older
4.	Gender:	Female	,	_ Male				
5.	5. Number of semesters you have lived on campus: 0 to 12 to 34 to 56 to 78 or more							
6. gr	 Select your predominant Ethnic Origin: (using groups identified by the university, mark only one group) 							

American Indian or Alaskan Native – origins in any of the original people of North America who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition

____ Asian or Pacific Islander – origins in any of the original people of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands

Black, not of Hispanic origin – origins in any black racial group

Hispanic – origins of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture,

regardless of race

White, not of Hispanic origin – origins in any of the original people in Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East

____ Other, please describe:

Check the box that corresponds to your level of agreement with each statement as it describes your perceptions of living on North Campus this school year.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	I anticipate my floor community will keep the common areas clean					
8	I anticipate my floor community will be responsible for their own behavior					
9	I anticipate being satisfied with the way my floor community will develop					
10	I anticipate the study atmosphere on my floor will be adequate for my needs					
11	I anticipate confronting others directly when their behavior affects me					
12	If I am of age and choose to drink, I will consume alcohol responsibly					
13	I will take the opportunity to meet and know more people					
14	I will take the opportunity to make new					

	friends					
15	I anticipate feeling a sense of belonging to the North Campus community					
16	I anticipate my GPA will increase when I live on North Campus					
17	The average number of classes I plan to miss each week this year will decrease					
18	The average number of hours I plan to study per week this year will increase					
19	Each school week this year, I plan to study:	1 to 5 hours	6 to 10 hours	11 to 15 hours	16 to 20 hours	21 hours or more

Please return this survey using the enclosed, stamped envelope. Thank you for your participation!

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Appendix B: North Campus Experience Survey/ Spring 2006

January 02, 2006

Dear North Campus Resident,

Seasons Greetings!

You will remember that during August 2005 I wrote to you asking for your participation in a survey about your perceptions of living in the North Campus residence halls.

We have received valuable feedback from that survey, and once again I am writing to ask for your participation in Part Two of that study. You will find a short survey on the reverse side of this letter about your living experiences on the North Campus. The information gained from this survey will help us better understand what experiences you have had living in North Campus residence halls this school year.

Like the previous survey, this one also has 19 questions. Participation in the survey requires approximately 10 to 15 minutes of your time. I have enclosed a stamped envelope for your convenience to return the survey to me by USPS mail. I shall greatly appreciate if you mail the survey back to me not later than Friday, January 20, 2006.

If you have any questions before or after participating, I will be glad to respond. I can be reached at 715-232-1688 or via e-mail at <u>ihad@uwstout.edu</u>.

I look forward to receiving your response and I thank you in advance for your assistance in this very important research.

Sincerely

Dipra Jha Red Cedar Hall Director

Housing & Residence Life North Campus Experience Survey / Spring 2006

Demographic Data

1.	Residence Hall:	Fleming	Hovlid _	JTC	Red Ced	arWigen
2.	Class Standing:	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate
3.	Age:	17-18	19-20	2^	1-22	23 or older
4.	Gender:	Female	Male			
5.	Number of semes	ters you have live 0 to 1	d on campus: 2 to 3	4 to 5	6 to 7	8 o r more

6. Select your predominant Ethnic Origin: (using groups identified by the university, mark only one group)

American Indian or Alaskan Native – origins in any of the original people of North America who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition

Asian or Pacific Islander – origins in any of the original people of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands

____ Black, not of Hispanic origin – origins in any black racial group

Hispanic – origins of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture,

regardless of race

White, not of Hispanic origin – origins in any of the original people in Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East

____ Other, please describe:

Check the box that corresponds to your level of agreement with each statement as it describes your experiences of living on North Campus this school year.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7	My floor community keeps the common areas clean					
8	My floor community is responsible for their own behavior				_	
9	I am satisfied with the way my floor community has developed					
10	The study atmosphere on my floor is adequate for my needs					
11	l confront others directly when their behavior affects me					
12	If I am of age and choose to drink, I consume alcohol responsibly	_				
13	I have taken the opportunity to meet and know more people					
14	I have taken the opportunity to make new friends					
15	l feel a sense of belonging to the North Campus community					
16	My GPA has increased since I have been living on the North Campus					
17	The average number of classes I miss each week this year has decreased.					

<u> </u>						
18	The average number of hours I study per week this year has increased.					
19	Each school week this year, I study:	1 to 5 hours	6 to 10 hours	11 to 15 hours	16 to 20 hours	21 hours or more

Please return this survey using the enclosed, stamped envelope. Thank you for your participation!