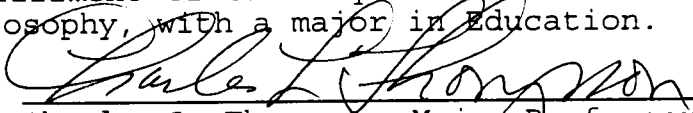
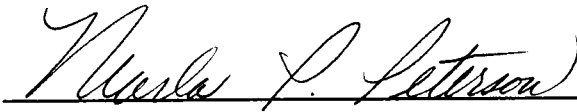


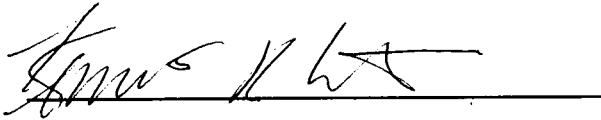
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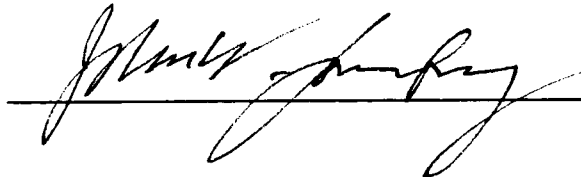
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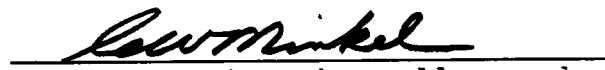
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THE DEVELOPMENT AND VALIDATION OF A CUSTOMER SERVICE
ORIENTATION SCALE FOR UNIVERSITY RESIDENT ASSISTANTS

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Philosophy Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Mark David Krautheim

May 1997

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The road to completion of this project has been filled with friends, colleagues, and family who have supported, comforted, pushed, nudged, and guided me along the way. I am grateful to each of you. I am especially grateful to my doctoral committee members, Charles Thompson, Marla Peterson, Ken Newton, and John Lounsbury, for the time and effort they spent in helping me reach my goal. They treated me with respect and valued me throughout my doctoral experience. I have grown through knowing each of them. I am especially thankful to Chuck for supporting and guiding me through the process. I am saddened that my interactions with each of them will most likely be diminished as I begin to carve out my own professional future. I will miss my Monday afternoons spent with Ken, who accepted me at every turn and taught me to accept myself. It was a wonderful gift.

I share my dissertation with my Mom and Dad who provided me with constant love and support. They have been with me every step of the way, through this process and throughout my life. They taught me the value of being customer service oriented.

I want to thank my life partner, Ann Marie, who believed in me and comforted me through the process. She sacrificed with me, and we will always share memories of our long Saturdays. She was my wall and my pillow.

I am indebted to my friends and colleagues who helped me along the way. I am thankful to Donice Knight, Troy Murray, and Ann Marie Krautheim for helping collect the data. I am grateful to Judy Dooley and Dorey Ross for providing technical support. I want to thank Marc Silling and Chris Meyers, for statistical assistance. I am thankful to the staff of the Counseling, Testing, and Career Center at University of Akron for their support and encouragement, especially Sara Simmers, for her technical assistance. I wish to thank my colleagues at the University of Delaware Center for Counseling and Student Development for their support.

I would like to thank all my former colleagues and friends at the University of Tennessee who shared a belief in the value of residence life. I have many fond memories of my residence hall experience.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the participants in the study who helped make this research possible.

ABSTRACT

A criterion-related validity study was conducted using a newly developed instrument, the Resident Assistant Style Inventory (RASI), designed to assess the customer service orientation of individuals applying for a university resident assistant (RA) position. Exploratory principal component analysis uncovered a twelve-item, one-factor solution which focused on an individual's customer service orientation. Customer service orientation was defined as the degree to which the RA placed the student's (customer) needs before his or her own needs and the degree of helpfulness, courteousness, and tact an RA displays when dealing with resident concerns.

Criterion for the study were supervisor-rated customer service orientation and job performance. Also, student ratings of presently employed resident assistants served as a criterion. Construct validity of the newly designed instrument was assessed by examining the relationship of the instrument to the "Big Five" personality dimension of agreeableness as measured by the NEO-PI.

Participants were 124 resident assistants, 11 supervisors (hall directors) and 320 students who resided in university residence halls at a large, southeastern university. The resident assistant sample was 54% female with an average age of 20.85 years and 2.6 semesters of experience as a resident assistant. Survey questionnaires were completed by supervisors who were asked to assess the customer service

orientation, job performance, and organizational citizenship behaviors of their RAs. Students completed a survey questionnaire designed to assess the customer service orientation of their RA.

The RASI was significantly and positively related to agreeableness, supervisor rated customer service orientation, and job performance. Also, the researcher found that the RASI was useful in discriminating between the top 25 and bottom 25 percent of RAs as rated on customer service orientation by their supervisors. However, organizational citizenship behavior and student ratings of customer service orientation were positively but not significantly related to the RASI. Lastly, supervisor-rated customer service orientation, job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior were positively and significantly related.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Problem Statement

Resident assistants (RAs) are generally the frontline customer service providers for meeting the needs of students residing in university housing operations. While there have been numerous attempts to develop an instrument to aid in selecting RAs (Ostroth, 1981), there is no instrument which focuses specifically on the customer service orientation of applicants for the position. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to devise and test an instrument designed to assess the customer service orientation of RA applicants.

Rationale for the Study

Finding appropriate personnel for service positions is a challenge for almost any organization or corporation which must hire or replace employees (Albrecht, 1988). Not surprisingly, organizations have used many methods to determine which potential employee can competently meet the requirements of a particular job. The most common employee selection methods include interviewing, personality inventories and ability tests, job previews, and role plays. One organization even used handwriting analysis in employee selection (Paajanen, 1993).

The trend toward more customer-focused management has added a new dimension to the approach organizations are using to hire employees providing services to customers. These

organizations must not only find employees with the skills and knowledge to perform effectively, they must also find employees who fit the organizational culture and can deliver quality customer service (Berry, 1995). An employee with a customer service orientation will be invested in meeting customer needs and in helping with customer concerns (Hogan, Hogan, & Busch, 1984; Sax & Weitz, 1982). Paajanen (1993) noted that while the literature agrees that some people are more likely to exhibit good service behaviors than others, companies and organizations generally rely on intuitive approaches rather than an empirically driven method to select employees for such positions.

However, a growing body of customer service orientation and personnel selection literature recognizes the possibility that personnel selection, based on customer service oriented personality characteristics, is achievable through more empirically driven approaches (Hogan et al, 1984; Paajanen, 1993). There has been considerable debate in the literature about the use of personality inventories for employment purposes. In the past, researchers have been disappointed by the results of the validity of personality measures for personnel selection (Guion & Gottier, 1965). More recently, however, the position that personality measures may be inappropriate for use in selection, has met with new challenges (Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein, 1991). Tett et al. (1991) argued that the uniqueness of trait-criterion

relationships call for the development of personality measures aimed at uncovering traits selected on the basis of a job analysis and are specifically tied to the personality requirements of a particular job. Guion (1991) noted that researchers should narrow the focus to the personality aspects that connect to the behavioral domain they are seeking to capture with the instrument.

Due to developments in the area of personality research, researchers remain interested in personality factors as predictors of job performance. Specifically, the emergence of the "Big Five" factor model of personality has kept personality factors related to job performance in the personnel psychology domain. Researchers now agree with the concept of five robust factors of personality (Barrick & Mount, 1991). As a result, researchers have a meaningful taxonomy for classifying personality dimensions (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Many of the customer service orientation studies have identified aspects of the Big Five personality dimensions of agreeableness and conscientiousness in employees deemed high in customer service orientation (Fausz, 1994). In a study of nurses Fausz found agreeableness, as measured by the agreeableness scale of the NEO-PI, to have a significant and positive relationship with supervisor ratings of an employee's customer service orientation. Barrick and Mount (1991), in a meta-analysis of criterion-related validity studies dealing

with personality and selection, did not find agreeableness to be as an important predictor of job performance. However, Tett et al. (1991) found a high validity for the agreeableness factor in their meta-analysis of studies examining the relationship between personality attributes and job performance. Currently, most of the existing customer service orientation instruments have some measure of the agreeableness factor (Hogan et al., 1984; Saxe & Weitz, 1982; Paajanen, 1993; Thomas, 1993).

Purpose of this Research

This research was intended to develop a personality-based instrument designed to identify individuals well suited for a customer service oriented position. Specifically, the instrument was designed to identify individuals suited for a student affairs/residence life paraprofessional position, commonly known as resident assistant or resident advisor (RA). A resident assistant is a student paraprofessional who is selected, trained, and supervised to perform tasks and assume responsibilities within university residence halls. RAs serve a vital service function because they are in the best position to impact students' lives (Dodge, 1990). Winston and Fitch (1993) identified several responsibilities of resident assistants including to "(1) directly promote the individual personal development of his or her peers, (2) foster the creation of and maintenance of environments that stimulate and support residents personal and educational development, and/or

(3) perform tasks that ensure the maintenance of secure, clean, healthy, psychologically safe, and aesthetically pleasing living accommodations" (p. 317). Delworth, Sherwood, & Cassaburri (1974) identified several personal variables that are important in selecting RAs including (1) adequate personal adjustment, (2) good group facilitation skills, (3) evidence of ego strength or sense of identity to effectively deal with peer pressure, (4) ability to function well in emotionally charged or crisis situations, (5) high energy level, (6) ability to establish harmonious relationships with others, and (7) informal leadership skills among peers.

Due to the important role that RAs play, universities spend considerable effort in selecting and training students for RA positions (Blimling & Miltenberg, 1990). Previous selection efforts have focused on identifying personality traits, assessing interpersonal skills, and observing potential candidates' performance in interviews, role plays, and leaderless group discussions (Upcraft, 1982). A review of the literature reveals that no instrument with consistent predictive validity has been developed or validated. Moreover, until recently, the resident assistant position was not viewed in terms of customer service orientation. However, as Upcraft (cited in Winston & Anchors, 1993) has noted, the students who fill resident assistant positions must be able to meet the increasing demands of students. Developing a reliable and valid self-report instrument of customer service

orientation for RAs required several steps: 1) a job analysis using subject-matter experts was conducted to develop items for the instrument, (2) existing instruments used for resident assistant selection were examined, and (3) existing customer service orientation instruments were examined. Subjective ratings by supervisors (hall directors) and customers (students) of current RAs' tendencies to engage in customer oriented behaviors will serve as the criterion variables to assess the concurrent validity of the instrument. Most of the previous attempts to validate a selection instrument for RAs have relied exclusively on supervisor evaluations as the criterion variable. Moreover, the existing customer service orientation instruments do not rely on both supervisor and customer ratings of an employee's customer service orientation to determine the criterion-related validity of their instruments.

To validate the instrument, the relationship between the newly developed customer service orientation instrument and the "Big Five" factor dimension of agreeableness, found to be part of the customer service orientation construct, will be examined. A significant and positive relationship between these two variables will show convergent validity, as well as extending the construct validity of customer service orientation.

The relationship between the customer service orientation ratings and other job related criterion variables (e.g., job

performance and organizational citizenship behavior) as assessed by supervisors will also be examined. Theoretically, an individual rated highly in customer service orientation would be more likely to engage in job-related behaviors that contribute to effective performance as an RA.

Summary

For any company or organization, attracting individuals with the necessary skills is essential Berry (1995), while acknowledging the importance in training and refining employees skills once they are on the job, also believed there are certain qualities and traits, that enable an individual to be successful in a customer service position, which cannot be taught. The premise of this research was that there are certain personality characteristics which make an individual well-suited for a customer service oriented position. The steps to develop a self-report instrument that may eventually be used for assessing the customer service orientation of students applying to be RAs will be reported. The initial efforts of establishing the reliability and validity of this instrument will be described.

Overview of the Study

A review of the research using previously validated and reliable personality inventories (e.g., Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, California Psychological Inventory) for the selection of RAs will be included in Chapter II. Several studies involving instruments designed specifically for

selection of resident assistants (e.g., Wyrick & Mitchell, 1971; Deluga & Winters, 1991; Biggs, 1971) were reviewed. In addition, a review of the existing customer service orientation instruments, as well as definitions of customer service orientation, are included in Chapter II. Current trends in personality research, especially as it relates to personnel selection, are examined in this chapter. In addition, the instruments used for measuring both the independent and dependent variables are discussed. Finally, the specific hypotheses to be tested are explicated.

Descriptions of the procedures used to acquire the sample of resident assistants, hall directors, and students for this study are included in Chapter III. Demographic characteristics of the sample are reported in Chapter III. Information about the previously demonstrated reliability of the measures used for the independent and dependent variables is included in this chapter.

Results of the analyses performed to test the hypotheses are reported in Chapter IV. A discussion of these results are presented in Chapter V. The limitations of this study, speculations about the findings, and implications for future research are also discussed in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is fourfold. First, an overview of the previous methods used to select university resident assistants is presented. Studies involving personality attributes as a decision making tool for RA selection, in addition to those studies using both students and supervisors as predictor variables, are reviewed. Second, the rationale for positing that the resident assistant position requires an individual to engage in customer-oriented behaviors is explained. Third, a review of the relevant research on personality attributes associated with an employee's customer-service orientation is presented. An examination of the research on the use of personality attributes in the prediction of employee job performance will also be included in this section. Finally, the specific hypotheses tested are delineated in the chapter.

Resident Assistant Selection Instruments

Researchers have used a variety of standardized instruments to identify and measure personality variables that might be associated with success as a resident assistant. Among these are scales from the Personal Orientation Inventory (Graff and Bradshaw, 1970; Mullozzi and Spees, 1971; Atkinson, Williams, and Garb, 1973; Schroeder and Willis, 1973; Kipp, 1979), the California Personality Inventory (Morton, 1975-76;

Hall and Creed, 1979), the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Wachowiak and Bauer, 1977), and the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (Holbrook, 1972).

Personal Orientation Inventory (POI)

Among standardized instruments used in RA selection, The Personal Orientation Inventory (POI) (Shostrom, 1964) appear to have been one of the most widely used. Based on Maslow's conceptualization of self-actualization, the POI is designed to identify an individual's level of self-actualization. Graff and Bradshaw (1970) hypothesized that highly self-actualized students would be more likely to engage in behaviors that would be viewed as effective by students and personnel deans (hall directors).

In this criterion-related study, Graff and Bradshaw asked RAs who had been on the job for two quarters to complete the POI. Two months following the completion of the POI, they asked students and personnel deans to evaluate the RAs' performance. The researchers found that four scales of the POI (Inner Directed, Self Actualizing Value, Spontaneity, and Acceptance of Aggression) correlated with the ratings of effectiveness by the students and personnel deans. This study was notable for its efforts in assessing RA performance with more than one criterion variable.

Atkinson, Williams, and Garb (1973) criticized the study because the POI was given after the RAs had been on the job for two quarters. Ostroth (1981) agreed with the criticism of

Atkinson et al. (1973) because he believed the data was not predictive in that it not provide preservice data relevant to selection. Another criticism of this study is that the sample included only male RAs. In a follow-up study to Graff and Bradshaw's (1970) work, Schroeder and Willis (1973) found that the POI was not useful in discriminating between students who were selected for an RA position and those who were eliminated during a phase of the selection process. Therefore, Schroeder and Willis concluded that the POI was unsuitable for use in selecting resident assistants. Kipp's study (1979) using the POI as a selection tool did offer more support for its use in selecting RAs. She found that the POI was effective in discriminating between accepted and rejected RA candidates. However, Kipp did not include any assessment of the accepted RAs' effectiveness. Based on the conflicting results on the use of the POI in the selection of RAs, Ostroth (1981) concluded that the case for use of the POI in RA selection was incomplete.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI)

Wachowiak and Bauer (1977) used the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to determine if it discriminated between rejected and accepted resident assistant applicants. The study also examined the effectiveness of the accepted RAs as evaluated by students and head residents. The MBTI scores of accepted and rejected RA applicants differed on the judging/perceiving scale. Accepted RAs seemed to be more

comfortable with the process of decision-making. The researchers did not find any significant correlations between students' effectiveness ratings of RAs and MBTI scores. However, the head resident effectiveness ratings of RAs correlated with the sensing/intuitive scale of the MBTI. The head residents evaluated resident assistants' performance more positively for those RAs who preferred being fact-oriented and attentive to details. The authors acknowledged that these findings presented an interesting dilemma for administrators. Should selection procedures focus on the attributes that discriminated between the accepted or rejected RAs or focus on the attributes of RAs that seem most appealing to head residents in performance evaluations?

The head residents seemed to value an RA's abilities as a program developer and disciplinarian. While these two roles are important aspects of most RA positions, the roles do not fit into most customer service definitions. To fit customer service definitions, effectiveness ratings of RAs by their supervisors should include criteria for assessing an individual's customer service orientation. Considering that student evaluations did not correlate with any scale of the MBTI, should the instrument be used at all in selection?

While the Wachowiak and Bauer study did pose interesting dilemmas for administrators, the study itself had some procedural flaws that seemed to interfere with the results. The applicant pool included with the rejected group contained

applicants who had not been screened out of the process but had chosen to deselect themselves from the selection process for unstated reasons. Including applicants who had voluntarily deselected themselves from the selection process contaminated the sample of rejected applicants. Zemke (1992) maintained that scores on the MBTI were easy to manipulate by those taking it and that it should not be used as a selection instrument. On the whole, the results must be interpreted cautiously due to the small sample size of accepted and rejected RA applicants.

California Psychological Inventory (CPI)

The California Psychological Inventory (CPI) (Gough, 1975) has been used in a number of studies focusing on RA selection (Morton, 1975-1976; Hall & Creed, 1979). Morton (1975-1976) found that the CPI did identify statistically different personality styles among RAs who were rated on performance by the director of personnel, the researcher, and two personnel workers. That is, RAs who were rated above average had significantly higher mean scores on the CPI for the following personality traits: dominance, capacity for status, self-acceptance, responsibility, socialization, good impression, achievement via conformance, and intellectual efficiency. Unfortunately, the results of this study must be interpreted cautiously, as Morton noted, future research should include more objective performance rating procedures. It seems unusual that the researcher included himself in the rating

procedure. Also, while Morton mentioned that the personnel workers who participated in the rating procedure solicited feedback from residents of the RA, developing a rating instrument for students to give direct feedback about RA performance would have added to the study. The rating instrument used in this study focused on the RA's abilities in social programming coordination, counseling duties, and disciplinary tasks. It is uncertain how these areas fit into an assessment of an individual's customer service orientation. Hall and Creed (1979), in an attempt to replicate Morton's results at a different institution, could not distinguish between RAs who had been rated above average and below average by their supervisors based on the CPI; however, the results of this part of their study must be interpreted cautiously due to the small sample size. Hall and Creed also evaluated the difference between RAs and a random sample of students. The researchers found that RAs had higher mean scores on five of the six scales measuring interpersonal adequacy. While this was a significant finding, it contributes little in terms of being able to distinguish between effective RAs and ineffective RAs.

Related Studies Involving Resident Assistant Selection

Wyrick and Mitchell (1971) studied both supervisor (head residents) and student ratings of RAs' effectiveness with an instrument measuring aspects of an RA's empathic understanding, nonpossessive warmth, and genuineness. For

female RAs there was a significant correlation between empathy and warmth with the student rating. However, none of the three measures was related to RA effectiveness as measured by the head residents.

Biggs (1971) developed the Residence Hall Viewpoints Inventory to assess a resident counselor candidate's viewpoints about the role the resident counselor should play in the residence hall and his or her attitudes about interpersonal relations. Biggs had candidates complete the Residence Hall Viewpoints Inventory and then factor-analyzed the instrument. Students who were selected were subsequently evaluated by their head residence counselor. Biggs (1971) provided little theoretical or empirical explanation for why his items should be related to resident counselor job performance, nor did he thoroughly explain the factors uncovered through the factor analysis. However, he concluded that interpersonal attitudes of residence counselors were important in predicting job success. Perhaps, more important, was Biggs' suggestion that future studies concerned with selecting residence counselors should also examine student ratings of a residence counselor's job performance.

A study conducted by Fedorovich, Boyle, and Hare (1994) was designed to explore whether wellness was a significant factor in distinguishing between students who were selected for the RA position and those who were not hired. The wellness factor was assessed by the Wellness Inventory of the

Lifestyle Assessment Questionnaire (LAQ), Fourth Edition (Hettler, Elsenrath, & Leafgren, 1985). The researchers also examined several extraneous variables that may have impacted the employment decision. The extraneous variables were grade point average, leadership ability, and self-esteem.

The researchers found that the composite Wellness Score of the LAQ, which measures an individual's current level of wellness, showed a significant difference between those selected for the RA position and those not selected. The selected students had higher wellness scores, with significant differences on several of the LAQ subscales including exercise, nutrition, self-care, emotional awareness and acceptance, emotional management, and spirituality. Individuals scoring high on the emotional subscales (emotional awareness and acceptance and emotional management) and the spirituality subscale are more likely to be socially comfortable, accepting of others, and have a commitment to humanitarian issues. These are characteristics that are similar to the description of agreeable individuals in Big Five terminology. Also, the researchers found a significant difference between the grade point average of those selected and those not selected, with the selected group of students having a higher grade point average.

One shortcoming of the research was that the researchers did not investigate the subsequent effectiveness, in terms of

job performance, of the students who were selected to become RAs.

Another limitation of the study was that the LAQ is a self-report instrument and the research did not establish a criterion variable to assess the selected RA's actual level of wellness. However, the research does have implications for RA selection. The researchers' finding that the selected sample of RAs reported themselves as being more socially comfortable, accepting of others, and more committed to humanitarian concerns than those who were not selected, provides additional support that students in RA positions, at the least, believe that an individual having these attitudes would be more favorably viewed in the selection decisions.

Several researchers have examined the reasons why students are attracted to or discouraged from applying for an RA position. In a study conducted by Ketchum (1988) examining the factors which attracted white and black students to the RA position several interesting results appeared. In the sample of 56 students (28 black and 28 white), 44 responded that RAs were "hassled" too much by other students. Also, 47 of the 56 students responded that they did not like to be perceived as the "bad guy." More than half of the sample also believed that people did not respect RAs and a third of the sample stated that RAs were not supported by their housing offices. Ketchum concluded that these perceived negative job qualities would dissuade students from applying for the RA position.

Sixty-one percent of the black students and 82% of the white students reported that they like working with people. However, the predominant reason that black students (79%) and the second-most selected reason that white students (75%) gave for wanting to become an RA was that the RA position would "look good" on a resume. Perhaps future research can address the difference in job performance between RAs whose motivation for applying for the position is career development with those whose motivation is an opportunity to work with people. Ketchum asserted that housing departments should take steps to enhance the reputation of the RA position, thereby leading to an increase in the number of students attracted to the position. She maintained that improved training programs for RAs would improve the morale, performance, and image of the position. Her approach is very different than the approach which maintains that individuals exhibiting a personality style more conducive to working with and helping people can be identified and selected for the RA position.

There are several limitations of Kethchum's study. First, as the researcher noted, the results of this study must be interpreted cautiously because of the small sample size. Also, since the sample used students who were not in an RA position at the time, the question of differences in motivation for actual applicants and currently employed RAs may be considerably different than students who have chosen not to apply. Perhaps students who choose to apply for RA

positions are less concerned with the perceived negative job qualities identified by this sample of students.

A study by Deluga and Winters (1991) also focused on the motivational drives of students deciding to apply for the RA position. These researchers, while examining the relationship between the reasons students become RAs with interpersonal stress and job satisfaction, found that RAs who reported having greater satisfaction with their work also had a stronger desire to help others in distress and to make college easier for others. However, Deluga and Winters (1991) did not investigate the job performance of the individuals who rated themselves higher in helping behaviors.

Two studies examined the benefits derived from being in the RA position. A study by Ames, Zurich, Schuh, and Benson (1979) asked RAs to rank order the benefits associated with the RA position. They ranked personal growth and development, friends made as a result of being an RA, compensation an RA receives, experience gained by developing a sense of responsibility, and private living quarters, as the top five benefits.

A study addressing the work motivation of employed RAs was conducted by Bierman and Carpenter (1994). The researchers found that RAs usually listed intrinsic items, or motivator, as the most satisfying aspects of the RA position. Motivator, according to Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1965), are job factors related to the work itself and are

directly connected to work satisfaction. Conversely, external, or hygiene factors, have been defined as external occurrences that affect worker attitudes. If external factors are not high enough, the worker's attitude toward the job may be dissatisfaction.

Learning responsibility and cooperation, staff team development, and helping freshmen adjust were three of the top four job satisfiers listed by the RAs. Financial benefit was the only external, hygiene factor listed. Females and more experienced RAs selected the intrinsic, or motivational, sources of the job as satisfying. Males and new RAs tended to select the extrinsic factors as more satisfying. Perhaps experienced RAs stayed on the job longer because they were more likely to be intrinsically motivated.

The researchers concluded that housing department administrators may want to focus their recruitment and selection efforts on informing job applicants of both the benefits and financial rewards that the position entails. Perhaps if prospective RAs realized what the potential satisfiers and dissatisfiers were, as determined by former RAs they could make an informed decision concerning applying for the position. The Bierman & Carpenter study would have provided additional information to the RA selection question if the researchers had added a measure of job performance in the study. With that information, the researchers could have answered the question of whether intrinsic or extrinsic

motivation factors are related to job performance. However, the researchers did make a recommendation that future research should examine the relationship between work motivation and job performance.

Summary

Numerous researchers have attempted to add to body of evidence concerning the selection process of resident assistants. Many have attempted to identify personality variables that distinguish effective RAs from ineffective RAs. While researchers have identified personality variables that distinguish between random samples of students and those students selected as RAs, these researchers have not added much information to answering the question of which personality variables, if any, contribute to an RA's effectiveness. While there have been some promising results, Ostroth (1981) in an extensive review of the literature, observed that "no single instrument or group of instruments has consistently shown predictive validity in a variety of selection settings"(p.28). Ostroth (1981), went on to cite the need for standardized role definitions and performance rating procedures to develop an instrument in selecting RAs.

Winston and Ender (1988) concurred with Ostroth's conclusion concerning the unreliability of the selection methods and called for new approaches to RA selection. Winston and Fitch (cited in Winston & Anchors, 1993) concluded that it is "more important to understand how potential RAs

relate to people and solve problems and whether these strategies are generally successful in situations likely to be encountered in the RA position than it is to seek any particular set of characteristics or traits" (p. 332). The exact point of Winston and Fitch's statement is confusing. Are they calling for the development of a personality/attitude instrument or for an instrument that assesses how an RA applicant would react in certain job related situations? As Ostroth noted, the research on RA selection has been hampered by the lack of standardized role definitions and ratings procedures. Within the last decade, however, the concept of customer service has emerged in the service industry and it seems to have a logical connection to the residence life field as well.

Customer Service Orientation and Resident Assistants

The premise of this research is twofold. First, given that most of the previous attempts to develop and validate a reliable instrument to select RAs have met with disappointing results, another attempt seems warranted. Secondly, the resident assistant position can be considered a customer service orientation position. When combined, these two factors call for the development of an instrument designed to assess the customer orientation attitude of an individual applying for a resident assistant position.

The changing business environment that has spawned the growth of customer focused management philosophies (e.g. total

quality management [TQM], efficient customer response [ECR], and continuous quality improvement [CQI] can be seen emerging in university housing operations. Upcraft (cited in Winston & Anchors, 1993) noted that "resident customers," parents, and other family members in reaction to the rising costs of higher education will require housing programs to become more responsive to their needs (p. 210). According to Upcraft (cited in Winston & Anchors, 1993) "attention to students' needs and interests from well-qualified, caring professionals can be an excellent 'selling point' to students and parents alike" (p. 201). Similarly, the customer-focused management approaches have a basic premise of meeting customer needs (Dobbins, Cardy, & Carson, 1993). That is, the customer determines not only the value of products and services but also employee and organizational performance (Dobbins et. al., 1993).

Definition of Customer Service Orientation

A review of the literature concerning customer service orientation revealed, that--while there is no consensus about which components comprise service orientation--there appeared to be many commonalities within the different definitions of customer service orientation (Fausz, 1994). Customer service orientation is the level of investment an individual employee has for meeting customer needs and for helping with customer concerns (Hogan, Hogan & Busch, 1984; Sax & Weitz, 1982). An employee with high customer service orientation creates

customer satisfaction and develops a long-term business relationship (Dunlap, Dotson, & Chambers, 1988; Sax & Weitz, 1982). Individuals rated high in customer service orientation have several qualities: friendliness, courteousness, responsiveness (to customer needs), and popularity and likability (Hogan et. al., 1984, Kelley, 1992; Paajanen, G., 1993).

There have been a number of attempts to develop instruments that measure customer service orientation (Hogan et. al., 1984, Paajanen, 1993; Sax & Weitz, 1982; Thomas, 1993). The researchers who developed these instruments conceptualized the customer service orientation construct as comprising a number of dimensions. Fausz (1994) noted that the researchers had considered both attitudinal and behavioral aspects of the service dimension in designing their instrument. He believed that the customer service orientation dimension should include both attitudinal and behavioral aspects to fully capture the construct. That is, customer service orientation is "as much a way of thinking as it is the act of performing specific customer-focused behaviors (Fausz, 1994, p. 12). However, Albrecht (1988) recognized the difficulties researchers have had in identifying employees well suited for customer contact positions because of the "emotional labor" variable. He highlighted these difficulties and offered a description of emotional labor:

Emotional labor is hard to define, and the competency for it is hard to measure. It is one thing to measure physical strength, manual dexterity, technical knowledge, or typing speed. It is another matter to try to measure warmth, concern for customers, interpersonal skills, and emotional resilience. Yet that is what we must eventually learn to do if we are going to get service-oriented people into service jobs (p. 21).

Since most researchers have hypothesized that the customer service orientation construct appears to be multidimensional and encompasses many of the facets of emotional labor, it is not surprising that a host of measuring instruments have been designed to assess the different dimensions of an individual's customer service orientation. While many of these instruments have been designed for several different occupations (e.g. retail salespeople, real estate brokers, and nurses), one instrument was designed for use as a screening tool for a range of occupations (e.g. PDI Customer Service Inventory). A review of these previously developed instruments and a critique of their psychometric properties will serve as a guideline for the development of the customer orientation instrument for university resident assistants.

Review of Instruments Previously Developed to Assess Customer Service Orientation

Hogan et al. (1984) had two goals in mind when they developed their measure of service orientation. One goal was to determine the construct validity of service orientation which they defined as an employee's "disposition to be helpful, thoughtful, considerate, and cooperative" (p. 167). The authors viewed service orientation as a part of an employee's nontechnical performance on the job. They hypothesized that service orientation would be important in a variety of jobs (e.g. nursing, sales, and clerical personnel).

The second goal of their research was to demonstrate and strengthen the position that personality measures could make a significant contribution to personnel selection. This topic will be discussed in the latter part of this chapter. The authors used the Hogan Personality Inventory (1983), a self-report instrument comprised of six scales (Intellectance, Adjustment, Prudence, Ambition, Sociability, and Likability) to develop an item pool for their service orientation scale, the Service Orientation Index (SOI). They concluded that the SOI seemed to discriminate between employees who are rude, tactless, and socially inept and employees who are pleasant, tactful, and socially competent. The study is noteworthy because of the steps the researchers took to further evaluate the SOI through concurrent validity studies, as well as through the steps they took to assess the construct validity

of service orientation. A limitation of this study is that only one criterion measure was used in developing the instrument, the supervisor rating of the employees. That is, the authors did not use the actual customers' (hospital patients) performance ratings of the direct service provider as an additional criterion measure to validate the SOI and add to the criterion-related validity of the instrument.

Saxe and Weitz (1982) developed a measure of customer-orientation, the SOCO Scale (Selling Orientation - Customer Orientation Scale), that was designed to assess the degree to which salespeople engage in customer-oriented selling. Customer-oriented selling occurs when salespeople help customers make buying decisions that will help the customers meet their needs (Saxe & Weitz, 1982). The authors hypothesized that customer orientation was related to a "concern for others" dimension found in several interpersonal behavior models. Individuals with a high customer orientation would have a high concern for others and a high concern for self, whereas individuals with a low customer orientation would have a low concern for others and a high concern for self. The authors concluded that salespeople rated high in customer-oriented selling were more likely to engage in behaviors that would insure long-term customer satisfaction. This study is notable for its efforts in assessing content, convergent, and discriminant validity of the SOCO Scale. However, one limitation of the study is the omission of both

supervisor's performance ratings and customer satisfaction ratings of the salespeople. This omission certainly affected the predictive validity of the instrument.

Dunlap, Dotson, and Chambers (1988) used the SOCO Scale to investigate the difference in perceptions between real estate brokers and buyers. This study appeared to be a logical next step in the development of the SOCO Scale. That is, this study would provide evidence that real estate brokers scoring high on the self-report SOCO Scale for customer-oriented selling would also be rated highly in customer-oriented selling by real estate buyers. Real estate brokers who rated themselves highly in customer-oriented selling would be more likely to engage in behaviors that would lead to an increase in long-term customer satisfaction. Unfortunately, the researchers found that the real estate brokers rated themselves higher in customer-oriented selling than did the buyers. Based on these results, criterion measures, which includes both customer and supervisor evaluations of the employee's customer orientation, are needed to establish the predictive validity of an instrument.

However, an instrument developed by Paajanen (1993) successfully predicts a potential employee's customer service orientation. Paajanen (1993) developed the PDI Customer Service Inventory (CSI) to screen applicants for a variety of service-related jobs requiring employees to be cordial and helpful to customers. The instrument was designed to be used

with hourly (non-exempt) employees, unlike typical RAs. This instrument is noteworthy because of the measures the researcher took to assess the reliability and validity of the instrument during its development. Although the instrument is designed for general use, the item selection for the instrument was based on job analyses. Paajanen (1993) assessed the validity of the instrument in four job settings (financial institution, health care, automobile sales, insurance firm) and found that the instrument was useful in predicting employee customer service orientation. Through a factor analysis of the instrument, he found five factors that were the most salient: friendliness, competence, practically and realistic, courteousness and tact, and open-mindedness. Paajanen (1993) cautioned individuals interested in using the CSI to assess whether or not the customer service position they are filling is similar to positions were used in the validation studies.

Several researchers (Guion, 1991; Schneider & Bowen, 1995) have suggested that it is appropriate to use measurements of personality that are related to the behavioral domains represented by the particular job. A more thorough review of the research on personality measures and personnel selection is included in a latter section of this chapter. The CSI has been found to be predictive for various industries, none of which have similar duties to the resident assistant position. The CSI was developed by correlating

scores on the CSI with supervisor ratings of employee's customer service orientation. Again, actual customers were excluded from the validation procedures. At this point, the question of whether supervisors and customers evaluate employees in a similar manner remains unanswered.

Another instrument to assess customer service orientation was developed by Thomas (1993). The Personal Style Inventory (PSI) identified nurses who were rated high in customer service orientation by their nursing supervisors. Thomas (1993) had nursing supervisors use the Patient Service Orientation Rating Form to rate nurses under their direct supervision. The development of a rating scale that includes items that directly assess customer service dimensions was a needed step in the development of customer service instruments. In an extension of Thomas' research, Fausz (1994) used the Patient Service Orientation Rating Form as well as two additional supervisor measures (job performance and organizational citizenship behavior) and found significant correlations among the three measures. He concluded that customer service orientation was related to both job performance and organizational citizenship behaviors. Again, as in the studies and instruments discussed previously, both Thomas and Fausz did not include the customers' (patients) evaluation of the employee's customer service orientation.

Personality Attributes in Customer Service Orientation

Previous researchers, assessing the validity of using personality variables as predictor of job performance, have concluded that the results are disappointing (e.g., Ghiselli, 1973; Guion & Gottier, 1965; Mann, 1959). Ghiselli and Barthol (1953), based on their summary of the inconsistent results of the research using personality inventories, cautioned against using personality measures in employment selection. More recently, Schmitt, Gooding, Noe, and Kirsh (1984), using meta-analysis, found that the effectiveness of personality inventories in selection contexts was marginal.

However, other researchers believe individual personality differences can be useful in making personnel selection decisions. For example, Schneider and Bowen (1995), based on the work of Hogan et. al., (1984), concluded "when personality tests that are relevant for particular jobs are used to make hiring decisions, the decisions tend to be accurate. That is, people whose test scores indicate that they have the personality the job requires do perform better on the job" (p.119). Day and Silverman (1989) in an earlier investigation of personality variables and job performance of accountants agreed with Schneider and Bowen.

Additional support for the use of the Big Five personality variables in personnel selection was provided by two studies using meta-analysis techniques (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Tett et al., 1991). Moreover, during the last decade,

researchers have begun to accumulate research that supports the taxonomy of the Big Five personality dimensions of extraversion, emotional stability, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience (Barrick & Mount, 1991).

Barrick and Mount (1991) hypothesized that one explanation for the low validity reported for personality as a predictor of job performance has been the lack of a well-accepted taxonomy for classifying personality traits. Thus, it was difficult to "determine whether there were consistent, meaningful relationships between particular personality constructs and performance criteria in different occupations" (Barrick & Mount, 1991, p. 2). Therefore, they examined the validity of the Big Five personality factors in predicting three job related criteria (job proficiency, training proficiency, and personnel data) in the following occupational groups: professionals, police, managers, sales, and skilled/semi-skilled workers. The researchers found that the personality dimension of conscientiousness was significantly related with all three job performance criteria and for all occupational groups. The results regarding conscientiousness were in line with the researchers hypothesis which predicted that conscientiousness, which assesses personality characteristics such as being persistent, planful, careful, responsible, and hardworking, would be important

characteristics of employees who successfully complete their work tasks.

Barrick and Mount (1991) also hypothesized that agreeableness and extraversion would be valid predictors of job performance for occupations that requiring employees to interact with others or to cooperate with others. The personality dimension of agreeableness includes traits such as being courteous, flexible, trusting, good natured, cooperative, forgiving, soft-hearted, and tolerant. Extraversion includes traits such as being sociable, gregarious, assertive, talkative, and active. The researchers found that extraversion was a valid predictor of job performance for two occupations that require social interaction, managers and sales. Agreeableness did not seem to be as important a predictor of job performance.

Overall, Barrick and Mount (1991) concluded that the results supported the use of the Big Five personality dimensions as a method of communicating empirical findings. Tett et al., (1991) also used meta-analysis to assess the relationship between the Big Five personality factors and job performance, but they added two study characteristics (confirmatory versus exploratory studies; job analysis and no job analysis). In this study, unlike Barrick and Mount's (1991), extroversion ($r = .16$) had lower predictive validity than agreeableness ($r = .33$). Interestingly, confirmatory studies in which the researcher provided some rationale for

the examination of specific traits in relation to job performance had a predictive validity almost twice as high as those studies in which the researcher administered an array of personality measures and did not provide a rationale for expectations regarding correlations (i.e., exploratory). Also, they found that studies which used personality variables selected based on a job analysis had a higher mean validity than studies where no job analysis was performed. Overall, Tett et al., (1991) agreed with the conclusions of Barrick and Mount (1991) that personality measures have a place in personnel selection research. Additionally, they concluded that future research strategies in personality and job performance should use confirmatory approaches employing personality-oriented job analysis. In other words, trait measures should be selected based on a "job analysis aimed specifically at identifying the personality requirements for the job" (Tett et al., 1991, p. 704). Unfortunately, there is little prescriptive information in the job analysis literature on procedures for conducting a personality-oriented job analysis (Gael, 1988).

Development of the Hypotheses

While the results regarding the usefulness of personality factors in employee selection seem to be inconsistent (Fausz, 1994), the recent meta-analyses provide additional evidence to support further studies using personality traits in personnel selection. Adding a taxonomy, like the Big Five, provides a

framework to examine personality traits and their relationship to job performance. Consequently, this research was an attempt to use previous findings regarding the Big Five to construct a personality-based selection instrument for RAs.

Fausz (1994) noted that, while many studies have focused on the relationship between personality characteristics and job performance in terms of quantity and quality of work, there may be a need to examine a different criteria for customer-oriented positions. He recognized that many definitions of customer service included elements of the Big Five dimensions of conscientiousness and agreeableness (Saxe & Weitz, 1982; Hogan et al, 1984; Paajanen, 1993; Dunlap et al., 1988; Thomas, 1993) than of extroversion, emotional stability, and openness to experience. While there seems to be some disagreement among researchers about the precise meaning of each of the Big Five factors, there is a general agreement about the prototypical definitions (Fausz, 1994). Fausz offered the prototypical definitions for agreeableness (e.g., likeable, courteous, flexible, cooperative, and good natured) and conscientiousness (e.g., dependable, responsible, reliable, and hard-working).

Lounsbury (1994) added to Fausz's definition by defining agreeableness as a person being sympathetic to the concerns of other people and being oriented toward helping others. Additional characteristics of agreeable individuals include being altruistic, team-oriented, cooperative, modest,

unselfish, trusting, accepting, and non-judgmental (Lounsbury, 1994). Those individuals low on agreeableness tend to be: skeptical, distrusting, judgmental, divisive, uncooperative, unsympathetic, and disagreeable (Lounsbury, 1994).

Fausz found that there was a positive and significant relationship between agreeableness and supervisor ratings of an employee's customer service orientation. That is, individuals who scored higher on the measure of agreeableness were more likely to be rated higher on customer service orientation by their supervisors (Fausz, 1994). Fausz also found that the relationship between conscientiousness and supervisor ratings of an employee's customer service orientation was positive, but not significant. The current study was an attempt to replicate Fausz's finding regarding the positive relationship between agreeableness and supervisor rating of an employee's customer service orientation. Agreeableness was measured with items selected from the agreeableness scale of the NEO PI-R personality inventory. The NEO, developed by Costa and McCrae (1985, 1989), has 240 items representing each of the Big Five personality constructs. The NEO includes six facets for each of the five constructs of the Big Five personality constructs. The six facets of the agreeableness scale were trust, straightforwardness, altruism, modesty, tender-mindedness, and compliance. This study used four items for each of the six facets of the NEO's agreeableness scale. These items were selected because they

replicated the items used by Fausz (1994) in his customer service study of nurses. The internal consistency reliability estimate (Cronbach's alpha) reported for the agreeableness scale in Fausz's study was .77.

The supervisor rating (hall director) of a resident assistant's customer service orientation was assessed from four items modified from Thomas' (1993) six-item measure of customer service orientation which was developed for health care settings. These items are unique from the other scales in this study because each item is loaded with several dimensions of customer service orientation. The four-item scale measures an RA's rapport with residents, their responsiveness to the needs of residents, teamwork and co-worker relations, and overall customer service orientation. A Likert scale, with anchors ranging from 1 = "rarely meets minimum standards" to 7 = "single best performance ever observed," was used for each item.

Where Fausz examined the validity of agreeableness for predicting the customer service orientation of direct patient care providers, as rated by their supervisors, the validity of agreeableness for predicting the customer service orientation of resident assistants as rated by their hall directors was examined in the current study. It was hypothesized that:

H1: The personality dimension of agreeableness will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.

The main independent variable in this study was a newly designed instrument developed to assess an individual's customer service orientation. The initial RASI is a self-report instrument covering three primary attitude dimensions: customer service orientation, job involvement, and sociability. In order to develop items for the measure, three steps were taken. First, two existing measures of RA motivation were reviewed (Residence Hall Viewpoints Inventory; Biggs, 1971, and Resident Assistant Motivation Questionnaire; Deluga & Winters, 1991). Next, previously developed instruments dealing with service orientation (Saxe & Weitz, 1982; Thomas, 1993) and work and job involvement (Kanungo, 1982; Lodahl & Kejner, 1965) were reviewed. Lastly, subject matter experts (SMEs) were interviewed. The SMEs included students living in residence halls, former RAs, and residence hall directors. The SMEs were asked to list what attitudes were important to the performance of a successful RA.

From the review of the RA motivation questionnaires, the existing customer service orientation instruments, and the interviews with SMEs, a list of fifty-two attitude questions was generated. This initial 52-item questionnaire was titled the Resident Assistant Style Inventory (RASI). Conceptually, the questions appeared to group into three broad categories. One category contained items concerning the extent to which an RA was sensitive to the needs of the residents and put the needs of the residents before his or her own needs. This

category was termed *customer service orientation*. A second category concerned the extent to which an RA had the necessary patience and communication skills to effectively deal with resident issues. This category was termed *social skills*. The third category consisted of items which concerned how much an RA was personally invested in performing his or her job successfully. Due to the conflicting obligations of an RA to be a student and employee, it was important to assess an individual's level of work and job involvement. This category was termed *job involvement*.

The RASI was arranged as a bipolar, verbally anchored rating scale. Each question contained two statements anchoring the two ends of a five-point rating scale. For example, one item contained the two statements: "It could easily be said of me that I live, eat, and breathe any job I hold" and "It could never be said of me that I live, eat, and breathe any job I have had." Respondents were required to choose whether the statement on the left or the statement on the right best described them. Respondents indicated their choice on a five-point scale positioned between the two poles. The complete RASI is included in Appendix A. Since the RASI is based on previous instruments used in RA selection and customer service orientation as well as from a job analysis of the RA position based on input from SMEs, the following hypothesis was offered:

- H2: Scores on the Resident Assistant Style Inventory will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.

Additionally, as mentioned previously, the construct of agreeableness has been observed in several instruments designed to measure an employee's customer service orientation. It followed that the agreeableness construct should be positively related to the RASI, which had been designed to assess an RA's customer service orientation. Accordingly, it was hypothesized that:

- H3: Scores on the Resident Assistant Style Inventory will be positively related to scores on the personality dimension of agreeableness.

Given that the RASI was developed by reviewing existing instruments that were designed for RA selection and assessment of employees' customer service orientation as well as job analysis information from SMEs, it was expected that the relationship between the RASI and supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation was significantly greater than the relationship between the personality dimension of agreeableness and supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

- H4: The relationship between the Resident Assistant Style Inventory (RASI) and supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation will be significantly greater than the relationship between the personality dimension of agreeableness and supervisor rating of an RA's customer service orientation.

The existing customer service orientation instruments discussed in this chapter have relied on supervisor ratings of an individual's job performance, extra-role behaviors, and

customer service orientation. In the development of these instruments, the researchers have relied almost exclusively on supervisor ratings as the criterion to establish the predictive validity of the instruments. To further enhance the usefulness of a customer service orientation measure, a criterion variable involving ratings or feedback from the customers, or in this case students, was included in the criterion-related validity. It was important that the students' (customers') ratings of the RA were significantly and positively related to scores on the RASI. This provided additional support in establishing the predictive validity of the RASI. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

H5: Scores on the Resident Assistant Style Inventory will be positively related to scores on the student ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.

It was useful to determine if the RASI can be used to discriminate between the top twenty-five and the bottom twenty-five percent of RAs, as rated by their supervisors for customer service orientation. That is, was there a significant difference between group scores on the RASI for these two groups. It was expected that the RASI taps important customer service orientation elements and that supervisors were also observing RAs engaged in customer oriented behaviors. Therefore, it was hypothesized that:

H6: There will be a significant difference between group mean scores on the RASI for the top and bottom twenty-five percent of RAs, as rated by their supervisors, for customer service orientation.

The relationship between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and supervisor ratings of an RA's job performance, was examined. In the residence hall, an RA's customer service orientation was most likely positively related to job performance. RAs displaying high levels of customer service were being helpful to residents. These RAs were more likely to be friendly, cooperative, and tactful. These types of behaviors resulted in superior job performance because the residents' needs were met, leading to increased satisfaction from living in the residence halls. It was hypothesized that:

- H7: Supervisor ratings of an RA's job performance will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.
- H8: Scores on the Resident Assistant Style Inventory will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's job performance.

Items modified from Smith, Organ, and Near's (1983) Organizational Citizenship Behavior Measure and Williams and Anderson's (1991) OCBI scale were used to measure an RA's organizational citizenship behavior. Organizational citizenship behavior has been defined as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient functioning of the organization" (Organ, 1988, p. 4). These items were modified from two existing instruments that demonstrated coefficient alpha in the .90s (George, 1991;

Williams & Anderson, 1991). Scale anchors ranged from 1 = "almost never" to 5 = "almost always."

Organizational citizenship behaviors (also known as extrarole behaviors), have been found to promote the effective functioning of an organization (Katz & Kahn, 1966; Organ, 1988). Organ (1988) noted that conscientiousness, helpfulness, and courtesy were three characteristics of organizational citizenship behaviors and seemed to mirror some of the qualities needed to provide high quality customer service. Accordingly, it was hypothesized that:

H9: Supervisor ratings of an RA's organizational citizenship behaviors will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.

Summary

A selective overview of the previous attempts to develop a reliable and valid instrument to aid in selecting university resident assistants was presented in Chapter II. Also, an overview of the existing instruments designed to measure an individual's customer service orientation, along with definitions of the customer service construct, were presented. Recent developments in both personality research (e.g. the Big Five personality taxonomy) and customer service orientation research have been described. Personality variables associated with the Big Five personality construct of agreeableness, which appear to be important factors in determining an individual's ability to engage in customer service oriented behavior within a university residence hall,

have been described. Supervisor ratings of an individual's job performance, customer service orientation, and organizational citizenship behaviors were used as the criteria, to establish the concurrent validity of the RASI. Additionally, student ratings of an RA's customer service orientation were used to further establish the concurrent validity of the instrument.

Finally, sample demographic characteristics were reported. Specifically, age, gender, and length of tenure in the RA position were reported. Although no hypothesis was made regarding the relationship between male and female scores on the RASI, the relationship was examined.

The following hypotheses were tested:

- H1: The personality dimension of agreeableness will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.
- H2: Scores on the Resident Assistant Style Inventory will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.
- H3: Scores on the Resident Assistant Style Inventory will be positively related to scores on the personality dimension of agreeableness.
- H4: The relationship between the Resident Assistant Style Inventory (RASI) and supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation will be significantly greater than the relationship between the personality dimension of agreeableness and supervisor rating of an RA's customer service orientation.
- H5: Scores on the Resident Assistant Style Inventory will be positively related to scores on the student ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.

- H6: There will be a significant difference between group mean scores on the RASI for the top and bottom twenty-five percent of RAs rated on customer service orientation by their supervisors.
- H7: Supervisor ratings of an RA's job performance will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.
- H8: Scores on the Resident Assistant Style Inventory will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's job performance.
- H9: Supervisor ratings of an RA's organizational citizenship behaviors will be positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

Participants

Participants for this study included currently employed resident assistants, their immediate supervisors (Masters' level residence hall directors), and students who were supervised by the resident assistant. All participants were either attending or employed at a large, southeastern university.

One hundred fifty-seven resident assistants and 13 residence hall directors had an opportunity to participate in the study. A total of 124 resident assistants and 12 residence hall directors responded to the survey, resulting in response rates of 78.98% and 92.31%, respectively. A list of 32 computer-generated random numbers was utilized to select 32 resident assistants from the sample of 124. Approximately 10 students who residing on the residence hall floor of the corresponding RAs were surveyed. A total sample of 320 students was used for the study.

The sample of 124 resident assistants was 54% female and resident assistants ranged in age from 19 to 25 years, with a mean of 20.85 ($SD = 1.39$). The tenure of job experience ranged from 1 to 8 semesters, with a mean position tenure of 2.60 semesters. The sample of the 32 randomly selected resident assistants to be evaluated by students was 63.3%

male. Their tenure ranged from 1 to 8 semesters, with a mean of 2.73 (SD = 1.44) semesters of on the job experience. The sample of residence hall directors was 58% male. Residence hall directors' age ranged from 23 to 35 years with a mean of 27.11 (SD = 3.43). The tenure in the present position ranged from 1 to 4 years, with a mean of 2.05 years (SD = .96). Years of professional experience in the college student personnel field ranged from 1 to 8 years, with a mean of 3.64 years (SD = 2.43).

Procedure

Supervisor (Hall Director) Form

Supervisor (hall director) rating forms were distributed at a weekly hall director staff meeting. Hall directors were asked to fill out an evaluation form for each RA under their direct supervision. The forms were collected at the conclusion of the staff meeting. Hall directors were also provided with the Resident Assistant Style Inventory (RASI) and the agreeableness scale of the NEO-PI to distribute to the resident assistants on their staff.

Resident Assistant Forms

The Resident Assistant Style Inventory (RASI) and agreeableness scale of the NEO-PI were distributed at a weekly individual residence hall staff meeting by the hall director during the last month of the academic year. RAs were asked to fill out the forms at the meeting and return the form to their hall director. Completed forms were collected from the hall

director by the researcher immediately following the conclusion of each staff meeting.

Student Form

A sample of 32 RAs was drawn from a computer-generated list of random numbers. The researcher and three assistants went to each residence hall floor of the corresponding RA and surveyed approximately ten students residing on that floor. Students were given the student rating form to complete and it was collected by the researchers immediately following the administration.

Measures

Each measure (hall director, RA, student) included a letter describing the research and explaining that responses would be kept confidential. The letter indicated that the responses to the measures were for research purposes only and would not become part of any individual's personnel file. A copy of each letter is found in Appendix A.

Independent Variables

Resident Assistant

1. Resident Assistant Style Inventory (RASI) ratings

The personality characteristics of the resident assistant were measured with responses to the previously described RASI. It consists of 52 items set in a bipolar, verbally anchored rating scale. The items on the RASI were developed from a review of previous instruments used in RA selection and customer service orientation, as well as from information

obtained from SMEs who conducted a job analysis of the RA position. The bipolar format helps control for the effects of social desirability bias (Lounsbury, personal communication, 1996). The respondents were required to choose whether the statement on the left or right best described them. Respondents indicated their choice on a five-point scale positioned between two poles. Higher scores were an indicator that the individual was more likely to engage in customer-oriented behaviors. The complete RASI is located in Appendix B.

2. Agreeableness Scale of the NEO-PI ratings

The agreeableness scale of the previously described NEO-PI, was administered to resident assistants to assess personality characteristics found in customer service oriented employees. Also, the responses to this scale added to the determination of the convergent validity of the RASI. The NEO-PI consists of 240 items representing the Big Five personality constructs (agreeableness, conscientiousness, extroversion, emotional stability and openness to experience). The NEO-PI breaks the five dimensions into six facets per dimension. The six dimensions of the agreeableness scale included facets for trust, straightforwardness, altruism, modesty, tender-mindedness, and compliance. Within the six facets for each dimension, there are eight items representing each facet. Fausz (1994) used four items from each of the six dimensions of agreeableness. In replicating Fausz's (1994)

study of the customer service orientation of nurses, this study used the same items for the agreeableness scale. The reliability estimate (coefficient alpha) for the twenty-four items of the agreeableness scale used in Fausz's (1994) study was .77.

Respondents indicated their agreement with each item on a five-point Likert scale with "strongly disagree = 1" on one pole and "strongly agree = 5" on the opposite pole. The mean scores for the sixteen items ranged from 1 to 5. Higher mean scores indicate that the individual is more likely to be sympathetic towards others and be oriented towards helping others. See Appendix C for a list of items representing the agreeableness scale of the NEO-PI.

Dependent Variables

1. Supervisor ratings (hall director)

The questionnaire administered to the hall directors was used to assess the job performance, level of involvement in organizational citizenship behavior, and customer service orientation of resident assistants under their direct supervision. The questionnaire consisted of twenty items previously described (see Chapter II). These items were modified from existing validated questionnaires with known reliability (Thomas, 1994; George, 1991; Williams & Anderson, 1991; Smith, Organ & Near, 1983).

Customer Service Orientation

The four items for the customer service orientation component of the questionnaire were derived and modified from Thomas' (1993) six-item Patient Service Orientation Rating Form, which was designed to assess the customer service orientation of nurses. Thomas' six-item measure had an internal consistency reliability of .97 (coefficient alpha). Supervisors recorded their assessments on a seven-point Likert scale with anchors ranging from 1 = "performance does not meet, or rarely meets minimum standards" to 7 = "single best performance ever observed." The scores on the four items for each resident assistant were summed and a total score for the items yielded a scale score. The higher scale score indicated that the resident assistant was more likely to have engaged in customer-oriented behaviors while performing his/her job duties. See Appendix D for a list of the customer service orientation items.

Job Performance

The nine items to assess an RA's job performance used in the questionnaire were derived and modified from a scale developed by Williams and Anderson (1991). Williams & Anderson's job performance scale had a coefficient alpha estimate of .91. The modified nine items are listed in Figure 3.3. Scale anchors range from 1 = "almost never" to 5 = "almost always." The scores for the nine items were summed and the total score for the items yielded a scale score. The

higher scale score indicated that the RA was engaging in behaviors that contributed to satisfying the needs of the residents that the RA serves. A list of the items measuring job performance is included in Appendix E.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

The seven items measuring organizational citizenship behavior (see Chapter II) were derived and modified from existing measures designed by Smith, Organ, & Near (1983) and Williams and Anderson (1991). Previous research using these scales demonstrated reliability estimates in the .90's. Scale anchors range from 1 = "almost never" to 5 = "almost always." The scores for the seven items were summed and the total score for the items yielded a scale score. The higher scale score would be an indicator that the RA was engaging in more organizational citizenship behavior that would contribute to the effective functioning of the residence hall. A list of the items measuring organizational citizenship behavior is included in Appendix F.

2. Student Ratings

The student-rated resident assistant evaluation was based on items developed from the responses of focus groups comprised of students living in the residence halls. The focus groups identified the attributes, attitudes, and skills of a competent customer service oriented resident assistant.

Sixteen items were developed to assess the customer service orientation of resident assistants by the students they serve.

The internal consistency reliability estimate (Cronbach's alpha) measured for this newly developed scale was .94. The items were measured on a five-point scale with anchors of "1=strongly disagree" to "5=strongly agree." The responses to the items were summed yielding a scale score. The higher scale score indicates that the residents had a positive impression of the RA's customer service orientation. A list of the student rating items is included in Appendix G.

Demographic Variables

Demographic information was obtained for both the resident assistants and hall directors who participated in the research. Specifically, information regarding age, gender, and length of tenure (i.e. number of semesters) in position was obtained. Additionally, information concerning the number of years in the college student personnel field and length of service in this position was asked of the hall directors.

Data Analysis and Hypotheses Tests

Descriptive and summary statistics were calculated and reported for the sample of RAs as well as for hall directors. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and range) and correlations were reported for each variable. Internal reliability estimates were measured by the coefficient alpha procedure for each scale used in the study. Correlational analyses were used to test the hypotheses concerning the relationship between the scores on the RASI and the scores on the agreeableness scale. Again, correlational analyses were

used to test the hypotheses concerning the relationship between the scores on the RASI and hall director ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and job performance. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the relative contributions of the RAs' scores on the RASI and their scores on the agreeableness scale for predicting a hall director's rating of an RA's customer service orientation. A *t* test was used to test for a significant difference between the group mean scores on the RASI for the top and bottom twenty-five percent of the RAs, as rated on customer service orientation by their supervisors (hall directors). Correlational analyses were used to test the hypotheses concerning the relationship between job performance and customer service orientation and organizational citizenship behavior and customer service orientation.

Analysis of the RASI

The first step in the analysis of the RASI involved an a priori examination of the items to assess which items were most clearly related to the customer service orientation construct. An exploratory principal component analysis was conducted to develop a one factor solution.

The final procedure in the item analysis was to determine the reliability of the factor. This was accomplished by estimating the internal consistency of the scale using the coefficient alpha procedure.

Summary

The methods involved in selecting the participants for the study have been described in this chapter. Also, the measures used in the study have been described. Finally, the methods used to analyze the data have been reported. A report of the results of the hypotheses tests conducted with this data is included in Chapter IV.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The results of the exploratory principal components analysis to determine a one factor solution for the RASI are presented in the initial part of this chapter. The results of the nine hypotheses designed to assess the reliability and validity of a newly designed, self-report, attitude scale (RASI) for use in the selection of university resident assistants are presented in the initial part of this chapter.

Descriptive and Psychometric Properties of the RASI Scale

The exploratory principal component analysis on the items selected a priori (i.e. items related to customer service orientation), from the initial 52 item RASI scale uncovered a twelve-item one factor solution. The twelve items which comprise the factor seem to display a willingness to help others, to put the needs of others in front of their own, to be cooperative, and to be non-judgmental. These items seem to capture the essence of customer service orientation especially as it relates to agreeableness. The twelve items, the response frequencies, and corrected item total correlation are included in Table 4.1. The factor seemed to be internally rich because the reliability measured by coefficient alpha was .77. This coefficient alpha level exceeds the recommended level of .70 suggested by Nunnally (1978). The twelve items constituted the RASI scale which was used in the remaining

**Table 4.1 Summary of Response Frequencies (%)
and Corrected Item Total Correlations of RASI Items**

Item	SA	A	N	D	SD	Corrected Item Total Correlation
2. Others who know me would say that I am a very patient person.	25	28	17.4	17.4	5.3	.4505
5. Before I speak to others, I always carefully think through what I will say.	17.4	31.8	22.7	15.2	4.5	.3357
10. I do not enjoy arguing with other people.	28	24	10	11.4	18.9	.5035
12. When someone says something I disagree with, I just let it pass.	23.5	37.9	22.7	8.3	.8	.4750
23. I prefer to just tolerate other people's attitudes when they differ from my own.	3	7.6	37.9	30.3	14.4	.3925
31. Most of my actions are aimed at making others happy.	18.9	29.5	30.3	11.4	3	.4042
32. One should never offend other people no matter what the circumstances.	5.3	10.6	28.8	29.5	18.9	.3369
33. I am generally a tender-minded, sensitive person.	30.3	26.5	21.2	9.1	6.1	.5229
34. I will pitch in to help another person, even if it means my own work might fall behind schedule.	22	37.1	20.5	10.6	4.1	.2883
42. When someone takes advantage of me, I usually let it slide.	3.8	18.9	31.1	23.5	15.9	.3998
46. An RA should always try to meet the needs of the residents, even if it means getting behind schedule in his/her own work.	2.3	15.9	37.9	24.2	12.9	.3207
51. I tend to hold back from criticizing other people even when they are in the wrong.	10.6	24.2	35.6	15.9	6.8	.4989

SA=strongly agree, A=agree, N=neutral, D=disagree, and SD=strongly disagree.

See Appendix A for full description of bipolar items in RASI.

analyses.

Descriptive and Psychometric Properties of the Remaining Scales

The descriptive statistics for the sample were reported in Chapter 3. Assessing the internal consistency of the measures used in this study was important because of the variations and modifications of the previously developed scales which had demonstrated acceptable reliability as assessed with the coefficient alpha procedure (i.e., agreeableness, customer orientation, job performance, and organization citizenship behavior) (Fausz, 1994). In addition, the coefficient alpha procedure was used to assess the internal reliability of the newly designed scales (i.e., RASI and student rating form). The internal consistency reliability estimates (Cronbach's Alpha) of the measures used in this study ranged from .77 to .94. These alpha coefficients are comparable to those found using similar scales to assess customer service orientation and job performance in business and industrial settings (J.L. Lounsbury, personal communication, November 24, 1994). The descriptive statistics and internal consistency reliability estimates of the measures used in the study are reported in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Descriptive statistics and reliability estimates for major study variables (N = 124).

Resident Assistant Measures

Measure (number of items)	Mean (SD)	Actual Range	Alpha
RASI (12)	34.82 (7.33)	1-5	.77
Agreeableness (24)	84.11 (9.94)	1-5	.84

Supervisor (Hall Director Measures)

Measure (number of items)	Mean (SD)	Actual Range	Alpha
Customer Service (4)	19.06 (5.02)	1-7	.94
Job Performance (9)	36.64 (6.67)	1-5	.94
Organizational Citizenship Behaviors (7)	21.36 (6.37)	1-5	.90

Student Measure

Measure (number of items)	Mean (SD)	Actual Range	Alpha
Student Rating (16)	61.44 (12.08)	1-5	.94

All items were measured on a five-point scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree) except the customer service orientation measure which used a seven point Likert scale (1=rarely meets minimum standards, 2=less than satisfactory, 3=satisfactory, 4=satisfactory in all respects, 5=above average but not superior, 6=superior in almost all respects, 7=single best performance observed).

Hypotheses Tests

Hypotheses 1-3, 5, 7-9 were tested using correlation analyses. The results of the correlation analyses appear in Table 4.3. Hypothesis 4 was tested using hierarchical regression analysis, with supervisor (hall director) ratings of an RA's customer service orientation serving as the dependent variable; RA scores on the agreeableness scale and RA scores on the RASI served as the independent variables. Scores on the agreeableness scale were entered in step one, followed by scores on the RASI. In Hypothesis 5, a *t* test for independent samples was used to test for differences--in terms of supervisor rated customer service orientation--between group mean scores on the RASI between the top 25 and bottom 25 percent of RAs.

Hypothesis Related to the Validity of the RASI

Hypothesis 1 was designed to determine the relationship between scores on the agreeableness scale of the NEO-PI and supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation. To do this, RA ratings of their own agreeableness were correlated with supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation. The researcher found that RA ratings of their own agreeableness were positively related to supervisor ratings of a RA's customer service orientation ($r = .27$, $p < .01$). These results parallel the results that Fausz (1994) found with a sample of nurses and supervisors in a health care setting.

Table 4.3 Pearson Correlations Between Measures in Study

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. RASI	---					
2. Agreeableness	68**	---				
3. Customer Service Orientation (Supervisor)	25**	27**	---			
4. Job Performance (Supervisor)	19*	10	69**	---		
5. Organizational Citizenship Behavior (Supervisor)	12	08	70**	61**	---	
6. Student Rating	29	39*	58**	61**	59**	---

* $p < .05$ (two-tailed significance)

** $p < .01$ (two-tailed significance)

Note: Decimal points have been omitted.

Hypothesis 2 was developed to determine if a positive relationship existed between RA scores on the RASI and supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation. To do this, RA ratings on the RASI were correlated with supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation. The RA ratings on the RASI were significantly and positively related to supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation ($r = .25$, $p < .01$). This suggests that individuals scoring higher on the RASI are more likely to be rated higher in customer service orientation by their supervisors.

Hypothesis 3 tested for a possible relationship between an individual's scores on the RASI and the agreeableness scale. The researcher found that the relationship between an individual's scores on the RASI were positively and significantly related to RA rating scores on the agreeableness scale ($r = .68$, $p < .01$) as assessed by correlational analysis. This finding suggests that individuals who score higher on the RASI are more likely to rate themselves higher in agreeableness.

Hypothesis 4 was developed to determine the relative contribution of RA ratings of agreeableness and RA ratings on the RASI in accounting for variance in supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation. To do this, a hierarchical regression analysis was performed. The results of the procedure, including the multiple R, R square at each

step, R square change and beta coefficients of the independent variables (scores on the agreeableness scale and scores on the RASI) appear in Table 4.4. The RASI did not account for significant variance beyond the variance on customer service orientation from the agreeableness scale. However, the two correlations (i.e. RASI and Agreeableness) were compared using Fisher z and were not found to be significantly different.

Hypothesis 5 was developed to see if RA scores on the RASI would be positively and significantly related to student ratings of an RA's customer service orientation. The researcher found a positive, but not significant relationship between student ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and RA scores on the RASI was found ($r = .29$, ns). This finding did not support the hypothesis that RAs who rate themselves higher in customer service oriented behavior, as assessed by the RASI, are more likely to be rated higher in level of customer service oriented behavior, by the students they served.

Hypothesis 6 was designed to determine if the RASI could distinguish between RAs who had been rated highest and lowest on customer service orientation by their supervisors. To do this, a t test for independent samples was performed on the group mean scores on the RASI for the top 25 and bottom 25

TABLE 4.4 Summary of the Hierarchical Regression Analysis:
Supervisor Ratings of Customer Service Orientation on
Agreeableness and RASI

Step	Variable Entered	Multiple-R	R-squared	R-squared Change
1	Agreeableness	.27*	.05*	.056*
2	RASI	.25*	.075*	.01 ns

* $p < .05$

percent of RAs rated on customer service orientation by their supervisor. A significant difference exists between the two groups, indicating that the RASI can distinguish between individuals rated high and low on customer service orientation by their supervisors ($\bar{M}^{\text{higher}} = 36.87$; $\bar{M}^{\text{lower}} = 31.90$), $t(60) = 2.47$, $p < .01$). While gender differences were not specifically examined in this study, it should be noted that there was a significant difference between group mean scores for male and female RAs on the RASI ($\bar{M}^{\text{male}} = 33.16$; $\bar{M}^{\text{female}} = 36.35$), $t(122) = 2.56$, $p < .01$). There was also a significant difference between group mean scores between male and female RAs on customer service orientation as rated by supervisors ($\bar{M}^{\text{male}} = 17.42$; $\bar{M}^{\text{female}} = 20.46$), $t(122) = 3.51$, $p < .001$).

Summary

The results of the analysis are consistent with the stated hypotheses in Hypotheses 1-3. These results were confirmed through correlational analyses. Significant positive relationships were found between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and RA ratings on the agreeableness scale and RA ratings on the RASI. Further, a significant positive relationship was found between the RA scores on the RASI and RA ratings on the agreeableness scale. However, as stated in Hypothesis 4, the RASI did not add significant variance beyond the agreeableness ratings in explaining supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation. In Hypothesis 5, RA scores on the RASI were

positively, but not significantly related to student ratings of the RA's customer service orientation. Lastly, as stated in Hypothesis 6, the RASI was able to discriminate between top 25 and bottom 25 percent of RAs rated for customer service orientation by their supervisors.

Results of the Remaining Hypotheses

Hypothesis 7 was designed to see if a significant and positive relationship existed between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and supervisor ratings of an RA's job performance. A significant and positive relationship was found between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and job performance ($r = .69$, $p < .01$). Indeed, RAs who were rated highly in customer service orientation by their supervisor were more likely to be rated highly in job performance by their supervisor.

Hypothesis 8 was designed to see if the relationship between supervisor rating of an RA's job performance and scores on the RASI was positive and significant. Using correlational analysis, a significant and positive relationship was found between supervisor ratings of an RA's job performance and RAs scores on the RASI, ($r = .19$, $p < .05$). RAs who score highly in customer oriented behavior as assessed by the RASI are more likely to be rated higher in level of job performance by their supervisors.

Hypothesis 9 was designed to see if a significant and positive relationship existed between supervisor ratings of an

RA's customer service orientation and supervisor rating's of an RA's organizational citizenship behavior. Using correlational analysis, a significant and positive relationship was found between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and organizational citizenship behavior ($r = .70$, $p < .01$). This indicates that RAs who score higher on supervisor rated customer service orientation are more likely to be rated higher in involvement with organizational citizenship behaviors by those supervisors.

Summary

Hypotheses 7-9 were designed to determine the nature of the relationship between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation with supervisor ratings of an RA's job performance and level of involvement in organizational citizenship behavior. It appears that the relationship between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and supervisor ratings of both an RA's job performance and level of involvement in organizational citizenship behavior were positive and significant. That is, RAs rated highly in customer service orientation were most likely to be performing well in other areas of the job; they went above and beyond the expected and required job responsibilities while contributing positively to the overall functioning of the residence hall staff and organization.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to develop a reliable and valid self-report customer service instrument for use in the selection of university resident assistants. Items for the instrument, known as the Resident Assistant Style Inventory, were developed through a job analysis of the resident assistant position conducted by subject matter experts at a large, southeastern university. In addition, previously developed instruments designed for the selection of resident assistants, as well as instruments designed for detecting an individual's inclination to engage in customer service oriented behavior, were examined. To assess the concurrent validity of the instrument, subjective ratings of RAs' customer service orientation by supervisors (hall directors) and customers (students) served as criterion variables. In addition, the relationships between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation, job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior were examined. The convergent validity was assessed by examining the relationship between the RASI and the construct of agreeableness, which has been found to be a significant part of customer service orientation. Correlational analyses were used to examine all of the above relationships. A *t* test and hierarchical regression analysis were used to test two of the hypotheses. The results of the statistical tests were reported in the

previous chapter and are discussed in this chapter along with speculations, limitations, contributions to the field, and recommendations for future research.

Discussion of the Hypotheses

The relationship between the personality dimension of agreeableness and supervisor ratings of an individual's customer service orientation was examined in Hypothesis 1. A positive and significant relationship was found, thereby supporting the hypothesis. This finding is consistent with the results that Fausz (1994) found in a sample of nurses. He recognized that, although no researchers had directly tested the relationship between agreeableness and customer service orientation, many researchers had included aspects of the agreeableness construct in their definition of customer service orientation (e.g., Dunlap et al., 1988; Hogan et al., 1986; PaaJean, 1991). These authors suggested that customer service orientation should come more naturally for employees who are more agreeable (Fausz, 1994). In the sample for this research, the RAs who rated themselves highly in agreeableness were more likely to be rated highly in customer service orientation by their supervisors.

Fausz (1994) suggested, based on the relationship between the personality dimension of agreeableness and supervisor ratings of customer service orientation for his sample of nurses, that his finding was consistent with the literature on occupational choice. Specifically, Fausz noted Holland (1985)

suggested that people tend to be attracted to occupations that seem to fit their personality. In their study of the reasons students chose to apply for the RA position, Deluga and Winters (1991) found that RAs responding that they had a desire to help others in distress and make college easier for others, also reported a greater satisfaction with the RA position. These two attitudes are part of the agreeableness dimension. Accordingly, agreeableness and customer service orientation seem to be important aspects of the resident assistant position.

The relationship between RA ratings on the RASI and supervisor ratings of the RA's customer service orientation was examined in Hypothesis 2. A significant and positive relationship was found, thereby supporting the hypothesis. RAs who answered items on the RASI in the expected direction were more likely to be rated highly in customer service orientation by their supervisors.

The relationship between the personality dimension of agreeableness and scores on the RASI was examined in Hypothesis 3. A significant and positive relationship was found, which supported the hypothesis. RAs who rated themselves highly in agreeableness were more likely to have rated themselves highly on the RASI. The RASI seems to have a significant relationship to the agreeableness personality dimension. While this finding is significant, future research should examine the possibility that there may be others

personality dimensions which correlate with the RASI. For example, the Big Five factors of conscientiousness and extroversion seem to be part of several definitions of customer service orientation, so future research should assess whether and how these dimensions are related to customer service orientation.

The relationship between agreeableness and the RASI in terms of supervisor ratings of customer service orientation was examined in Hypothesis 4. The RASI did not account for additional variance in customer service orientation as predicted.

Hypothesis 5 was developed to assess the relationship between student ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and the RASI. A positive, but not significant relationship was found, so the hypothesis was not supported. This insignificant finding has important ramifications because most of the previous research on customer service orientation and RA selection had not relied on more than one criterion variable to establish criterion-related validity. This researcher attempted to develop an instrument which demonstrated criterion-related validity based on two criterion variables. Perhaps the low sample of students used in this analysis affected the outcome.

Hypothesis 6 was developed to test whether the RASI could discriminate between the top and bottom 25 percent of RAs when rated on customer service orientation by their supervisors.

Indeed, a significant difference was found between the mean scores of the two groups. Therefore, the RASI has demonstrated potential in being useful in the selection of RAs. Further research examining the predictive validity of the instrument will be needed before any definitive conclusions are reached.

In Hypothesis 7 it was predicted that a significant and positive relationship between supervisor ratings of an RA's customer service orientation and job performance would be found. A significant and positive relationship was found, thereby supporting the hypothesis. Clearly, RAs who were rated highly in customer service orientation were also performing the required duties of their position in an acceptable manner.

Hypothesis 8 was developed to investigate the relationship between the supervisor's ratings of an RA's job performance and the RA's scores on the RASI. Again, a significant and positive relationship was found, which supported the hypothesis. RAs who were rated highly in job performance by their supervisor also rated themselves highly on the RASI.

Hypothesis 9 was developed to investigate the relationship between the RASI and organizational citizenship behavior. A significant and positive relationship was found, thus supporting the hypothesis. Fausz (1994), in his study of nurses, also found a significant and positive relationship

between supervisor ratings of customer service orientation and organizational citizenship behavior. He noted that the fundamental difference between the constructs was that while customer oriented behavior is generally an expectation of a service position, organizational citizenship behavior was largely a discretionary act which was not formally recognized by the organization. Organ (1988) found that organizational citizenship behaviors performed by employees could enhance the functioning of an organization. It appeared that RAs rated highly in customer service orientation were more likely to be engaging in behaviors that contributed to the effective functioning of the organization.

Summary

Mowday et al., (1979) noted that the criteria for evaluating the psychometric properties of an attitude measure have been most influenced by the rigorous standards for establishing reliability and validity of a measurement instrument set forth by Campbell and Fiske (1959). Mowday et al., (1979) contended that, if the reliability and validity criteria established by Fiske and Campbell were taken literally, few instruments (existing or newly developed) would meet acceptable standards. Mowday et al., (1979) in response to Campbell and Fiske, concluded:

The extent to which our instruments can measure up to the high standards set by these authors is limited by the common methods of measurement that

are typically used both within and between studies, our level of sophistication in measuring attitudes, and our theoretical understanding of the attitude constructs we attempt to measure. It therefore seems more reasonable to evaluate the properties of a particular instrument in view of these constraints and relative to the validity and reliability available for other widely accepted attitude measures (p. 242).

With the concerns and suggestions of Mowday et al., (1979) in mind, it is possible to reach several conclusions concerning the reliability, validity and usefulness of the RASI. The RASI demonstrated reasonably strong evidence of internal consistency reliability. In reference to internal consistency measures, Anastasi (1988) noted that "because it helps to characterize the behavioral domain or trait sampled by the test, the degree of homogeneity of a test has some relevance to its construct validity" (p. 156). However, she cautioned that, unless there is data external to the test itself, the contribution of internal consistency to construct validity is narrow. While the RASI demonstrated acceptable interitem consistency, in the future, researchers should examine the stability of the instrument over time.

Further, in order to demonstrate that an instrument has convergent validity, the instrument should correlate highly with other instruments that it should theoretically correlate

(Campbell, 1960). Evidence of construct validity for the RASI was suggested by the moderately high correlation found between the RASI, which was hypothesized to measure customer-service orientation, and agreeableness, which was used in other customer-service orientation instruments.

Evidence for the predictive validity of the RASI was demonstrated by relatively consistent relationships in the predicted direction between customer service orientation and supervisor ratings of customer service orientation and job performance. Unfortunately, organizational citizenship behavior and student ratings of customer service orientation were not found to be significantly related to the RASI. As mentioned previously, perhaps the lack of significance between student ratings and the RASI can be explained by the small sample size.

The RASI was designed to prevent the effects of a social desirability bias because self-report inventories can be susceptible to the effects of malingering or faking (Anastasi, 1988). The bipolar, verbally anchored format of the items on the RASI was intended to control the effects of a social desirability bias by offering respondents two attractive choices. In addition, the RAs who responded to this instrument had been informed that their responses would be kept confidential, except to the researcher, and no information or results would be included in their personnel file. Therefore, the likelihood that the RAs in this sample

would have answered the RASI in a socially desirable manner would seem to have been reduced.

Limitations

Prior to addressing the prescriptions for future research endeavors in the area of RA selection, it is necessary to examine the limitations of this study. Specifically, limitations due to methodology, statistical analysis and measurement will be addressed.

First, as with previous studies of RA selection (e.g., Graff & Bradshaw, 1970), this one involved a concurrent validity approach in which the predictor and criterion variables were gathered at the same time. In reference to the concurrent model, Ostroth (1981) noted that "(1) the motivation of employed staff could differ from that of candidates in completing the inventory, (2) job experience could affect scores on tests or inventories, and (3) job success (or lack of it) could affect test results" (p. 26). Furthermore, Anastasi (1988) noted that when employees are given inventories for "research purposes only" their motivation and attitude may not be reflective of an applicant sample.

Another limitation of the concurrent validity approach is the restriction of range that occurs because not all applicants for the RA position can be hired and subsequently followed to evaluate their performance. Ideally, an unselected sample of applicants would be hired and retained on

the job long enough to allow the accumulation of adequate and stable criterion data (Anastasi, 1988).

Since the RASI was administered at the conclusion of the academic year, the sample may have been affected by attrition. In other words, the sample in this study does not include RAs who either voluntarily withdrew or were terminated from their position. Consequently, the results may be affected by the restricted range of the sample, thereby reducing variability and lowering the corresponding validity coefficient (Anastasi, 1988). Further, the results of this study may be affected because no information is available concerning those RAs who chose not to participate. Perhaps RAs who recognized that their job performance was unsatisfactory declined to participate in the research.

The results of the analysis pertaining to student evaluations of customer service orientation must be cautiously interpreted because of the small size of the student sample. However, the inclusion of student ratings of customer service orientation provided an additional source of information to aid in establishing the concurrent validity of the RASI. Fausz (1994) suggested that in order to avoid potential sources of error in supervisor ratings (e.g. supervisor's personal characteristics, self-serving attributions, and perceptions of employee's responsibility) researchers should investigate customer service orientation from several perspectives as was done in this study. In the future,

researchers should examine the relationship between how long a resident chooses to reside in residence halls and their level of satisfaction with the resident assistant. Perhaps students' choices to live in the residence hall are not impacted by the level of service an RA provides. This study did not examine the length of occupancy of the students in the survey.

Researchers have observed that it is difficult to generalize and apply the results of one study to a different sample of resident assistants at other institutions (Kipp, 1979; Ostroth, 1981). Perhaps other higher education institutions have different requirements and expectations for their resident assistant staff; therefore, the results of this study must be viewed cautiously and not generalized to other institutions unless their requirements for their resident assistant staff are similar.

Another area that should be examined is the stability of the RASI across different samples of RAs with divergent demographic differences (e.g., academic standing, age, gender, race). Although assessing the stability of the RASI for various demographic groups was not a focus of the present study, future research aimed at uncovering whether the RASI discriminates between groups would add to the validity of the instrument.

While several instruments with known reliability and validity were used in this study, the wording of several items

in each of the instruments were modified to accurately address this sample. For example, the customer service orientation instrument used in this research was modified from Thomas' Patient Service Orientation scale which had been designed for use in a health care industry. Therefore, the impact of rewording and decreasing the number of items on the reliability and validity of the instrument will need to be examined in future research. Also, information regarding the validity and reliability of the RASI and the student rating form is limited because this was the first administration of both instruments. The psychometric properties of these measures should be examined in future research. For example, while the RASI demonstrated reasonable inter-item consistency, the question of the instrument's stability over time is questionable. Lastly, while many of the hypotheses were analyzed and found to have a significant and positive relationship as predicted, many of the correlations were moderate and may have been affected by the size of the sample.

The results of the factor analysis must be interpreted cautiously due to the limited size of the sample. While there does not seem to be a consensus in the literature concerning the number of subjects per variable required for a factor analysis, several researchers have offered guidelines. Comrey (1973) suggested that a sample size of 100 was poor and a sample of 200 was fair. However, Tinsley and Tinsley (1987) criticized this guideline as simplistic. Tinsley & Tinsley

recommended that "investigators consider the number of factors that theoretically would be expected to emerge from the analysis and that they include more than enough variables to measure each factor" (p. 415). They maintained that this procedure increases the precision of the factor analysis, and lessens the necessity of a large sample size. However, Tinsley & Tinsley (1987) suggested that if the number of factors that theoretically are expected to emerge cannot be estimated researchers should follow the guideline offered by Kass and Tinsley (1979). Kass & Tinsley (1979) suggested obtaining 5-10 subjects per item reaching a sample size of 300. Before any conclusions can be drawn about the sample used for the present research, additional analyses surrounding the size of the sample should be performed.

Two additional factors that would have strengthened this study were the use of a pilot study and a cross validation study. A pilot study would have provided more information about the items included in the RASI, for instance, information about the readability of the items could have been obtained. Also, a preliminary examination of the items by item analysis would have provided more information about which items to retain in the scale. Replication of the study using a different sample of subjects is advisable before using the scale in a practical prediction situation.

Recommendations for Future Research

Research in this area should focus on the reasons students choose to apply for the RA position. Several researchers (Bierman & Carpenter, 1994; Deluga & Winters, 1991; Ames et al., 1979) have maintained that housing department administrators need to thoroughly inform prospective RAs about the job requirements and possible benefits of holding a position. Prospective RAs aware of the potential benefits and negative aspects, they can make more informed decisions about whether or not to seek the position. Regarding financial benefits, Deluga & Winters (1991) observed that RAs who had taken the position primarily for the financial benefits were more likely to experience interpersonal stress. The researchers hypothesized that perhaps these individuals experience few intrinsic rewards from meeting the daily responsibilities of the job, thus leading to more interpersonal stress. Individuals susceptible to interpersonal stress would be most likely to have difficulty in a position that required face-to-face contact with people, and this could exacerbate their level of stress. Deluga & Winters (1991) suggested that RA candidates be informed about both the job responsibilities and the job stressors during the selection process. They advocated telling financially motivated candidates about the risk of experiencing interpersonal stress and persuading them to find alternative employment opportunities. However, screening out

applicants whose interest in the position is financial may be difficult to do.

As Berry (1995) noted, from the customer's perspective, the individual performing the service is the company. For example, he observed that for a customer "A careless bank teller is a careless bank" (p. 167). The significance this places on who is selected to represent the organization is great. If the RA is viewed by the students as representing the housing or residence hall department, or quite possibly the university, then these individuals should be invested in meeting the needs of the residents as well as representing the university. Certainly, the stakes involved in hiring the individuals most suited for the position are raised.

Researchers have provided evidence that RAs who are most satisfied in the position are individuals expressing a desire to help others (Deluga & Winters, 1991). Also, researchers have found that RAs with higher tenure in the position were more likely to be motivated by intrinsic factors, including a desire to work with other people (Bierman & Carpenter, 1994). Despite the lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness in terms of job performance of the RA sample in these two studies, it is possible to speculate that the RAs who are intrinsically motivated and have a desire to help others may have a higher tenure in the position.

Consequently, any information about an individual's personal orientation that demonstrates a willingness to help

others and be rewarded through interactions with others might be an indication that he or she can be successful in the RA position. In fact, as Holland (1985) noted in his theory of vocational choice, people making successful career choices are pulled toward work environments which match their personal orientation.

Research in this area should also focus on examining the organizational commitment (Mowday et al., 1979) of RAs who remain in the position for additional years of service. Organizational commitment has been defined as "(1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization's goals and values; (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization" (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 226). Commitment is a more stable construct than job satisfaction, which is often influenced by the day-to-day occurrences in the work place. Mowday et al., (1979) found significant correlations between commitment and measures of employee turnover, absenteeism, and tenure in the organization. More recently, researchers have developed a three-component conceptualization of commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1993). Meyer and Allen (1991) identified the three forms of commitment as affective, continuance, and normative. Meyer, Allen, & Smith (1993) noted that "employees with a strong affective commitment remain with the organization because they want to those with a strong continuance

commitment remain because they need to, and those with a strong normative commitment remain because they feel they ought to do so" (p. 539). Meyer, Paunonen, Gellatly, Goffin & Jackson, (1989) found a connection between commitment and job performance. If commitment provides additional evidence of an RA's attitude toward the housing organization, the job, or to the students, then are these RAs more likely to engage in customer-oriented behaviors?

Further, Balazs (1990) considered the impact of an employee's value system as it relates to the organization's value system. Perhaps employees whose value system corresponds to the organization's value system are more likely to engage in customer service oriented behaviors. Future research might assess the relationship between an RA's value system and the housing organization's value system on customer service oriented behavior. As mentioned previously, research by Biermam & Carpenter (1994) found that RAs with higher tenure are more intrinsically motivated. Perhaps these individuals also align themselves with the values of the housing organization.

Researchers should also examine the benefits of training on the customer service orientation of RAs. Training is often viewed as a tool for refining skills or addressing deficits which may have been overlooked in the RA selection process (Eichenfield, Graves, Slief, and Haslund, 1988). A study conducted by Bowman & Bowman (1995) examined the various types

of training programs used with RAs. They found that the most frequent goal identified for RA training courses was "developing specific interpersonal skills among the RA staff" (Bowman & Bowman, 1995, p. 41). This suggests that an individual's interpersonal skills can be modified through training. Also, the focus on training interpersonal skills by housing administrators and researchers acknowledges the importance of this particular skill for having success as an RA.

A study by Peterman, Pilato & Upcraft (1979) provides some evidence that a pre-employment training course focusing on the development of interpersonal skills can positively effect the job performance of RAs as rated by their residents. Interestingly, several aspects of the performance ratings used by students in the study by Peterman et al., (1979) have correlates to the customer service dimensions identified by student focus groups in this research. Specifically, items addressing the availability and approachability of the RA are included in both the job performance measure in Peterman et al's study as well as in the customer service orientation measure used in the present research. The training course description however, does not seem to address issues related to an RA's agreeableness or customer service orientation, such as the disposition to be helpful, friendly, cooperative, etc. The question of whether or not an individual's personality

dimensions are susceptible to change through a training course remains unanswered.

An additional concern about the study by Peterman et al. is that it did not include any pre-training assessment of an individual's interpersonal effectiveness. Therefore, assuming that the training program accounted for any of the changes in job performance is flawed. However, the potential effectiveness and utility of a training program should not be overlooked. For example, the usefulness of a training program was demonstrated by Winston and Buckner (1984) who found that RAs who had been trained prior to taking on their job responsibilities reported less on-the-job stress. However, no measure of job performance was included in this study. Therefore, the question of whether RAs who exhibit less stress in the position are more likely to perform better on the job was left unanswered.

Customer service researchers endorse educating employees about an organization's values and expectations for employees. For example, Maremont (1990) cited the successful efforts of British Airways in training employees about the importance of customer service and the values of the company. These training programs have helped the company gain a reputation for service within the airline industry. Future research might examine the effects of training programs at influencing an RA's customer service orientation.

Researchers should investigate the relationship between job involvement with customer service orientation and job performance. Job involvement, as it was conceptualized in this study, is "the degree to which a person is identified psychologically with his work, or the importance of work in his total self-image" (Lodahl & Kejner, 1965, p. 24.). The obvious conflict for students assuming the role of RA is how to balance the role of student and employee. Perhaps students who rate themselves higher in job involvement would be more likely to go above and beyond to provide customer service oriented behavior. The relationship between job involvement and customer service orientation should be examined in future research.

Researchers should examine the relationship between positive mood and prosocial behavior at work. Prosocial behaviors are helping behaviors that are performed for the benefit of others (Krebs, 1982). George (1991) found that positive mood (as an affective state) rather than positive mood (an affective trait) was related to prosocial behavior. She found that employees who experienced positive moods at work were "more likely to engage in role-prescribed (i.e. customer service) and extrarole (i.e. altruism) forms of prosocial behaviors" (1991, p. 303). Although George (1991) recognized that trait positive mood was significantly and positively related to state positive mood, it was the positive mood state which influenced prosocial behavior. The

implication of this finding is that if researchers can identify the variables which account for positive mood states at work they can influence whether and how employees participate in customer service oriented behaviors. Fausz (1994) noted that George's finding suggests that researchers examine positive mood states as well as personality traits to understand customer service oriented behaviors.

Theoretical Implications

The purpose of this study was to take the initial steps in developing a reliable and valid instrument to assess the customer service orientation of RAs. Literature from the organizational behavior field was integrated with literature from the college student affairs field. Specifically, research in the area of customer service orientation and RA selection was merged. While there have been numerous attempts to validate a new or existing instrument for the selection of RAs, these instruments did not use the construct of customer service orientation as a framework to address the RA position. Ordinarily, customer service orientation is associated with service positions (e.g. nurses, sales personnel). However, this researcher asserted that the RA position should be viewed as a customer service position in light of the similarities between the RA position and other service related positions. In doing so, this researcher relied on research in the customer service orientation field to aid in the development of the RASI. Also, the relationship between the RASI and

important job variable (e.g. performance, organizational citizenship behaviors) was examined.

An important feature of this research was the use of two criterion ratings, student and supervisor. Fausz (1994) noted a problem with previous research in this area is that the data usually comes from one source. In an effort to prevent response-response contamination this research included data from three sources. The multiple perspective permitted examination of the relationships between student, supervisor, and RA. It was necessary to examine whether students and supervisors were viewing the customer service orientation of RAs in a similar manner.

While the limitations in terms of reliability and validity of the measures used in this study have been addressed in an earlier part of this chapter, it was necessary to focus on the issue again. Two instruments, the RASI and student rating measure were developed for this research and little was known about their psychometric properties. Additional research should examine the psychometric properties of these measures. In addition, researchers can examine whether the student rating form should include information about how many semesters the student has resided in residence halls as well as the student's reasons for choosing to live in residence halls. Perhaps the customer service orientation of the RA has little or no impact on a student's decision to live in a residence hall.

The goal of this research was to develop an instrument which could be used for selection of students well-suited for the RA position. The focus of instrument was on assessing the customer service orientation of students applying for the RA position. However, the customer service oriented roles (e.g. helpfulness, courteousness) are only a part of the roles which an RA must fulfill. For example, the instrument did not assess how well an RA would accomplish other job roles, such as disciplinarian and administrator. Therefore, researchers should focus on identifying individuals who can also manage these roles in addition to providing customer service oriented behaviors.

Practical Implications

Clearly, the numerous and various approaches which have been applied to RA selection indicate the problematic nature of hiring the right individual to do this job. The increased competition from alternative housing options and the demands of student "customers" has created additional pressures on university housing departments to identify appropriate front line personnel to interact and meet the needs of these customers.

There is a body of research that suggests that individuals can be socialized to the customer oriented values of an organization and trained in providing customer service oriented behavior (Berry, 1985). Two studies (Winston & Buckner, 1984; Peterman et al., 1979) mentioned previously,

which focused on RA training, reported positive outcomes of training programs.

However, Berry noted that not all qualities or traits needed for a service position can be taught. In fact, Bowman & Bowman (1995) noted that RA training programs most often focused on the development of interpersonal skills. While it is uncertain which interpersonal skills are the focus of the training, this seems to indicate that interpersonal skills are an area where most RAs are underdeveloped. The RASI was developed to help assess an applicant's interpersonal style and attitude above and beyond traditional selection methods (e.g. interviewing, letters of reference, role plays).

While the intention of the RASI was to be a screening device for future applicants for the RA position, in the future, researchers should explore the usefulness of the RASI in identifying presently employed RAs who may be in need of remediation or further training in customer service oriented behavior.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Cover Letters to Participants

Resident Assistant Rating Form

This research is being conducted by Mark D. Krautheim, M.Ed. and John Lounsbury, Ph.D. (Department of Psychology) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

You have been selected to participate in a research project designed to assist Departments of Residence Halls/Housing Offices such as yours to make better decisions with regards to Resident Assistants (or student paraprofessionals employed in housing operations).

The information you provide will be used for research purposes only and will not be revealed to the Resident Assistant or any other person within the Department of Residence Halls. All identifying information will be destroyed at the end of this project, and the ratings will never appear in any individual's personal file.

In rating each Resident Assistant, please read the description for each dimension carefully. Then rate the Resident Assistant on each dimension. Please do this for each Resident Assistant that has or continues to report directly to you. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

If you have any questions about the project please contact Mark D. Krautheim at (330)668-1224.

Stop! Before you go on please complete the following demographic information.

Name : _____

Age: _____ years

Gender: _____ female _____ male

How many years have you been employed in the college student personnel field?
_____ years

How long have you worked in your current position? _____ years

Resident Assistant Style Inventory

This research is being conducted by Mark D. Krautheim, M.Ed. (Department of Educational and Counseling Psychology) and John Lounsbury, Ph.D. (Department of Psychology) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. **Your participation in this project is voluntary and your data may be withdrawn at any time without penalty. For research purposes it is important that you identify yourself on this survey. However, your responses will be kept in the strictest confidences of the researchers. Also, for research purposes, information about your performance as a Resident Assistant will be collected from your Hall Director and students on your floor. This information will be confidential and will have no bearing on your status as a Resident Assistant.** If you have any questions regarding your participation, now or later, you may contact John Lounsbury, Ph.D. at (615) 974-2531 or Mark Krautheim at (330) 668-1224. You may receive the results of the study from the same source.

I have read and understand the above stated guidelines.

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Circle One:

Age: 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 Other: _____

Sex: Male Female

Number of **Semesters** as an RA: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Resident Assistant Rating Form

This research is being conducted by Mark D. Krautheim, M.Ed. and John Lounsbury, Ph.D. (Department of Psychology) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

You have been selected to participate in a research project designed to assist Departments of Residence Halls/Housing Offices such as yours to make better decisions with regards to Resident Assistants (or student paraprofessionals employed in housing operations).

The information you provide will be used for research purposes only and will not be revealed to the Resident Assistant or any other person within the Department of Residence Halls. All identifying information will be destroyed at the end of this project, and the ratings will never appear in any individual's personal file.

In rating your Resident Assistant, please read the description for each dimension carefully. Then rate the Resident Assistant on each dimension. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

If you have any questions about the project please contact Mark D. Krautheim at (330) 668-1224.

Name of Resident Assistant _____

Appendix B

RASI

Resident Assistant Style Inventory

Instructions: As you read each of the following sets of phrases, think about how you most of the time or how you most characteristically feel or think about Resident Assistants, yourself on a job, or in general. **For each item, check which of the five boxes describes you.** If the phrase to the right better reflects your view of yourself, check one of the boxes on the right. If your view of yourself is better reflected by the phrase to the left, check one of the boxes on the left.

Here are some examples:

Example 1:

I will do anything I can to make sure my assignments get done on time.	+	I am concerned about getting my assignments done on time, but know that deadlines can be extended.
--	---	--

In this example, the person checked the box to the far right indicating that he or she is concerned with deadlines but believes that most deadlines can be extended.

Example 2:

When I am studying in my room I hate to be interrupted.	+	When I am studying in my room I don't mind being interrupted.
---	---	---

In this example, the person checked the box next to the one on the far left, indicating that he or she typically, but not always, hates to be interrupted while studying.

Example 3:

For me to feel good about myself, it is essential that my job is going well.	+	I tend to feel good about myself even when my job is going poorly.
--	---	--

In this example, the person checked the middle box, indicating that he or she is in-between on this issue, which may mean that sometimes it is important for the person's job to be going well if they are to feel good about him/herself but that sometimes the person feels good about him/herself even if the job is going poorly.

It is important to bear in mind that there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Please answer each item in terms of what is true for you. Above all, **BE HONEST** in how you represent yourself.

1.	The most important things I do involve my work.	 +	The most important things I do involve my family and my personal life.
2.	Others who know me would say I tend to be a very patient person.	 +	Others who know me would say I am an impatient person.
3.	The concerns of the residents should always come first.	 +	The concerns of the residence hall should always come first.
4.	Most RAs don't really care about what happens on the job as long as their paychecks are regular.	 +	Most RAs really do care about what happens to the residence hall they work for.
5.	Before I speak to others in the residence hall, I always carefully think through what I am going to say.	 +	Before I speak to others in the residence halls, I do not always carefully think through things I am going to say.
6.	It is easy for me to control the way I come across to people depending on the impression I wish to give them.	 +	It is difficult for me to control the way I come across to people.
7.	I think most residents RAs would see on hallwalks are interested in the RA just doing his/her hallwalk and going on.	 +	I think most residents that see RAs on the hallwalks would like to strike up a conversation with the RA as they do their hallwalk.
8.	RAs in most residence halls put their own interests before the interests of the resident.	 +	RAs in most residence halls put the interests of the student before their own self-interests.
9.	Those who know me well would say I have an extremely high energy level.	 +	Those who know me well would say I do not have an extremely high energy level.
10.	I occasionally enjoy a lively argument with other people.	 +	I do not enjoy arguing with other people.
11.	How well I perform is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to my self-worth.	 +	How well I perform is usually IMPORTANT to my self-worth.
12.	When someone says something I disagree with, I prefer to challenge it.	 +	When someone says something I disagree with, I just let it pass.
13.	If I don't do well on the job, I feel bad and tend to brood about it.	 +	If I don't do well on the job, it doesn't get me down.
14.	If I am really upset with someone, I like to speak to that person and try to clear the air immediately.	 +	If I am really upset with someone, I prefer to avoid that person and let things blow over.
15.	I appreciate it when others see me as the person in charge.	 +	I prefer that others see me as just another person.

16.	It could easily be said of me that I live, eat, and breathe my work.	 +	It could never be said of me that I live, eat, and breathe my work.
17.	When it comes to interacting with people, I am a better listener than talker.	 +	When it comes to interacting with people, I am a better talker than listener.
18.	Most RAs cannot be trusted to do what they are supposed to do.	 +	Most RAs can be trusted to do what they are supposed to do.
19.	I always try to set very challenging goals for myself.	 +	I prefer to set easy-to-reach goals for myself.
20.	I am probably viewed as someone who prefers to be alone in the residence hall.	 +	I am probably viewed as a very sociable person in the residence hall.
21.	I think that any RA's job performance should be evaluated based on part on surveys of his or her residents.	 +	I think that any RA's job performance should not be evaluated at all by surveys of his or her residents.
22.	For me to feel good about myself, it is essential for my job to be going well.	 +	I tend to feel good about myself even when my job is going poorly.
23.	I prefer to try to change other people's attitudes when they differ from my own.	 +	I prefer to just tolerate other people's attitudes when they differ from my own.
24.	Sometimes it's OK for an RA not to report minor rule violations to the hall director.	 +	An RA should always report all rule violations to the hall director.
25.	I have an EXTREMELY strong desire to be a high achiever.	 +	I would like to be a high achiever, but I am not hung up on it.
26.	I would be happier if everyone liked me.	 +	I would not be any happier if everyone liked me.
27.	I would feel completely comfortable apologizing to a person for a mistake I had made.	 +	I would feel uncomfortable apologizing to a person for a mistake I had made.
28.	As an RA I would prefer to know exactly how my residents feel about the quality of service I provided them.	 +	As an RA I would prefer not to know how my residents feel about the quality of service I provided them.
29.	After I have made an important decision on a job, I never think about it again.	 +	After I have made an important decision on the job, I sometimes think about other ways I could have handled it.
30.	I prefer not to help others do their work.	 +	I like to help others do their work.
31.	Most of my actions are aimed at making others happy.	 +	Most of my actions are aimed at making me happy.
32.	One should never offend other people no matter what the circumstances.	 +	Sometimes offending other people can't be helped.

33.	I am generally a tender-minded, sensitive person.	 +	I am generally a tough-minded, thick-skinned person.
34.	I will pitch in to help another person, even if it means my own work might fall behind schedule.	 +	I would rather not help another person, if it means I will get behind in my own work.
35.	Some RAs could not improve their attitudes toward residents even if they were asked to do so.	 +	All RAs could improve their attitudes toward residents if they were asked to do so.
36.	I spend more time thinking about people who like me.	 +	I spend more time thinking about people who don't like me.
37.	An RA should always strictly enforce a residence hall's visitation hours.	 +	An RA should bend a little on a residence hall's visitation hours from time to time to meet the needs of the residents.
38.	The average person would rather lie than admit to a serious mistake on the job.	 +	The average person would rather admit to a serious mistake on the job than lie about it.
39.	It is important for me to deal with the general public in any job I hold.	 +	It is not important for me to deal with the general public in any job I hold.
40.	I am very comfortable when a person tells me about his/her personal problems.	 +	I am uncomfortable when a person tells me about his/her personal problems.
41.	Many people will be unhappy no matter how hard one tries to please them.	 +	Only a few people will be unhappy no matter how hard one tries to please them.
42.	When someone takes advantage of me, I usually let it slide.	 +	When someone takes advantage of me, I usually get ticked-off and try to do something about it.
43.	It's a good idea to express sympathy with anyone who has a complaint.	 +	It is never a good idea to express sympathy with anyone who has a complaint.
44.	I would probably be exhausted if I had to spend all day in discussions with other people, even if the topics were of interest to me.	 +	I would probably be energized if I had to spend all day in group discussions with other people, especially if the topics were of interest to me.
45.	I have never worried about a problem on a job I have held.	 +	I have often worried about a problem on a job I have held.
46.	An RA should always try to meet the needs of the residents, even if it means getting behind schedule in his/her own work.	 +	An RA should try to meet the needs of the residents, but not if it means getting behind schedule in his/her own work.
47.	I would rather tell a polite lie than say something that would hurt another person's feelings.	 +	I would rather tell the truth to another person.

48.	I sometimes say things I don't mean to avoid being disliked.	 +	I never say things I don't mean to avoid being disliked.
49.	I like to compare how well I do on my work with others.	 +	I do not like to compare how well I do on my work with others.
50.	For most RAs, being an RA is a large part of who they are.	 +	For most RAs, being an RA is a small part of who they are.
51.	I tend to hold back from criticizing other people even when they are in the wrong.	 +	I tend to criticize other people right away if they are in the wrong.
52.	I always try hard to improve on my past performance on a job.	 +	I am not concerned with my past performance on a job - it is now that counts.

Items 4,7,8,10,12,15,18,20,23,29,30,35,36,37,38,41,44,45 are reverse scored.

Appendix C

AGREEABLENESSTrust

1. I believe that most people are basically well-intentioned.
2. I believe that most people will take advantage of you if you let them.*
3. I think most of the people I deal with are honest and trustworthy.
4. I tend to assume the best about people.

Straightforwardness

1. I couldn't deceive anyone even if I wanted to.
2. Being perfectly honest is a bad way to do business.*
3. I would hate to be thought of as a hypocrite.
4. I pride myself in my shrewdness in handling people.*

Altruism

1. Some people think of me as cold and calculating.*
2. I generally try to be thoughtful and considerate.
3. I think of myself as a charitable person.
4. I go out of my way to help others if I can.

Modesty

1. I'd rather not talk about myself and my achievements.
2. I try to be humble.
3. I feel that I am no better than others, no matter what their condition.
4. I would rather praise others than be praised myself.

Tender-Mindedness

1. Political leaders need to be more aware of the human side of their policies.
2. We can never do too much for the poor and elderly.
3. I believe all human beings are worthy of respect.
4. I would rather be known as "merciful" than "just."

Compliance

1. I would rather cooperate with others than compete with them.
2. When I've been insulted, I just try to forgive and forget.
3. I'm hard-headed and stubborn.*
4. I often get into arguments with my family and co-workers.*

From: Costa, P.T. & McCrae, R.R. (1985). The NEO Personality Inventory manual. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.

*Indicates reverse scoring.

Items measured on a five-point scale: (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)

Appendix D

CUSTOMER SERVICE ORIENTATION MEASURE

1. Develops positive rapport with students, is friendly and pleasant with students, greets them by name, treats students personally and as individuals.
2. Is responsive to the needs and concerns of residents, is aware of residents who may be having problems and actively seeks ways to be of assistance, anticipates student concerns, does not lose composure even when dealing with difficult students, respects the dignity of each student.
3. Contributes to team work and morale of staff, cooperates with other RAs when asked to do so, takes up slack for other RAs, projects image of being a team player who will work cooperatively with others, is enthusiastic about being a Resident Assistant and exhibits a positive attitude.
4. All things considered how would you rate this RA's overall customer service orientation, including the degree to which the RA's job performance contributes to high student satisfaction, student retention in the residence halls, and positive public image of the Department of Residence Halls.

Items modified from:

Thomas, J.B. (1993). Personality versus affect:
Predicting customer service orientations. Unpublished
manuscript.

Items measured on a seven-point scale: (1=rarely meets minimum standards, 2=less than satisfactory, 3=satisfactory in most respects but not all, 4=satisfactory in all respects, 5=above average but not superior, 6=superior in almost all respects, 7 single best performance ever observed)

Appendix E

JOB PERFORMANCE MEASURE

1. Adequately completes assigned duties in a timely manner.
2. Fulfills responsibilities specified in job description.
3. Performs tasks that are expected of him/her without instructions from the assistant hall director/hall director.
4. Meets formal performance requirements of the job.
5. Engages in activities that will positively affect his/her performance evaluation.
6. Neglects aspects of the job he/she is expected to perform.*
7. Fails to perform essential duties.*
8. Arrives at desk shift on time.
9. Gives advance notice if unable to cover desk or hall shifts.

* Indicates reverse scoring.

Items Derived and Modified From:

Williams, L.J., & Anderson, S.E. (1991). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment as predictors of organizational citizenship and in-role behaviors. Journal of Management, 17(3), 601-617.

Items measured on a five-point scale: (1=almost never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently, 5=almost always)

Appendix F

ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR MEASURE

1. Assists you with your work.
2. Makes innovative suggestions to improve the residence hall.
3. Volunteers for things that are not part of his or her normal job requirements.
4. Orients new RAs even though it is not required.
5. Helps RAs who have been absent.
6. Attends functions not required that help the Department of Residence Halls image (e.g. attend/presents at conferences, participates in United Residence Halls Council (URHC), National Residence Hall Honary (NRHH), National Association of College and University Residence Halls (NACURH).
7. Helps other RAs who have heavy work loads.

Items derived and modified from:

Smith, C.A., Organ, D.W., & Near, J.P. (1983). Organizational citizenship behavior: Its nature and antecedents. Journal of Applied Psychology, 68, 453-463.

Williams, L.J., & Anderson, S.E. (1991). Job satisfaction and organizational commitment as predictors of organizational citizenship and in-role behaviors. Journal of Management, 17(3), 601-617.

Items measured on a five-point scale: (1=almost never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=frequently, 5=almost always)

Appendix G

STUDENT RATING MEASURE

1. My RA constantly works to create a community on the floor.
2. I have **not** found my RA easy to get in touch with when I need to see him/her.*
3. My RA usually checks in with me to see if I have any concerns.
4. I can approach my RA about concerns at any time during the day or night.
5. I think my RA is an excellent resource about campus policies and procedures.
6. I can share personal concerns with my RA and be certain that he/she will handle them appropriately.
7. My RA puts the concerns of the residents before his/her own interests.
8. I often question how dedicated my RA is to his/her RA position.*
9. My RA **does not** respect the rights of the residents.*
10. I can count on my RA to be there when I need him/her.
11. My RA **does not** seem to have a genuine interest about the concerns and needs of the residents.*
12. My RA is sensitive to the individual differences of the residents.
13. My RA maintains a positive attitude toward the residents regardless of the residence hall policy violations occurring on the floor.
14. My RA would rather be seen as a person in charge than as a friend.*
15. I think my RA provides high quality customer service.
16. If I decided to live in residence halls again, I would be very happy to have the same RA on my floor.

* Indicates reverse scoring.

Items measured on a five-point scale: (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree)

VITA

Mark David Krautheim was born in Paterson, New Jersey on December 23, 1961. He attended public school in Totowa, New Jersey. He graduated from Passaic Valley High School in Little Falls, New Jersey in June 1980. He received a Bachelor of Arts in Government and Anthropology from the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia in 1984. Mark continued his studies in the Master of Education with a concentration in Higher Education Administration at the College of William and Mary, officially receiving the degree in August, 1987. He participated in the intercollegiate football program while both an undergraduate and graduate student at the College.

Mark was employed as a residence hall director/assistant football coach at Chowan College in Murfreesboro, North Carolina from July, 1985 through July, 1988. He began work as a residence hall director at the University of Tennessee in July, 1988. Mark entered the Ph.D program in Counselor Education in 1989. He resigned from his residence hall director position in July, 1990 to pursue full-time graduate study. After two years of full-time doctoral work, he was asked to return to a residence hall director position by the Division of Student Affairs at the University of Tennessee, to help facilitate the transition of an athletic residence hall to a mainstream residence hall. He served in the position for three years.

Mark transferred to the Counseling Psychology program in 1991. He completed his American Psychological Association approved predoctoral internship at the University of Akron, Akron, Ohio in June, 1996. He received the doctorate of philosophy in May, 1997.

Presently, Mark is employed as a staff psychologist in the Center for Counseling and Student Development and as assistant director of the Student Services for Athletes Program at the University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware.