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Temperament and Wellness
Within A College Population

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Abstract

The effect of group affiliation on temperament traits, overall wellness, and personal and social identities was investigated. Group affiliation was defined as membership in either Greek or service organizations on the University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus. In addition, individuals who were not members of either group were classified as independent. Temperament traits were determined by assessment of the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey and Bates, 1978). Overall wellness was assessed through the Wellness Test (Blonna, 1996) which examined levels across six subscales. Personal and social identity was determined by the Personal and Social Identity Questionnaire (Hogan and Cheek, 1983). No statistical significance was found between the presence of certain temperament traits and personal and social identity recognition in relation to group affiliation. However, total wellness, social, social, spiritual, and environmental wellness were found to be statistically significant in regards to the effects of group affiliation. The most important finding and hence the one with possible implications for further study was the positive effect group affiliation had on certain aspects of an individual's level of wellness.

Temperament and Wellness
Within a College Population

Research has shown that individuals exhibit a variety of temperament traits. However, there is little information regarding the association between temperament traits and overall wellness in relation to college students. For the purposes of this study, group affiliation was defined as involvement in a Greek organization (sorority or fraternity) or service organization such as Habitat for Humanity. No involvement in either type of group constituted the individual as independent. The main objective of this research was to identify possible differences between group affiliation and personality, social, and wellness characteristics in a college population.

Personality theories, prevalent in the field of psychology, allow researchers to classify individuals into a certain typology according to the basic characteristics of their personalities. According to Keirsey and Bates (1978), Jung's typology of temperament traits is a useful tool to assess an individual's basic temperament. Keirsey and Bates developed a questionnaire that utilizes Jung's ideas on the conception of temperament. According to Jung (as cited in Keirsey and Bates, 1978), a person can be categorized as to extraversion, introversion, sensation, intuition, thinking, feeling, perceiving, or judging with varying degrees of each type indicator. Extraversion, in simplest terms, means "sociable," while introversion means "territorial".

Furthermore, intuition refers to a person who is visionary and somewhat of a dreamer, while sensation-seeking individuals are characterized by sensibility. Thirdly, impersonal individuals are referred to as thinking types, while a feeling type individual chooses to be personal in his/her relations with others. Lastly, a person who wants closure in his/her affairs is likely to be called a judging type and a person who prefers to keep decisions, situations, etc. open to change is likely a perceiving type (Keirsey and Bates, p. 12-24). Therefore, this typology gives a description of certain aspects of an individual's personality and will be used for assessing the personalities of the participants in this study.

Many different variables constitute an individual's level of wellness. Not only does physical health describe wellness, but also emotional, spiritual, and environmental awareness describe wellness as well (Blonna, 1996). Oleckno and Blacconiere (1990) conducted a study on wellness in reference to college students. These researchers studied levels of wellness as a function of gender, race, and class standing. They found that females in particular scored higher in regards to overall wellness than males. Also, Euro-Americans exhibited higher levels of wellness than the other races under study. Although this study gives an idea of what to expect when studying wellness, it does not take into account a student's primary social group as a determinant of wellness.

According to Hogan and Cheek (1983), the concept of the inner-outer metaphor is essential to understanding the relevance of personal and social identity. The inner-outer metaphor describes personality in terms of social identity or one's outward appearance and personal identity as one's inner self. Fundamentally, the inner-outer metaphor expresses the idea that both personal values and perceived social roles have a significant influence on one's social behavior. In addition, one's social identity exists independently of one's personal identity, i.e., personal identity and social identity are not interrelated. Furthermore, one's devotion to maintaining either aspect of identity varies across individuals. Consequently, this variation in devotion affects one's social behavior. Hogan and Cheek also stress that people's devotion to maintaining either their personal or social identities is linked to their early childhood and adolescent development. Specifically, Hogan and Cheek hypothesize that introverted children who have a closer relationship to their parents than their peers would likely as adults to be more oriented toward the personal aspects of identity. Similarly, adolescents with close peer relationships would most likely value the social aspects of identity when they were adults. In contrast, alienated individuals separate themselves from both the personal and social aspects of identity. Therefore, the integration of both aspects of identity indicates an individual who has reached maturity (Hogan and Cheek, 1983).

In this study, I attempted to identify the effect of group affiliation on temperament traits, wellness variables, and personal and social identity formation. It was assumed that certain temperament traits would be characteristic of members of either Greek or service organizations. Furthermore, group affiliation was posited to have an effect on overall wellness and each of the tested aspects of wellness. By having the support of a primary social group, Greek and service organization members were expected to score higher on levels of wellness than independents. Lastly, the formation and recognition of one's personal and social identities was expected to be influenced by one's group affiliation or absence of affiliation. Because members of a group can identify themselves as part of a larger social organization, their identities should be clearly formed and easily recognized.

Method

Participants

One hundred and six students (70 females and 36 males) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville participated in this study. The majority of the participants were Euro-American with a mean age of 21. For the purposes of this study, twenty individuals from each group affiliation condition (Greek, service, or independent) were chosen at random to be used in the data analysis process.

Apparatus

A packet of three questionnaires along with a demographics survey was utilized in this study. The demographics survey was designed to assess basic demographic data such as age, race, gender, and group affiliation of each participant. The first questionnaire, the Wellness Test (Blonna, 1996), is a fifty-six item questionnaire arranged on a 10-point Likert Scale with 1 as the lowest score and 10 the highest on each subscale. The Wellness Test assessed an individual's level of wellness across six scales which included physical, social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and environmental wellness. Total wellness was obtained by adding the scores on each scale and dividing the total number by six. The second questionnaire was the Personal and Social Identity Questionnaire (Hogan and Cheek, 1983) designed to assess the importance of an individual's personal and social identity to him/herself. This questionnaire consisted of twelve questions on a 5-point Likert Scale format with 1 indicating little importance and 5 indicating a high level of importance to the participant. The scores on this questionnaire ranged from 5-25. The last questionnaire was the Keirsey Temperament Sorter (Keirsey, 1978) which assessed an individual's temperament traits, i.e., introverted, extroverted, intuitive, sensation-seeking, thinking, feeling, judging, or perceiving. This questionnaire was comprised of seventy questions arranged in (a) or (b) style format (e.g., At a party

do you: (a) interact with many, including strangers or (b) interact with a few, known to you).

Procedure

The questionnaire packet was administered to an undergraduate psychology class at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Only one session was required to administer and collect 106 packets from the participants. The total time needed to complete the questionnaire was estimated to be about ten to fifteen minutes. All participants were required to sign an informed consent form agreeing to take part in the study. The purpose and rationale of the study was explained to the participants. All participants were encouraged to ask any questions in regards to the study and the clarifications were promptly made to them. The confidentiality of the students was stressed as was the absence of any risk from participating in the study. The students who participated in this study received extra credit within their psychology class. No other incentives were offered to encourage their participation. When the participants completed the packet, they were thanked for their participation.

Results

To look at group differences, a one-way analysis of variance

(ANOVA) was used for the dependent measures of wellness and identity. Post hoc analyses were conducted to determine where the proposed differences lie within the distribution. The Scheffe Multiple Comparisons Test was used to complete the post hoc analysis. A chi square was constructed to assess whether certain temperament traits were contingent upon group affiliation. For statistical purposes, the significance level was set at .05.

The first variable to undergo analysis was wellness. Overall wellness was found to be statistically significant, $F(2,57)=3.24$, $p < .05$, to the effects of group affiliation (see Figure 1). The Scheffe Comparisons Test showed that persons affiliated with either Greek or service organizations reported higher levels of wellness than persons with no group affiliation ($p < .05$).

Wellness was assessed across six subscales, which included physical, social, spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and environmental with separate ANOVA tests used for each subscale. Physical, emotional, and intellectual wellness were found to be nonsignificant in relation to group affiliation ($p > .05$). Social wellness was statistically significant, $F(2,57)=5.91$, $p < .05$, to the effects of group affiliation (see Figure 2). Post hoc analysis indicated that persons who belonged to either Greek or service organizations scored higher on social integration than independents. In addition, spiritual wellness was also

statistically significant, $F(2,57)=3.96$, $p < .05$ (see Figure 3). Scheffe Comparisons showed that Greeks scored higher than independents on this variable, but did not differ with regard to members of service organizations. A highly significant finding was the statistical significance derived from environmental wellness, $F(2,57)=5.05$, $p < .05$ (see Figure 4). The subsequent Scheffe Compararisons showed that service members scored higher on levels of environmental wellness than both Greek members and independents ($p < .05$).

With regard to personal and social identities, the ANOVA revealed no significant differences between group affiliation and personal identity. However, a trend toward significance was found for social identity, $F(2,57)=2.87$, $p < .06$. Post hoc analysis indicated that Greek membership tended to shape social identity compared to the other types of group affiliation (see Table 1).

To assess the liklihood of certain temperament traits being contingent upon group affiliation, a chi-square test was used for the dependent measure of temperament. The chi-square analysis showed no significant trend for $\chi^2(7, N=60)=3.88$, $p > .05$. Due to the lack of significance found with this sample ($p=.7942$), temperament traits are thought to be independent of group affiliation.

Discussion

Only one out of the three original hypotheses was supported by the findings. This particular study found that group affiliation had a significant impact on total wellness. Group affiliation also positively affected spiritual, emotional, and environmental wellness. The hypothesis regarding the influence of group affiliation on personal and social identity was discounted by the results of this study. Furthermore, group affiliation was also found to be independent of temperament, i.e., group affiliation was not a determinant of the likelihood of belonging to a certain group. Thus, the significance of group affiliation in the life of a college student merits further study.

Because I discovered group affiliation to be a positive influence on total wellness along with certain aspects which comprise overall wellness, this finding will have the most possible implications for further study in the field of psychology. Perhaps the reason for the positive impact of group affiliation on wellness is the support, feeling of connectedness, and sense of community that results from belonging to a group. Such persons will most likely relate to others more easily and develop more closer and stable relationships. The college experience itself offers many young adults their first opportunity to experience life on their own. But being on their own might cause some students to experience feelings of loneliness

loneliness and possibly depression (Nottingham, Rosen, and Park, 1992). As a way to meet new people, many students choose to join a particular group on their college campus. Whether sorority, fraternity, service organization, etc., these groups provide some students with the necessary support, friendship, and confidence needed to enhance their well-being. This present study illustrated the positive role of extracurricular activities on certain levels of a student's wellness.

The formation and recognition of one's identity is essential in order to relate to others and the world around you. A college campus would seem a prime location for freely expressing and exploring one's identity. In their study, Hogan and Cheek (1983) emphasized that a great deal of variation existed across individuals when attempting to measure their devotion to maintaining either their personal or social identities. In the initial stage of my study, I had hypothesized that group affiliation might have an influence on the amount of devotion placed on maintaining one's identity. From the sample of students that participated in this study, group affiliation seemed to have no significant impact on their devotion to either their personal or social identities. Because of this finding, I concluded that the participants (both within groups and between groups) in my study maintained an equal balance between the two aspects of their identities.

Individuals exhibit various temperament traits which when

combined constitute a temperament typology. This study classified individuals according to introversion, extroversion, sensing, intuitive, thinking, feeling, judging, and perceiving. Although the participants showed variation in their temperament typologies, this variation was found to be nonsignificant across the three groups under study. Therefore, temperament was found to be independent of group affiliation. Thus, according to the results of this study, possessing a certain typology may not predict the likelihood of belonging to a certain group.

After conducting data analysis, I concluded that a more equal distribution of participants between the three groups might have yielded more significant results than the current sample. Due to the high proportion of students classified as independent compared to the other two groups under study, i.e., greek and service, the sample which was utilized in data analysis was significantly reduced. Taking into account my time frame and experience with conducting research, I did not have a feasible alternative to the process by which I generated my random sample. Considering the limitations and difficulties inquired by my study, the obtained results are worthwhile.

Possibilities for further study might include investigating any other avenues through which affiliation with certain groups whether in college or elsewhere, can positively affect one's life and well-being. In addition, the role of identity recognition to students is important to understanding their motivation for

success and should be looked at more precisely in other possible studies. Lastly, temperament or personality traits could be studied on one specific group to determine whether or not certain types of persons cluster together in the formation of the group.

References

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Table 1

Descriptive Statistics of Personal and Social Identity Inventories

Personal Identity				
Group	Mean	Std. Dev.	Variance	Coef. of Variation
Greek	25.77	3.00	9.00	.1164
Service	25.44	2.97	8.85	.1169
Indep.	25.5	3.01	9.01	.1182

Anova Summary

Source	Sum Sqres	Df	Mean Sqres	F-Ratio	Prob
Between Grps	1.14	2	.5740	.0639	.9382
Within Grps	448.06	51	8.98		
Total	459.20	53			

Social Identity

Group	Mean	Std. Dev.	Variance	Coef. of Variation
Greek	20.66	2.61	6.82	.1264
Service	19.16	2.92	8.5	.1521
Indep.	17.94	4.48	20.06	.2496

Anova Summary

Source	Sum Sqres	Df	Mean Sqres	F-Ratio	Prob.
Between Grps.	66.93	2	33.46	2.8375	.0678
Within Grps.	601.44	51	11.79		
Total	668.37	53			

Figure Captions

Figure 1. Means and Standard Deviations of Greek members, service members, and independents on levels of total wellness.

Figure 2. Means and Standard Deviations of Greek members, service members, and independents on levels of social wellness.

Figure 3. Means and Standard Deviations of Greek members, service members, and independents on levels of spiritual wellness.

Figure 4. Means and Standard Deviations of Greek members, service members, and independents on levels of environmental wellness.

Total Wellness

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

MEANS & STD DEVS

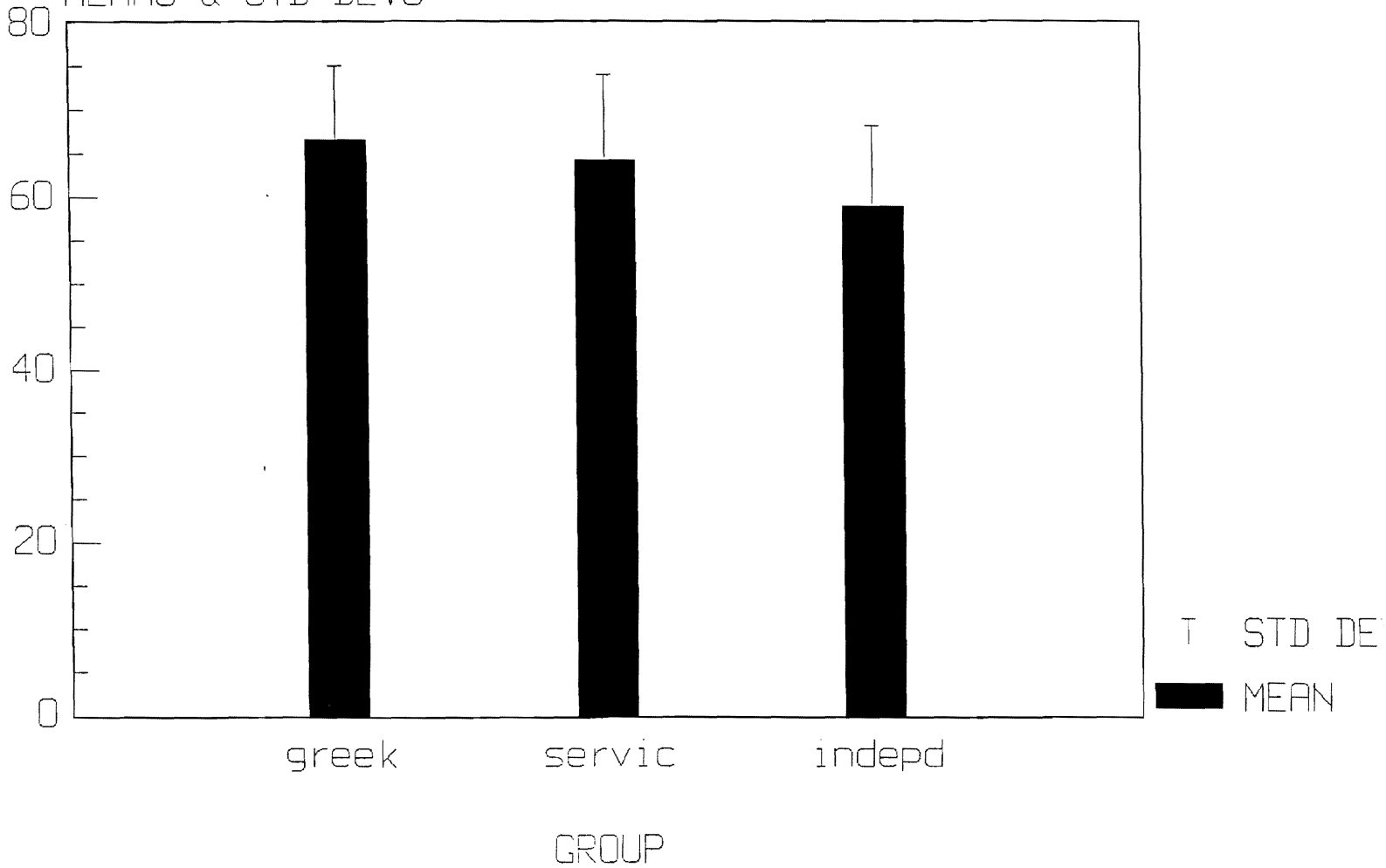
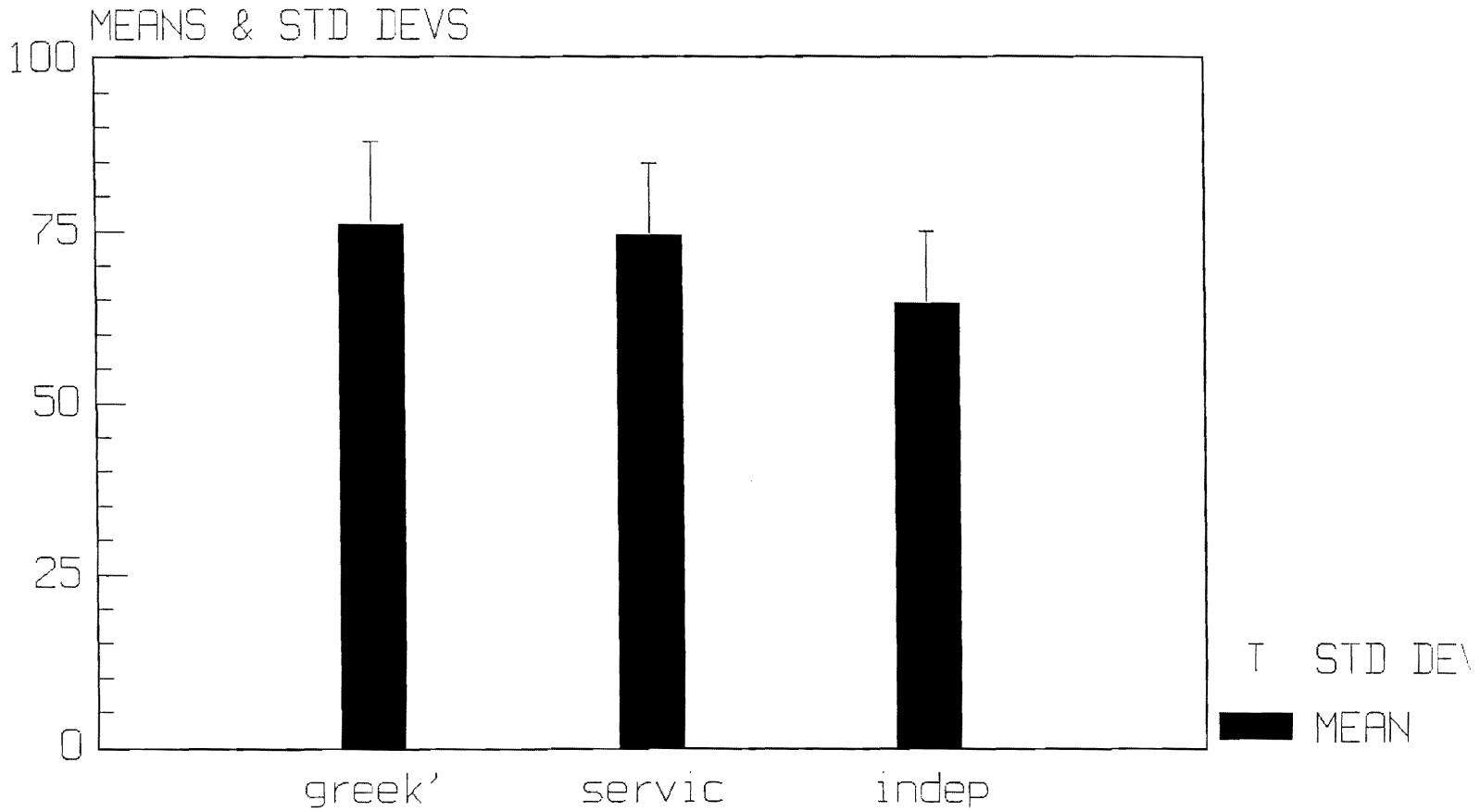


Figure #1

Social Wellness
COMPARISON OF ANOVA CELL MEANS
F = 5.9112, P = .0049



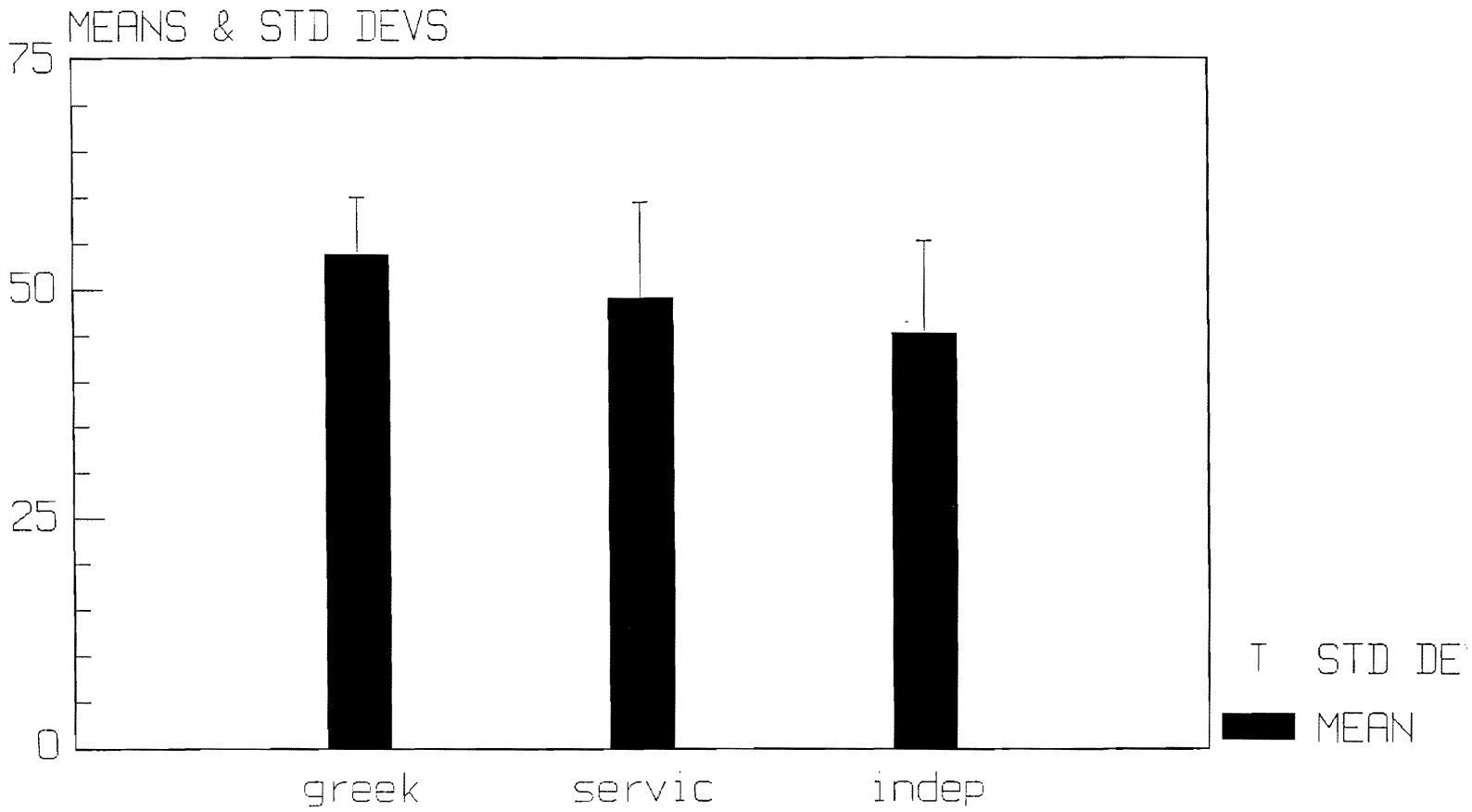
ONE-WAY ANOVA SAMPLES

Figure #2

Spiritual Wellness

COMPARISON OF ANOVA CELL MEANS

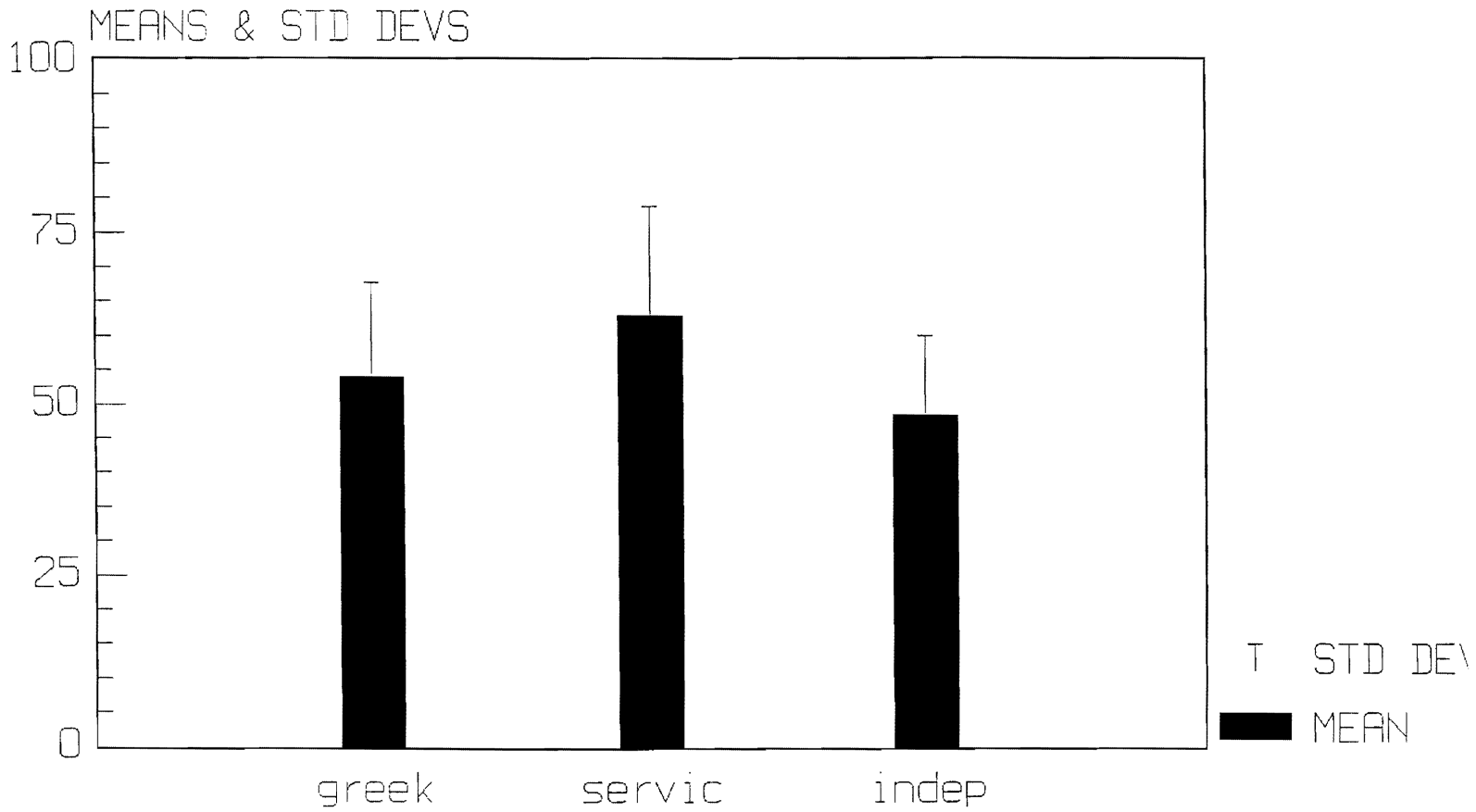
$F = 3.957, P = .0253$



ONE-WAY ANOVA SAMPLES

Figure #3

Environmental Wellness
COMPARISON OF ANOVA CELL MEANS
F = 5.052, P = .01



ONE-WAY ANOVA SAMPLES

Figure #4