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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by William Foster Hayes Jr. entitled "Systematic Human Relations Training and Resident Assistant Effectiveness." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in College Student Personnel.

Eugene Schoch, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Robert B. Walker, John W. Edgerly

Accepted for the Council:

Dixie L. Thompson

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

August 8, 1973

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by William Foster Hayes, Jr., entitled "Systematic Human Relations Training and Resident Assistant Effectiveness." I recommend that it be accepted for nine quarter hours of credit in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in College Student Personnel.

Eugene W. Schoch

Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:

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Graduate Studies and Research

47

SYSTEMATIC HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING AND
RESIDENT ASSISTANT EFFECTIVENESS

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Council of
The University of Tennessee

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science

by
William Foster Hayes, Jr.

August 1973

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ABSTRACT

Systematic human relations training has been shown to be an effective method for training both lay and professional counselors. However, its usefulness for resident assistants in a residence hall setting has been sparsely documented.

The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to reaffirm existing evidence that a systematic human relations training program can make a group of resident assistants more effective helpers and (2) to determine whether this change in effectiveness can be detected in the immediate environment of the resident assistant, that being his residents and supervisor. In order to establish the first objective, resident assistants who received the training were asked to respond to client stimuli expressions. These responses were rated and compared to responses of resident assistants who did not undergo training. In pursuance of the second objective, evaluations presently being used in a residence hall system were administered before and after training. These were compared for the two groups. In addition, the frequency and duration of resident assistants' contacts with residents were analyzed during the course of the training.

The subjects in this study were two groups of seven resident assistants that were selected from four residence halls. The experimental and control groups were matched according to number, sex, and residence hall.

The data supported existing evidence that systematic human relations training can significantly improve the level of functioning of a resident assistant as a helper. However, no significant transfer of this improvement into the resident assistant's environment was suggested by resident assistant evaluations or by contact frequency and duration data.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The importance of the resident assistant in the modern college residence hall and the influence he has on the resident's personal learning and living situation has become increasingly apparent. There has been considerable evidence that paraprofessionals can be effective in areas ranging from academic advising (Zunker and Brown, 1966) to providing facilitative conditions for personal growth (Truax and Carkhuff, 1967). It is felt by many people that resident assistants play an important part in creating maximum growth situations for college students. They are no longer viewed as policeman who enforce regulations, but rather as facilitators who can and should provide an environment which encourages students to take responsibility for themselves (Nickerson and Harrington, 1970; Powell, Plyler, Dickson and McClellan, 1969). Thus a major function of the resident assistant is his role as counselor and helper. The concern of the administrator is to determine how effective the resident assistant is in this role. A second concern of the administrator is to improve upon a given level of effectiveness.

The staff in the residence hall system at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville employs several evaluation tools to measure the effectiveness of the resident assistant. These measuring devices generally tap two areas of the many resident assistant functions. The first is administrative and attempts to answer the questions: (1) How well does the resident assistant perform the described duties and

responsibilities of the position? and (2) How well does he live up to the expectations of his superiors? The second is the resident's point of view and seeks to investigate how friendly and likable the resident assistant is and how easy he makes life for his residents. These two measurements are valuable, but there is a marked absence of any measure of the resident assistant's counseling or helping relationship ability.

The combination of (1) the recognition of the importance of the counseling/helping role of the resident assistant and (2) the absence of any tool used to measure the existence of counseling or the helping effectiveness of the resident assistant in this role is the impetus for this study.

Systematic human relations training has been demonstrated repeatedly to be an effective method for training both lay and professional counselors (Carkhuff, 1969, 1971). According to Carkhuff, this approach emphasizes didactic and experiential training in responding to another person's experience. The process begins with the simplest forms of responsiveness and progresses to complex communication involving both responsive and initiative behaviors. An important emphasis is repeated practice in the behavior that is to be effected. This provides both tangible skills and valuable experience which typically generate self-confidence following the training.

The first hypothesis of this study relates to the measured change or lack of change in two groups of resident assistants, one which received systematic human relations training and one which did not. The purpose here is merely to replicate other studies which have demonstrated that systematic human relations training improved effectiveness as a

helper. This will be determined by accurate empathy ratings of the resident assistant's taped responses to client stimuli expressions both before and after the training. Proceeding on the assumption that we would be successful in this first step, our major purpose is to investigate whether or not this change will then generalize into, and be recognized by, the resident assistant's immediate environment, that being his floor of residents and his supervisor. Measuring tools will be employed which provide evaluations of the resident assistant's performance by the resident assistant's supervisor, by the resident assistant himself, and by residents on the resident assistant's floor. There will also be an attempt to detect any changes in the frequency and duration of the resident assistant's contacts with the residents on his floor through logs of contacts which the resident assistants will keep throughout the training. Here lies the main crux of the study: Given the fact that the resident assistant can become a better helper as the result of systematic human relations training (which we must also demonstrate), will this change generalize into his environment and thus produce a more effective resident assistant.

I. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to reaffirm the theory that a systematic human relations training program can make a group of resident assistants more effective helpers and (2) to determine whether or not this change of effectiveness can be detected in the immediate environment of the resident assistant via evaluations by residents, the resident assistants themselves, and supervisors, and by any

change in the frequency or duration of contacts with residents.

II. Hypotheses

1. There will be no significant differences between a group of resident assistants who receive a systematic human relations training program and a group of resident assistants who do not receive the systematic training.

2. There will be no significant differences between the experimental and control groups on evaluations by residents, by the resident assistants themselves, and by their supervisors.

III. Importance of the Study

The importance of this study lies in the need for the recognition of, the measurement and evaluation of, and the training for the resident assistant's role as a counselor/helper. Resident assistants at The University of Tennessee at Knoxville are evaluated on two different dimensions which give little attention to the resident assistant's responsibility and performance as a counselor. In addition, there is little formal training for the new resident assistant to make him effective in this role.

The importance of the counseling role should be recognized, and provisions should be made for training and evaluation relative to this role.

The author is hopeful that this study will demonstrate an effective method of training, and a beginning point for the evaluation

of the effectiveness of this training and its carry-over into the resident assistant's performance.

IV. Definition of Terms

Resident Assistant. A resident assistant is an employee of The University of Tennessee charged with the general supervision of a floor of 35 to 50 residents in a University Residence Hall.

Head Resident. A head resident is a University of Tennessee employee who is charged with the general operation of a residence hall and is the immediate supervisor of a staff of resident assistants.

Supervisor. This term is used interchangeably with the term head resident.

Systematic Training Program. A systematic training program, as used in this study, is a structured program of learning exercises formulated to increase the effectiveness of resident assistants in that capacity.

Systematic Human Relations Training. A specific program of training developed by Carkhuff (1969).

V. Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to the Knoxville campus of The University of Tennessee. The sample for the study was limited to resident assistants in four University of Tennessee residence halls.

The two evaluation tools utilized were developed by the residence hall system at The University of Tennessee. No reliability or validity has been established.

VI. Research Design

The sample in this study consisted of two groups of seven resident assistants, one serving as an experimental group and the other as a control group. The experimental group received systematic human relations training and the control group did not. The two groups were rated on their taped responses to client stimuli expressions both before and after the training. The significance of change in the level of response was determined through the use of two t-tests. The .05 level of confidence was selected for determining the significance of t-ratios.

Evaluations of the resident assistants by the residents on their floor, by their head residents, and by the resident assistants themselves were administered to all fourteen resident assistants before and after the training. This was an attempt to tap any transfer of their training to their immediate environment. With a similar pretest-posttest control group design, gain scores were computed and the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was applied to check for significant differences. This was done for individual items to provide an item analysis, and also for the evaluations as a whole. The .05 level of significance was again chosen to determine significant differences.

The analysis of the resident assistants' contact logs was to be only descriptive. An attempt was made to discern any differences in frequency and duration of contacts during the course of the training.

VII. Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters with a bibliography and appendix.

Chapter I includes the introduction, the purpose of the study, the hypotheses, the importance of the study, the definition of terms, the limitations of the study, the research design, and the organization of the study.

Chapter II deals with the related literature and research.

Chapter III describes the population and sample, instrumentation, procedures, and treatment of the data.

Chapter IV presents a summary and discussion of the data, after statistical analysis.

Chapter V presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There is a fair amount of literature which indirectly eludes to or directly supports the importance of the counseling role of the resident assistant. In a 1966 survey, Brown and Zunker found that resident assistants were involved in counseling functions in 40 per cent of their sample of American colleges. Indications are that this figure has increased over the last seven years. In a 1970 survey involving approximately 300 small private colleges, Dixon reports that counseling is one of the most frequently mentioned responsibilities of the resident assistant. This point has been relatively unchallenged though some argue its secondary relative importance to other resident assistant responsibilities. In contrast, Dixon discovered that only some of the schools he surveyed had continuing courses in counseling. Also, in a study by Hoyt and Davidson (1967), it was shown that residence hall counselors or advisors are usually relatively untrained upperclassmen or graduate students who are charged with a wide range of responsibilities.

Emphasizing the role of the resident assistant on the college campus, Rand and Carew (1970) estimated that residence halls, along with peer groups, are responsible for stimulating and facilitating from three to five times as much of the college student's learning as are the student's classes. If the role of the resident assistant in this scheme has such a large amount of potential, then what characteristics or qualities in a resident assistant make him effective in his position?

Schroeder and Dowse (1968) determined that the kind of person the hall counselor should be is ". . . a person who is able to respect the other person and who is sensitive to the feelings of others." Powell and Tyler (1969) reached the conclusion that the three basic areas which are seen as necessary in the repertoire of the residence hall counselor are sensitivity, empathy, and genuineness. There is a consistent theme here which seems to be that resident assistants are expected to be sensitive to the feelings of their residents and to be able to accurately empathize with them.

A corollary which goes along with this is that the resident assistant must come across as being genuine in these two regards. There is evidence to show that these qualities do generate desired performance in resident assistants. Wyrick and Mitchell (1971) found that female resident assistants who communicate at higher levels of accurate empathy were evaluated more favorably by their residents than were resident assistants who were rated lower on this dimension. Shapiro, Krauss, and Truax (1969) and Lewis and Krauss (1971) determined that empathy, genuineness, and warmth mediate the quality of interpersonal disclosure. Individuals reveal more of importance about themselves to those who they perceive to have more of those qualities than those who they perceive to have less.

Given the assumption that these qualities are desired in resident assistants and that they corollate with positive performance, can systematic human relations training be helpful? The effectiveness of Carkhuff's systematic human relations training has been well documented for lay counselors as well as professional counselors (Carkhuff, 1969,

1971). Further, in programs varying in length from 16 to 100 hours, undergraduate and graduate students have been brought to a level of functioning comparable to professional counselors. According to Carkhuff (1971), this approach includes experiential training in the

. . . responsive conditions (responding to another person's experience) such as empathic understanding, respect, and specificity of expression; and initiative dimensions (initiating from one's own experiences) such as genuineness, confrontation, and interpretation of immediacy. . . . (p. 65)

Thus it appears that Carkhuff's program trains individuals in developing those qualities and skills which are desirable in resident assistants. Schroeder, Hill, Gormally, and Anthony (1973) demonstrated that systematic human relations training for resident assistants has a significant positive effect on their helping skills as evidenced by their performance on both written and taped data. This a good beginning point, and this is exactly what this study, in part, attempts to replicate. However, the next logical step appears to be the investigation of whether or not this increase in skills and effectiveness transfers into the resident assistant's environment. How can this be measured? It is the objective of this study to determine whether or not this transfer can be detected in the evaluations of resident assistants in a residence hall.

In searching the literature for evidences of training programs in use at colleges and universities, the author discovered only one such case. Nair and Sonders (1969) discuss a unique program for the selection and training of male residence hall advisors in effect at Lycoming College, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, based on role-playing of everyday problems of a resident assistant. Their residence halls operate on a counselor-centered philosophy. During the selection

process, evaluators look for, among other things, recognition of understanding of the problem and counseling insight. The chosen resident assistant then goes through intensive training before starting work in the Fall. It is the author's contention that this approach is a step in the right direction. Residence hall systems should recognize this role of the resident assistant and should incorporate an appropriate emphasis into their selection process and training program.

I. Summary

The importance of the counseling role of the resident assistant is well documented. However, almost equally in evidence is the paucity of counseling training programs and courses for resident assistants. The traits which determine the effectiveness of a resident assistant in this role appear to be sensitivity, empathy, and genuineness. The development of these traits is clearly the objective of Carkhuff's systematic human relations training. The success of this training regarding improvement of helping skills for resident assistants has also been demonstrated. Assuming that this improvement can be achieved consistently with Carkhuff's training, does this increase in effectiveness transfer into the resident assistant's environment. This study attempts to answer this question by means of evaluations presently in use in a residence hall system. One example of a unique selection and training program was cited at Lycoming College. Resident assistants are chosen on their performance in role-playing everyday problems of a resident assistant. Following selection, they undergo intensive training before beginning work.

CHAPTER III

THE DESIGN AND PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

I. Population and Sample

The sample for this study was two groups of seven resident assistants who were selected from the staffs of the four residence halls making up the Presidential Complex of The University of Tennessee at Knoxville. The initial selection was made from the population of resident assistants with junior or sophomore status. Subsequent to that selection, vacancies were chosen from the population of resident assistants with senior status. The result was 12 resident assistants with junior status, 1 with sophomore status, and 1 with senior status. Selection was also intentionally made to form two groups which were balanced and matched according to sex. Originally, each group consisted of four male and four female resident assistants. However, prior to the first training session, one male dropped out of each group, leaving each group with three males and four females. In addition to sex, the two groups were matched according to the residence hall they worked in. Each group contained two males from Reese Hall, one male from Carrick Hall North, two females from Carrick Hall South, and two females from Humes Hall.

There was no attempt to randomly sample subjects from the populations. Individuals were chosen on a voluntary basis. The two main criteria were interest and availability of time to participate in

the study. Academic credit was offered as motivation for participation.

II. Instrumentation

The instrument used to rate the responses of the resident assistants to taped client expressions was an accurate empathy scale developed by Carkhuff (1969). For a detailed description of the rating scale, this reference should be consulted.

The two evaluation forms used in this study are forms developed and used by the residence hall system of The University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

The first form is labeled Resident Assistant Evaluation and consists of two forms, one labeled Form M for males and one labeled Form F for females. The male form has 29 items and the female form has 30 items. The forms were developed from student input seeking those qualities which students preferred in a resident assistant. The rating scale is a five point scale ranging from "Totally Unsatisfactory" to "Outstanding" performance. A copy of each of these forms is contained in the Appendix of this study. The rating scale is presented in detail at the beginning of the form.

The second form is labeled Resident Assistant Evaluation Form. It was developed from the standpoint of (1) responsibilities listed in the position description and (2) supervisor expectations, and it attempts to be comprehensive in this regard. The rating scale is again a five point scale ranging from "Unsatisfactory" to "Outstanding" performance. The purpose of this form is to provide three different

evaluations according to the following process. There are three columns of spaces on the form labeled SELF, STAFF, and JOINT, respectively. Initially, the resident assistant receives the blank form and completes an evaluation of himself using the column labeled SELF. He then submits the form to his head resident who evaluates the resident assistant using the column labeled STAFF. The resident assistant then arranges a meeting with his head resident during which they discuss the two evaluations and arrive at a mutually agreeable third evaluation. These ratings are listed in the column labeled JOINT. This third evaluation completes the form. A copy of this form is contained in the Appendix of this study. The rating scale is explained in detail at the beginning of the form.

A third instrument was developed for the purpose of use in this study. It was labeled the Resident Assistant Contact Log and was created and used in order to gather data regarding the frequency and duration of contacts the resident assistants had with their residents. A copy of one page of this log is contained in the Appendix of this study. Instructions, listed on the instruction sheet, for use of the log are the following. The log is divided into seven columns. In the first three columns, labeled "Resident," "Date," and "Time," supply the name of the resident and the date and time of the contact. In the fourth column labeled "Nature of the Situation," record briefly what the contact was all about. In column five labeled "Time Spent," estimate the duration of the contact. In column six labeled "Assessment," record a personal perception of the quality of help given to the resident. Quality was indicated by means of the following numerical

scale: "1" meaning very little help, "2" meaning some help, or "3" meaning a lot of help. In column seven, labeled "Indication of Effectiveness," explain any evidence of the effectiveness of the assistance. The log is to be kept daily as completely as possible.

III. Procedures

Following the selection of subjects and their organization into experimental and control groups, all fourteen subjects were evaluated via the Resident Assistant Evaluation (Form M of Form F according to sex) and the Resident Assistant Evaluation Form. Both forms were supplied directly to the resident assistants. Instructions were (1) to distribute the Resident Assistant Evaluations to their residents and have them returned to them by a specified date and (2) to complete the first evaluation on the Resident Assistant Evaluation Form, submit it to their head resident so that he could complete the second evaluation, and to arrange an appointment with the head resident during which they would complete the third evaluation. At the specified times, the Resident Assistant Evaluations were collected from the resident assistants and the Resident Assistant Evaluation Forms were collected from the head residents.

After completion of these evaluations, each subject was asked to respond to seven different client stimuli expressions. These expressions were presentations of problems normally encountered by a resident assistant. The subjects were individually presented with these taped expressions. Their responses were taped and later rated on an accurate empathy scale by three experienced raters, who were

systematically trained by Carkhuff and his associates. Interrater reliability was computed.

The actual training was begun after these evaluations were completed and the responses gathered. The training was administered by Dr. Robert B. Walker, Professional Counselor at the Student Counseling Center of The University of Tennessee at Knoxville. It consisted of twenty hours of training over an eight-week duration. The experimental group met six times during this period averaging a little over three hours per session. The content and organization of material is presented in Carkhuff's The Art of Helping. This book was used as the text for the training.

Following completion of the training, the measuring tools were again administered. All fourteen subjects were evaluated via the Resident Assistant Evaluation and the Resident Assistant Evaluation Form in the same manner as the pre-evaluations. Similarly, the fourteen subjects were again asked to respond to the same seven client stimuli expressions. These responses were again rated by the three raters and interrater reliability was computed.

Prior to the commencement of the training, each subject was supplied with twenty blank pages of the Resident Assistant Contact Log and an instruction sheet. The instructions were also explained verbally and the importance of conscientious record keeping was stressed. The logs were collected after termination of the training. The duration of the log was eight and one-half weeks.

IV. Treatment of Data

Individual code numbers were assigned to each subject to insure anonymity. Code numbers and raw data were placed on computer layout sheets. Cards were punched and submitted for analysis on the IBM 7040 Computer at The University of Tennessee Computer Center.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

For each subject, the ratings of their responses to client stimuli expressions were averaged across two dimensions: (1) the seven client expressions and (2) the three raters. In this manner, a pre-training mean and a post-training were computed for each subject. Pre-training and post-training group means were then computed for the experimental group and the control group. These means are presented in Table 1. Prior to the training, the control group was functioning at a slightly higher level than the experimental group. However, after the training, the control group had dropped a little whereas the experimental group had increased markedly.

TABLE 1

TABLE OF MEANS FOR RATINGS OF RESPONSES
TO CLIENT STIMULI EXPRESSIONS

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP			CONTROL GROUP		
Subjects	Pre	Post	Subjects	Pre	Post
s ₁	1.71	3.00	s ₈	2.00	2.02
s ₂	1.86	2.90	s ₉	2.10	1.93
s ₃	1.90	2.98	s ₁₀	2.00	1.95
s ₄	2.00	2.90	s ₁₁	1.93	1.90
s ₅	1.81	2.67	s ₁₂	1.97	1.90
s ₆	1.93	2.67	s ₁₃	1.97	1.86
s ₇	<u>2.02</u>	<u>3.02</u>	s ₁₄	<u>1.95</u>	<u>2.00</u>
\bar{s}_e	1.89	2.88	\bar{s}_c	1.99	1.94

Interrater reliability was computed for these ratings using an intraclass reliability correlation coefficient (Ebel, 1951). The result was an interrater reliability of .91. This demonstrates a very high degree of correlation among the raters.

The group means were then analyzed by means of a t-test (Champion, 1970). The pre-training mean and post-training mean were compared for each group. The results are presented in Table 2. While the .05 significance level was selected to determine significant differences, the experimental group was found to have improved significantly at the .0005 level. The control group decrease was not significant.

TABLE 2
t-TEST ANALYSIS OF RATINGS OF RESPONSES TO CLIENT
STIMULI EXPRESSIONS

Group	\bar{x} pre-level	\bar{x} post-level	t
Experimental	1.89	2.88	14.14*
Control	1.99	1.94	.08

*p < .0005.

This analysis confirms the expectations of the author relative to the first hypothesis. The t-test reveals a significant improvement for the experimental group. There was no improvement for the control group. This reaffirms the theory that systematic human relations training is an effective tool for raising the level of functioning of a resident assistant on an accurate empathy scale.

The first step in the analysis of the evaluations of the resident assistants was to examine each evaluation form item by item. This item analysis would separate the items which were discriminatory with respect to the change in resident assistant helpfulness from those which were not discriminatory. Group means were computed for the experimental group and the control group on each item. The pre-training means were subtracted from the post-training means to obtain gain scores. These gain scores were compared using the Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance. Significance was determined at the .05 level of confidence. Results showed no significant differences for all items of the four evaluations.

Means were computed across all items of each evaluation form to provide gross scores for each evaluation. Comparisons were made using the Kruskal-Wallis one way analysis of variance and the results are reported in Table 3. There were no significant differences between the pre-training evaluation scores and the post-training scores at the .05 level of significance. This was true for all four evaluations.

TABLE 3

SUMMARY OF KRUSKAL-WALLIS ANALYSIS FOR FOUR RESIDENT ASSISTANT EVALUATIONS

Evaluation	H-value
Resident Assistant Evaluation	2.12 NS
Resident Assistant Evaluation Form (SELF)	1.21 NS
Resident Assistant Evaluation Form (STAFF)	0.79 NS
Resident Assistant Evaluation Form (JOINT)	0.87 NS

The Resident Assistant Contact Logs were analyzed in the following manner. The contacts were divided into five categories according to duration. The category divisions were as follows: category 1--0 to 5 minutes, category 2--6 to 15 minutes, category 3--16 to 30 minutes, category 4--31 to 45 minutes, category 5--over 45 minutes. Frequency counts were tabulated for each week of training for each subject. Thus, there were five frequencies per subject per week. The total number of contacts in any given week could be computed by adding the five category frequencies for that week. The frequency counts covered the eight weeks of training.

These frequencies were analyzed to discover any changes during the course of the training. Difficulty was encountered in establishing any consistent change. The weekly contact frequencies were sporadic for subjects in both the experimental and control groups. There was a great deal of variation between subjects in both groups. Problems were also encountered relative to missing data. The result of this analysis was that no significant or consistent changes could be detected in the data during the course of the training.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. Summary

Emphasis on the resident assistant's role as a counselor has been increasingly the focus of research in the area of residence halls. Institutions are recognizing not only the vast potential which lies with the resident assistant relative to the college student's learning experiences, but they are also realizing the great impact the resident assistant is presently having. This realization will hopefully cause administrators to examine their selection process, their training program, and their evaluation procedures to insure that an appropriate emphasis is placed on this function of the resident assistant.

This study was an attempt to point out a method of training which could be useful in both the selection process and the training program of a residence hall system. This study also attempted to determine whether improvement in a resident assistant as a helper could be detected in the evaluations being used in a residence hall system. Finally, an attempt was made to detect any changes in the frequency or duration of contacts with residents as a result of improvement as helpers. This was done through the use of logs kept by the resident assistants.

More specifically, Carkhuff's systematic human relations training was administered to a group of resident assistants. Following the training, this group was compared to a group which did not have the training and was found to be functioning at a significantly higher level

as helpers. Two evaluations presently being used in the residence hall system were administered to the two groups before and after the training. No significant differences were found between the groups on the scores of these evaluations. Relative to the resident contact data collected in the resident assistant logs, several problems were encountered in the analysis. No significant trends or consistencies could be discovered in frequency or duration of contacts during the course of the training.

These results raise a logical question: Given the assumption that a residence hall system realizes the importance of and places value on the counseling role of the resident assistant, and given the assumption that a significant improvement as helpers has been effected in a group of resident assistants, then if this change cannot be detected in the evaluation tools utilized by the residence hall system, either the measuring tools are not measuring the performance of the resident assistant in this role, or the implication is that the first assumption is invalid. That is, if the performance of the resident assistant in the counseling role is purposely not being evaluated, then its relative importance as a function of the resident assistant is not very great. In the case of the residence hall system studied here, it is the author's opinion that the inconsistency lies in the measuring tools. They require further development and analysis in order to establish their validity regarding the measurement of the resident assistant's performance in the counseling role.

This study was limited to the Knoxville campus of The University of Tennessee. The sample for the study was limited to the staffs of

four residence halls in The University of Tennessee residence hall system.

There were two hypotheses in this study:

1. There will be no significant differences between a group of resident assistants who receive a systematic human relations training program and a group of resident assistants who do not receive the systematic training.

2. There will be no significant differences between the experimental and control groups on evaluations by residents, by the resident assistants themselves, and by their supervisors.

II. Conclusions

On the basis of ratings of taped responses to client stimuli expressions, the first hypothesis was rejected. This research supports other evidence found in the literature which confirms the value of systematic human relations training as a method of improving the level of functioning of a resident assistant as a helper.

On the basis of the scores on the two evaluation forms used, the second hypothesis was accepted. No significant differences between the two groups were found. In attempting to explain why no differences were found, the author arrived at three possible explanations.

The first has to do with the rating scale used on the evaluations. The rating scale is apparently not a competent discriminator for the items being evaluated. A vast majority of the data collected fell into a very small range at the upper end of the scale. This made it difficult to discern pre-training and post-training differences.

The second explanation relates to the time element involved for the transfer of learning to occur. The post-training evaluations were administered immediately following the termination of the training. The nature of systematic human relations training makes it somewhat anxiety producing for the trainees due to the amount of personal disclosure involved. The training itself is anxiety producing and transferring this training to one's environment is even more anxiety producing. This factor causes a time delay in the transfer of the training to one's environment. It is then conceivable that not enough time was allowed for this transfer to take place.

The final possible explanation for the lack of significant differences examines the evaluations as measuring tools. The logical question to raise is: Are the evaluations measuring what they are supposed to be? That is, are they measuring the performance of the resident assistants in the counseling role? It is the author's opinion that here lies a good deal of the problem. In characterizing these two evaluations in the Introduction, it was noted that an emphasis on the counseling role of the resident assistant was lacking. The implication is that the evaluations were not measuring what was attempted to be measured.

In seeking an explanation for the lack of success of the Resident Assistant Contact Log, two major possibilities were considered. The most frequent criticism on the part of the resident assistants was that it was too time consuming to conscientiously keep a daily log of all contacts. This resulted in incomplete and missing data. This might be remedied by developing a log in which entries were, as

completely as possible, numerical. An example would be the numerical scale used in column six of the Resident Assistant Contact Log. This system decreased the amount of time spent by the resident assistant in recording contacts in the log. This concept should be broadened to include most, if not all, of the desired information in the log.

A second consideration was the appropriateness of frequency and duration data for measuring the kind of change we had effected. This type of change would probably be more accurately reflected in the actual content of the contacts, rather than the number or length of contacts.

The results of this study support existing evidence that systematic human relations training can be a useful method of improving the helping skills of resident assistants. Results also showed that an improvement in the level of functioning of resident assistants was not reflected in the evaluations used by the resident hall system. Data collected regarding frequency and duration of contacts was inconclusive in detecting this improvement.

III. Recommendations

The major need recognized by this study is the development of a measuring tool which would evaluate the resident assistant in terms of his performance as a counselor and helper. If this role is viewed as an important function of the resident assistant, then this need must be satisfied. The performance level of any function cannot be determined without the proper measuring device. The author recommends the development of such an instrument, and then research regarding its application and success.

This study also points out the need to redefine the roles and responsibilities of the resident assistant, to include his role as a helper. Once this definition has been made clear, the training programs and measuring devices should be formulated according to the definition.

Recommendations for other areas of research generated by this study are the following:

1. How is the counselor role of the resident assistant affected by his "policeman" responsibilities?
2. Would systematic human relations training be a useful screening device for the selection of resident assistants?
3. Is systematic human relations training a valuable instaff training method for resident assistants?
4. Are the residents' perceptions of a resident assistant altered subsequent to his undergoing systematic human relations training?

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APPENDIX

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENCE HALLS
RESIDENT ASSISTANT EVALUATION FORM

These statements deal with various aspects of the Resident Assistant's responsibilities. Please respond to each statement using the following numerical rating scale and whenever appropriate please comment.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 5 = Outstanding | RA achieves exceptional levels of performance and does so consistently. |
| 4 = Good | RA surpasses acceptable standards, occasionally reaching outstanding levels of achievement. |
| 3 = Average | RA's performance meets job requirements. |
| 2 = Below average | RA has difficulty performing minimum job standards. |
| 1 = Unsatisfactory | RA's performance is well below minimum standards. |

After completing the self-evaluation, make an appointment with your Head Resident to jointly discuss the evaluation.

A) RESIDENT ASSISTANT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS.

	SELF	STAFF	JOINT
1. I know all the residents on my floor by name and something about each. Comment:	---	---	---
2. I actively encourage the academic progress of students on my floor. Comment:	---	---	---
3. I am on the floor and available enough that students are able to find me. Comment:	---	---	---
4. I have been able to refer those students who appear to need special guidance and I follow up each referral. Comment:	---	---	---

5. Students feel at ease to talk with me and ask questions.

SELF

STAFF

JOINT

Comment:

6. Students respect me.

Comment:

B) RESIDENT ASSISTANT'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE ENVIRONMENT.

1. I willingly assist floor and hall officers/representatives with projects.

Comment:

2. I understand and fulfill my responsibility to the University as a disciplinary agent.

Comment:

3. I encourage students to take advantage of the social, cultural and other extracurricular opportunities that the University offers.

Comment:

C) RESIDENT ASSISTANT'S PERSONAL APPRAISAL.

1. I am open minded, flexible and am willing to look at varying points of view.

Comment:

2. I adhere to rules and regulations.

Comment:

3. I make every effort to understand the entire situation before making a judgement. (I do not jump to conclusions.)

Comment:

4. I enjoy my work.

Comment:

	SELF	STAFF	JOINT
5. I maintain a positive attitude amidst adverse circumstances. Comment:	—	—	—
6. I have taken every opportunity to learn more about my position. Comment:	—	—	—
7. I am dependable and follow through on tasks. Comment:	—	—	—
8. I am aware of my personal strengths, limitations, and weaknesses. Comment:	—	—	—
9. I willingly receive suggestions, criticism, and constructive communications. Comments:	—	—	—
10. I attempt to develop new ideas, and I am creative. Comment:	—	—	—
11. I communicate honestly and effectively Comment:	—	—	—
12. I am tactful in my dealings with others. Comment:	—	—	—
13. I refrain from gossip, sarcasm, depreciation, or suspicion of others. Comment:	—	—	—
14. I respect the confidentiality of student's personal problems. Comment:	—	—	—

D) IMPORTANT DETAILS.

	SELF	STAFF	JOINT
1. I am prompt and conscientious in performance of my duties and responsibilities. Comment:	---	---	---
2. I dress in keeping with standards established in <u>The Last Word</u> and by my Head Resident while working in my desk and hall duties. Comment:	---	---	---
3. I know the Housekeeping Staff and the Maintenance Man. Comment:	---	---	---
4. I keep my resume cards up-to-date. Comment:	---	---	---
5. I can explain the rationale which lies behind given policies. Comment:	---	---	---
6. I have gotten to know people from various agencies: Counseling Center, Health Clinic, Student Affairs Administration Office Financial Aids, etc. Comment:	---	---	---
7. When I do not like a policy, I take constructive action to initiate change. Comment:	---	---	---

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENCE HALLS
RESIDENT ASSISTANT EVALUATION

FORM M

Your R.A. _____ Floor _____

Please rate your Resident Assistant on each of the following qualities using a numerical ranking of 1 to 5 as defined below:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 5 = Outstanding | This individual possesses exceptional competence and is <u>consistently outstanding</u> with regard to possessing or demonstrating this quality. |
| 4 = Good | Overall performance goes beyond acceptable standards and sometimes <u>achieves outstanding standards</u> of behavior and performance. |
| 3 = Average | Overall performance is adequate and meets minimum job requirements. |
| 2 = Below average | Overall the individual does not demonstrate or possess this quality enough to meet minimum standards. |
| 1 = Totally
Unsatisfactory | Overall performance is far below the minimum standards. |

My Resident Assistant:

- ___ 1. takes a personal interest in students on the floor.
Comment:
- ___ 2. takes a common sense approach toward hall living.
Comment
- ___ 3. is a person you can talk to and reason with.
Comment:
- ___ 4. is mature.
Comment:

___ 5. is consistent in disciplinary action and able to maintain control on the floor.

Comment:

___ 6. has the ability to counsel.

Comment:

___ 7. is respected.

Comment:

___ 8. is open-minded.

Comment:

___ 9. has knowledge of the University and academics.

Comment:

___ 10. is available when needed.

Comment:

___ 11. is sincere/concerned.

Comment:

___ 12. is emotionally stable.

Comment:

___ 13. is a friend but not a drill sargeant.

Comment:

___ 14. is a leader but not domineering.

Comment:

___ 15. is willing to participate in floor activities.

Comment:

___ 16. a readiness to confide as willing to be confided in.

Comment:

___ 17. is tactful.

Comment:

- ___18. has a good personality.
Comment:
- ___19. places student welfare above beauracracy--rules.
Comment:
- ___20. voices opinions of residents to Housing staff.
Comment:
- ___21. participates with guys in out-of-hall activities.
Comment:
- ___22. communicates--lets the residents know what is going on in the
hall.
Comment:
- ___23. is fair.
Comment:
- ___24. is open to constructive criticism and advice.
Comment:
- ___25. is dependable.
Comment:
- ___26. is honest--real.
Comment:
- ___27. attempts to develop floor unity.
Comment:
- ___28. maintains confidentiality.
Comment:
- ___29. does not abuse special staff privileges (i.e., visitation).
Comment:

(Revised 10/72)

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF RESIDENCE HALLS
RESIDENT ASSISTANT EVALUATION

FORM F

Your R.A. _____ Floor _____

Please rate your Resident Assistant on each of the following qualities using a numerical ranking of 1 to 5 as defined below:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 5 = Outstanding | This individual possesses exceptional competence and is <u>consistently outstanding</u> with regard to possessing or demonstration this quality. |
| 4 = Good | Overall performance goes beyond acceptable standards and sometimes <u>achieves outstanding standards</u> of behavior and performance. |
| 3 = Average | Overall performance is adequate and meets minimum job requirements. |
| 2 = Below average | Overall the individual does not demonstrate or possess this quality enough to meet minimum standards. |
| 1 = Totally
Unsatisfactory | Overall performance is far below the minimum standards. |

My Resident Assistant:

- ___ 1. is sincere; a real person.
Comment:
- ___ 2. is concerned about the residents on the floor.
Comment:
- ___ 3. acts like the other residents; she is not different because she is an RA.
Comment:

- ___ 4. makes an effort to know each resident.
Comment:
- ___ 5. enjoys being an R.A.
Comment:
- ___ 6. is responsible.
Comment:
- ___ 7. respects the privacy of others.
Comment:
- ___ 8. is able to refer students to places or people who can help them.
Comment:
- ___ 9. is friendly.
Comment:
- ___ 10. is a good counselor.
Comment:
- ___ 11. works to create a friendly atmosphere on the floor.
Comment:
- ___ 12. is enthusiastic.
Comment:
- ___ 13. is available when you need her.
Comment:
- ___ 14. communicates well to the residents about things going on in the hall.
Comment:
- ___ 15. respects the opinions of others.
Comment:

- ___16. is willing to sacrifice personal time to help others.
Comment:
- ___17. gets the paperwork done promptly (room/hall changes, your requests, etc.)
Comment:
- ___18. is consistent in disciplinary action.
Comment:
- ___19. has earned the respect of students on the floor.
Comment:
- ___20. expects the same of herself as of others.
Comment:
- ___21. tries to bring the students on her floor closer together.
Comment:
- ___22. is warm toward others.
Comment:
- ___23. is diplomatic.
Comment:
- ___24. is thoughtful.
Comment:
- ___25. supports floor officers and projects.
Comment:
- ___26. is imaginative and creative.
Comment:
- ___27. is a good follower as well as a leader.
Comment:
- ___28. does not abuse special staff privileges (i.e., visitation).
Comment:

(Revised 10/72)

VITA

William Foster Hayes, Jr., was born in New York City on October 28, 1949. He attended Garden City High School, Garden City, New York, for three years. He spent his senior year at Rich Central High School, Olympia Fields, Illinois, and graduated in May, 1967. The following September he entered DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana, and received his Bachelor of Arts degree with a double major in Mathematics and Economics in May, 1971.

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