

**SOCIAL SUPPORT, CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT,
AND THE ADJUSTMENT TO UNIVERSITY**

By

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THESIS

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Abstract

This thesis sought to assess the relationships between students' involvement in campus life and their adjustment to university. Additionally, the study examined some of the possible determinants of involvement in campus activities (i.e., living in residence, past involvement in school activities, and parental community involvement). Ninety-eight introductory psychology students completed a questionnaire containing measures of campus involvement, social support, residential status, students' past involvement in school activities and their parents' involvement in community organizations. Results indicated that students who were involved in campus organizations and activities were better adjusted to university social life. In addition, there was some evidence that the relationship between involvement in university activities and social adjustment was partially mediated by social support. While parental involvement in community organizations did not predict student involvement in university life, both residential status and past school involvement were significant predictors of campus involvement. Results are discussed in terms of their implications for the prevention of students dropping out of university.

Introduction

The purpose of the present study was to examine some of the possible determinants of university students' involvement in campus activities, and to assess the relationship between student involvement and adjustment to university life.

Some of the variables that were examined as predictors of involvement included place of residence, past school involvement, and parental community involvement.

This study also investigated the relationship between campus involvement and social support, and the possibility that social support acts as a mediating variable between involvement and adjustment.

Expectations about University Life

A considerable amount of research has focused on the transition students must make when they leave high school to enter university. Past research indicates that this transition can be considered a major life event and can be quite stressful for many students (Aneshensel & Gore, 1991; Compas, Wagner, Slavin & Vannatta, 1986; Cutrona, 1982; Jay & D'Augelli, 1991). This is especially true for students who must leave home to attend university. The stress is a result of the demands of a new social environment (Jay & D'Augelli, 1991), the false expectations students possess (Baker, McNeil, & Siryk, 1985; Berdie, 1968), and loss of a significant portion of the student's social support network (Berdie, 1968). Before entering university, students typically envision the life of a university student in a very positive light. Many anticipate happily, increased independence, meeting people and making new friends, new romantic relationships, and a more challenging academic

setting than they had been accustomed to in high school. They do experience these things to some extent; however, students often fail to anticipate some of the more negative experiences they are likely to encounter.

Along with their new found independence, students also experience the loss of familiar people and settings. When students leave home they often leave behind familiar, comfortable relationships with friends and family as they venture off into unknown territory. Where they may previously have felt stifled by the constant presence of their parents, contact is now limited to occasional phone calls and letters. Students who were once popular at their high school are now faces in the crowd; and without the security of their past social standing, it may be more difficult to make friends and develop new romantic relationships. Furthermore, the forging of new friendships occurs in an unfamiliar setting, in which they may not feel entirely comfortable (Cutrona, 1982). Finally, many students experience difficulty coping with the increased demands of university classes. On average, university classes tend to be much larger than those in high school. University students are fully responsible to attend classes on their own and to meet many deadlines set by professors who do not know each new student by name and may not even know them by the end of the term.

The reality students face when entering university can be very harsh for students who have had only romanticized notions of what university life would be like. This shift from positive expectations to negative experiences has been named the "freshman myth" (Berdie, 1968) or "matriculant myth" (Baker et. al., 1985).

Generally, this "myth" suggests that incoming freshmen have very naive and idealistic expectations of both the academic and non-academic aspects of university life.

It has been suggested in the past that this stereotype concerning university and university life originates from friends and family. Stern (1966) found that few of the students' peers or parents had ever attended post-secondary school; thus he suggested that it is probable that parents and peers idealize the notion of university and the idea of higher education and encourage their children to do the same. While a much higher proportion of present-day university students' parents would have attended university themselves, their recollections of university life may certainly be changed by the passage of time. Also, their desire to convey a positive message about higher education to their children may colour their descriptions of university life.

The movies (e.g., "Spring Break") and the media also tend to depict distorted views of university life, portraying university as a time of freedom and carefree fun. Consequently, new students arrive at university with romanticized views, only to find some amount of disillusionment and disappointment. It is unlikely that any university could have fulfilled the high expectations of most first-year students. This failure of the university lifestyle to meet one's expectations inevitably affects the adjustment of new students. Past research has indicated that students who fall victim to the freshman myth are more likely to perform poorly academically (Lauterbach & Vielhaber, 1966), are less likely to participate in campus activities or to seek

leadership positions on campus (Berdie, 1968) and are more likely to drop out before graduation (Berdie, 1968; Smith, 1991).

Stresses Experienced During University

The transition from high school to university appears to be one of the most difficult transitions students experience (Baumrind, 1991). Shaver, Furman and Burhmester (1985) suggest that it is more difficult than the transition from elementary to junior high school and from junior high to high school. It has been well established that the first year of university tends to be the most stressful time for university students (Cutrona, 1982; Fisher & Hood, 1987; Kashani & Priesmeyer, 1983; Levitz & Noel, 1989).

On average, first year students experience more problems than do older students. Fisher and Hood (1987) conducted a longitudinal study to investigate the effects of the transition to university in students living in residence and students living at home. They found that all students demonstrated an increase in psychological disturbances, such as depression, as well as increased absent-mindedness, over the period of the first two and a half months of university. Kashani and Priesmeyer (1983) found that in comparison with second, third, and fourth-year students, freshmen reported more difficulty concentrating on their academic work. Freshmen also reported more appetite disturbances, such as overeating and not eating enough.

Another common experience during this transition is loneliness. Cutrona's (1982) study of freshmen indicated that first-year students tend to be lonely at the

beginning of the school year. Shaver et al. (1985) conducted a longitudinal study on freshmen, demonstrating similar results. They measured loneliness at different intervals (fall, winter, and spring) over the academic year of 1980. They found that freshmen reported high levels of loneliness, particularly in the fall of their first year.

Cutrona (1982) and Shaver et al. (1985) both concluded that the majority of freshmen overcome their loneliness when new friendships have been established. Cutrona (1982) suggests, as does Astin (1975), that loneliness may be a factor contributing to high drop-out rates in post-secondary education.

In summary, students may experience many stresses as they make the transition from high school to university, particularly in their first year of university. Thus, it may be important to examine some of the possible determinants of these stresses and the student adjustment process.

Factors Influencing Adjustment

Research on factors that may be related to the quality of adjustment of students to university has been limited. However, one factor that is consistently referred to in the adjustment literature is social support. There is also evidence that involvement in campus activities is related to the quality of adjustment of students to university life. The following sections summarize the literature concerning the relationship of adjustment to university with social support and involvement in campus activities.

Social Support

Research on social support was first stimulated by Durkheim's (1897/1951) study of suicide over 85 years ago. Durkheim was concerned about a breakdown of

social integration when workers began moving to urban areas. He hypothesized that as social ties between one and one's family, church, and community in general were severed, this would produce a loss of support and would ultimately be detrimental to one's psychological well-being. He found that suicides were more prevalent among those with few social ties. Since Durkheim, many researchers have been involved in defining social support and investigating the relationship between social support and adjustment.

Research on social support and major life events increased dramatically in the nineteen-seventies. Interest in the area was prompted by research conducted by Cassel (1974) suggesting that interpersonal relationships are important in promoting one's physical and psychological health. Caplan (1974) characterized social support as consisting of significant others who: a) help people to deal with emotional problems; b) share people's tasks; and c) provide them with money, materials, tools, skills, information, and advice in order to help them deal effectively with stressful situations. The "buffering hypothesis" emerged during this time, suggesting that large amounts of satisfying social support protect one from the development of symptoms of physical and psychological disorders due to stressful life events (Cohen & Hoberman, 1983).

Cohen & Hoberman (1983) defined social support in terms of the various resources (e.g., money, information, skills) provided by one's interpersonal ties. To further grasp the concept of social support, one may consider the term social support network. One's social support network consists of all those persons from

whom one receives support; this network may consist of family, friends, teachers or virtually anyone who offers support to the person in some way. A network can be characterized by such things as size, reliability, proximity, and intimacy (Gottlieb, 1981).

Research has supported the notion that a relationship exists between support and one's general well-being (physical and psychological); that is, the greater one's social support, the better one's general well-being. Jay and D'Augelli (1991) conducted a study on social support and adjustment to university life, comparing African-American and white freshmen. They discovered that social support was positively associated with the psychological (e.g., energy level, satisfaction, mood) and physical (e.g., health) well-being of both African-American and white freshmen. Compas et al. (1986) studied older adolescents, averaging 18 years of age, who were leaving home and entering a university dormitory, and suggested that poor support was linked to symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and somatic problems. Whatley and Clopton (1992) found that college students with higher levels of social support were less likely to have suicidal thoughts than those students with little support.

Based on the assumption that a relationship exists between support and well-being, it may be that there is also a relationship between support and adjustment to major life changes. Gottlieb (1981) found evidence supporting this notion in a study conducted on the role of social support in the adjustment of adolescent girls to pregnancy. He found that the receipt of satisfying support is associated with the

positive adjustment of these adolescents. Gottlieb (1981) also found similar results when he studied the adjustment process of women after a divorce.

The literature on adjustment to university is consistent with these conclusions. Riggio, Watring, and Throckmorton (1993) found that satisfaction with social support was linked to a variety of college student adjustment measures. Support was linked to decreased feelings of loneliness, increased self-esteem and greater satisfaction with college and life in general. Hays and Oxley (1986) conducted a longitudinal study of the development of social support networks among first-year students. They found that the greater the number of fellow university students in one's social network, the better students adjusted to the university lifestyle.

In summary, studies have consistently demonstrated that there exists a link between social support and adjustment to major life changes. More specifically, it has been suggested that there is a relationship between support and the adjustment to university.

Campus Involvement

Another factor that may facilitate the adjustment of students to university may be involvement in campus activities. Extracurricular activities such as student clubs, sports, and student-run newspapers have existed since the nineteenth century (Brubacher & Rudy, 1976). In university, students have a wide variety of clubs, fraternities, sororities, and organizations in which they can become involved if they choose to do so. Astin's (1975, 1984) "student involvement theory" describes the way in which students' involvement in campus life can influence their adjustment.

Involvement, according to Astin, refers to "the quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience" (Astin, 1984, p.307) and may take many forms, such as absorption in academic work, participation in extracurricular activities, and interaction with faculty and staff. He indicates that a highly involved student would be someone who devotes a considerable amount of energy to studying, spends a lot of time on campus, gets involved in campus activities, and often interacts with other students and faculty members. The basic elements of the theory are as follows:

- "a) Involvement refers to the investment of physical and psychological energy in various objects. The objects may be highly generalized (the student experience) or highly specific (preparing for a chemistry examination).
- b) Regardless of its object, involvement occurs along a continuum; that is different students manifest different degrees of involvement in a given object, and the same student manifests different degrees of involvement in different objects at different times.
- c) Involvement has both qualitative and quantitative features. The extent of a student's involvement in academic work, for instance, can be measured quantitatively (how many hours the student spends studying) and qualitatively (whether the student reviews and comprehends reading assignments or simply stares at the textbook and daydreams).
- d) The amount of student learning and personal development associated with any educational program is directly proportional to the quality and quantity of student involvement in that program.
- e) The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the

capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement. " (Astin, 1984, p. 298).

Astin (1975) asserted that those students who participate in some type of campus activity such as joining a fraternity or sorority, participating in a sport, or enrolling in an honours program, are less likely to drop out and are more likely to be satisfied with university life than students who choose not to participate. This theory was meant for the use of both researchers and school administrators. It was designed to guide further research on student development and to help school officials produce more effective learning environments (Astin, 1984).

The literature confirms that campus involvement does indeed have an impact on student development. Past research has demonstrated that campus involvement is related to increased intellectual development and achievement (Baxter Magolda, 1992; Fitch, 1991). Baxter Magolda (1992) conducted a longitudinal study examining the extent to which a number of factors contributed to students' intellectual development and she found that involvement was related to their intellectual development. Winter, McClelland and Stewart (1981) found that students who were involved in extracurricular activities were more mature and had better career decision-making skills. They suggested that this was due to the fact that to be involved with a group or organization means to be committed, involved in the planning of activities, and sharing with others, which are factors related to maturity. Thus, it has been well documented that, like social support, campus involvement may be related to the positive adjustment of students to university.

Past research has also indicated that for freshmen, social interactions such as attending parties, dances, and sports events, assist students in adjusting to university (Astin, 1975). It was suggested that this is due to the fact that such events aid students in becoming familiar with their role as a student and with university life in general. However, it may also be the case that such interactions allow students to mix and mingle in a more relaxed "fun" atmosphere and thus to make new friends.

Link Between Involvement and Support

Social support exists not only on the individual level (i.e., friends and family), but it occurs within and between organized groups, social structures, and informal social groups (Felton & Shinn, 1992). It seems probable that those students involved in organized activities or groups will receive higher levels of social support than others. Haring and Breen (1992) conducted a study on social interactions between students with disabilities and their nondisabled peers, and found that participation in an integrated environment promoted the development of friendships, thus increasing thus social networks of those involved. Past research has also demonstrated that students who live amongst other students, in residence, are more satisfied with university life in general (Brown, 1968). As discussed earlier, the student involvement literature suggests that campus involvement aids students to positively adjust to university. This may be due to the fact that those students who are actively involved in campus life may receive higher levels of support from their peers, professors, and other university faculty, promoting better adjustment. Hirsch (1981)

suggested that integration with a group of peers may assist student adjustment to university by producing socialization opportunities for students. Thus, it may be that social support acts as a mediator between campus involvement and adjustment.

Predictors of Involvement

Considering the evidence that student involvement in campus activities is an important factor in promoting the healthy adjustment of freshmen, it is worthwhile to speculate on some of the possible predictors of involvement. Astin's (1975) investigation of factors linked to students' likelihood of dropping out of university identifies some of these predictors. He conducted a longitudinal study of college students, surveying them initially in the fall of their first year and then following up four years later, to identify factors that contributed to a person's persistence or lack of persistence to stay in college. Several factors associated with involvement were related to students remaining in college. These included living in residence, having part-time employment on campus, and being enrolled in a four-year university program rather than a two-year community college program. Obviously, students who live in residence have more opportunity to get involved in university activities than do students living off campus. They spend more of their time on campus, increasing the degree of involvement in university. This is also true for those students holding part-time employment on campus. The more time they spend, the more likely it is that they will come into contact with other students, professors, and college staff. It may also be that students who rely on the college for their income may develop a sense of attachment to the school. Finally, students who are

enrolled in a community college are minimally involved. Students typically do not live on campus, thus decreasing their likelihood of becoming involved. In addition, college programs are shorter than university programs; therefore length of time and opportunity to get involved are minimized.

Another factor that may relate to involvement on campus is students' past involvement in school or community activities. Involvement in volunteer community service, giving time to help others for no pay, has been a topic of investigation for a number of years. Researchers studying areas such as altruism, voluntary and prosocial behaviour have offered a number of reasons for people becoming involved in voluntary activities. Among these have been altruistic (the goal being to increase the welfare of others), egoistic (the goal being to increase the welfare of the helper), and social obligation (the goal being to repay a debt to society) (Allen, 1982; Phillips, 1982; White, 1981). Fitch (1987) conducted a study designed to assess motivations for college student involvement in community service work and found that these students participated for mainly egoistic reasons (eg., "I am involved in community service volunteer work because of the prestige associated with it"). This study also assessed the characteristics of student volunteers, and the possible existence of a relationship between certain demographic variables and participation in volunteer activities. Among variables linked to volunteer activity were the past community involvement of students, parental level of community involvement, and the influence of friends. A later study conducted by Fitch (1991) provided additional support for the conclusion that past voluntary involvement influences involvement in

university. He found that the large majority of students involved in community service during their time at university were involved in such activities prior to entering college. Another noteworthy finding concerning factors influencing campus involvement was that students living in residence were more involved in volunteer activity on campus than were non-campus students.

In summary, past research appears to indicate that social support and campus involvement are related to the quality of adjustment of students to university. In addition, it has been suggested that the more immersed a student becomes in university life, the more likely it is that his/her level of social support will increase due to the greater opportunity of interacting with fellow students and university faculty. In addition, certain factors such as living in residence, past involvement in school activities, and the degree to which parents are involved in community activities may relate to students' involvement in university.

Hypotheses

Thus, the following study has been designed to test several hypotheses:

- 1) there is a positive correlation between social support and adjustment to university, with students who show higher levels of support demonstrating better adjustment;
- 2) there is a positive correlation between involvement and adjustment to university, with students who have higher levels of involvement demonstrating better adjustment;
- 3) the relationship between campus involvement and adjustment is mediated by social support. In other words, the addition of social support to a model in which

involvement is considered as a predictor of adjustment will result in a significant reduction in the relationship between involvement and adjustment;

4) students who live in residence will report more campus involvement than students living off-campus;

5) there is a positive correlation between past involvement in school activities and organizations and current involvement in university activities; and

6) there is a positive correlation between parents' involvement in community activities and students' current involvement in university activities. The diagram representing the relationships being tested in this research is outlined in Figure 1.

Method

Research Participants

Data for the present study were drawn from 98 undergraduate university students enrolled at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ontario. Sixty-eight females and 30 males, ranging from 18 years to 37 years of age with a mean age of 20.4, participated in the research. Of the 98 participants, 67 were in their first year, 16 in their second year, 13 in their third year, and 2 were in their fourth year, 45 participants lived in residence, 37 lived off-campus, and 16 lived at home with their parents. Students were recruited from the introductory psychology participant pool and were awarded one research credit, worth one half percent bonus towards their grade for the course in return for their participation in this experiment.

Measures

Background Information

Six questions were developed to establish the background of students (see Appendix B). The first five items sought to establish the sex, age, place of residence, program of study, and year of the participant. The sixth question sought to establish the number of groups of which the participant was a member at university (e.g., "How many groups or organizations are you a member of at university?").

The Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (EII)

The EII (Winston & Massaro, 1987) was designed to measure both the quantity and quality of student participation in extracurricular activities (see Appendix C). The EII required the respondent to answer an identical set of questions for each group or organization she/he belonged to at the time of testing. Participants were given five sets of questions, enough sets to describe up to five organizations.

Specifically, for each organization they belonged to, respondents were asked to indicate the type of organization it was, the number of hours they participated in the organization (to measure the quantity of participation), and positions held. Five additional questions established the quality of their involvement, assessing such things as the frequency of taking part in discussions at meetings, as well as the extent to which they fulfilled responsibilities efficiently and promptly, encouraged other students to attend activities sponsored by the group, and talked about their

own membership outside the group. Response options for each of these items were very often, often, occasionally, and never.

A quality of involvement score for each organization was obtained by totalling the responses to the five items that assessed the dimension of quality, giving three points for each very often response, two for often, one for occasionally, and 0 for never. The quality dimension scores therefore can range from 0 to 15. The sum of the five items is then multiplied by the quantity measure to achieve an intensity score, using the following conversion scale for the quantity measure: 0 hours=0, 1-8 hours=1, 9-16 hours=2, and so on at 8 hour intervals, to yield an intensity score for each organization. The authors of the scale provided no explanation for performing this conversion. However, the intensity score is thus the product of the quality measure and the quantity measure. The EII score is the sum of the intensity scores for all organizations to which the respondent belongs.

The authors of the scale provide sufficient evidence of the scale's reliability and validity, reporting a 2-week test-retest reliability estimate of .97 and a correlation of .45 with the Clubs and Organizations Scale (Fitch, 1991), a scale that also measures involvement.

The Past Involvement in Groups and Organizations Scale

The Past Involvement in Groups and Organizations Scale was adapted from the EII for the purpose of this study to determine the quantity of involvement in groups or organizations during the participant's last year of high school (see Appendix D). The questions measuring quality were not included as it was felt that respondents might

not accurately recall such detailed information; thus an intensity score could not be completed. For each group or organization respondents belonged to, they answered four questions that sought to establish the name of the group or organization, the type of group or organization, the number of hours of involvement per month, and the office held. Again, participants were given five sets of questions for five organizations. For scoring purposes, the number of hours that students were involved in groups/organizations was summed for all groups or organizations of which the respondent was a member.

The Parental Involvement Scale

The Parental Involvement Scale was designed to assess the degree to which the parents of participants were involved in their community during the participants' final year of high school (see Appendix E). The scale is divided into two parts; the first refers to the mother's involvement and the second refers to the father's involvement. This measure was also adapted from the EII and is similar in content to the Past Involvement in Groups and Organizations Scale. For each group or organization the parent belonged to, respondents answered four questions designed to establish the name of the group or organization, the type of group or organization, the number of hours of involvement per month, and the office held. Again an intensity score could not be calculated as it was not asked of the participants to give detailed information of the involvement of their parents. For the purposes of analysis, the number of hours parents were involved in groups/organizations was summed.

The Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire

The SACQ (Baker & Siryk, 1989) was designed to assess how well a student is adjusting to college or university (see Appendix F). The self-report questionnaire consists of 67 items which are divided into 4 subscales focusing on specific aspects of adjustment to college, with some items being used for more than one subscale. These items that were used more than once were 1, 4, 16, 26, 36, 42, 56, 57, and 65. The Academic Adjustment subscale consists of 24 items referring to the extent to which the student is adjusting to the various academic demands of college (e.g., "I have been keeping up to date on my academic work"). The range of possible scores for this subscale is from 24 to 216. The Social Adjustment subscale consists of 20 items that refer to adjustment to the interpersonal-societal demands of college (e.g., "I feel that I fit in well as part of the college environment"). The range of possible scores is from 20 to 180. The Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscale consists of 15 items focusing on how the student is feeling psychologically and physically (e.g., "I have been feeling tense or nervous lately"). The range of possible scores is from 15 to 135. The Goal Commitment/Institutional Attachment subscale contains 15 items designed to assess the student's feelings about being in college and the specific college he/she is attending (e.g., "I am pleased now with my decision to go to college"). The range of possible scores is from 15 to 135.

Each SACQ item is a statement and the student indicates the degree to which each statement holds true for her/him on a 9-point response format ranging from -4 (applies very closely to me) to +4 (doesn't apply to me at all). These ranges were

later converted to 1 to 9, low scores indicating poorer adaptation and high scores indicating better adaptation, with possible total scores ranging from 67 to 603. For 34 of the items, values run from 1 to 9, while for the other 33 items the values run from 9 to 1. These reversed items are indicated by an asterisk (*) in appendix F. The sum of the individual item scores for each subscale constitutes an index for each of the 4 aspects of adjustment. The sum of scores for all 67 items is an index of overall adjustment.

The authors of the scale provide sufficient evidence that the scale is reliable, reporting that Cronbach's alpha for the full scale ranges between .92 and .95 (Baker & Siryk, 1989). The scale also correlates significantly (.66) with other measures of adjustment such as the Mental Health Inventory (Veit & Ware, 1983), providing evidence of the scale's validity.

The Social Provisions Scale

The Social Provisions Scale (Cutrona & Russell, 1987) was designed to assess the extent to which one's current relationships provide social support or benefits such as advice or information, tangible help, a sense of worth and a feeling of belonging, and an opportunity to help and nurture others (see Appendix G). The scale consists of 24 items, with 4 items assessing each of 6 different types of benefits that can be derived from support: guidance (e.g., "There is a trustworthy person I could turn to if I were having problems"); reliable alliance (e.g., "There are people I can count on in an emergency"); reassurance of worth (e.g., "There are people who admire my talents and abilities"); attachment (e.g., "I have close

relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being”); social integration (e.g., “I feel part of a group of people who share my attitudes and beliefs”); and opportunity for nurturance (e.g., “There are people who depend on me for help”). Respondents indicated their agreement / disagreement with each item on a 9-point response scale, ranging from -4 (very strongly disagree) to +4 (very strongly agree). These ranges were later converted to 1 to 9 for the purpose of scoring. For 12 of the items, values run from 1 to 9, while for the other 12 items the values run from 9 to 1. These reversed items are indicated by an asterisk (*) in appendix G. Total scores can range from 1 to 216, with higher scores indicating greater social support.

The authors provide a considerable amount of evidence that the scale is reliable and valid (Cutrona & Russell, 1987). Cronbach's alpha for the total score was reported to be .91, indicating that the scale has a high degree of internal consistency. The Social Provision Scale correlates significantly with other measures of social support, .40 with the Social Support Questionnaire (Sarason, Levine, Basham, & Sarason, 1983) and .46 with a measure of attitudes toward use of social support (Eckenrode, 1983), providing evidence of the scale's validity.

Social Support Scale

The Social Support Scale (see Appendix H) was designed to determine those persons available to provide one with social support (Filyer, Pratt, Pancer, & Hunsberger, 1995). Participants were asked to list the initials of these persons, indicate their relationship to the person (e.g., “TM - brother”) and indicate on a

seven-point scale how satisfied they were with the support they receive from this person. The scale ranges from -3 (strongly dissatisfied) to +3 (strongly satisfied). These ranges were later converted to 1 to 7 with a low score indicating dissatisfaction and a high score indicating satisfaction.

A mean satisfaction score was calculated by dividing the sum of the individual ratings by the total number of people listed. Unfortunately, no reliability and validity information was available to the researcher for this scale.

Procedure

Students who were interested in participating in this study chose a convenient time and date and signed their name on a recruitment sheet that was posted outside the Psychology Department office. The recruitment sheet also indicated the location of testing.

The questionnaire was administered in November to small groups of two to five people and each student who appeared for testing was thanked for coming and given a questionnaire package and asked to read the instruction sheet (see Appendix A) carefully. The instruction sheet indicated that their responses would remain completely confidential, that they could omit any question they did not wish to answer, that they were free to decline to participate or to withdraw participation at any time during testing, and that completion of and the return of the questionnaire to the experimenter would indicate their consent to participate. They were also briefly informed of the purpose of the study, that is, to determine how well students adjust to university life and what factors encourage healthy adjustment. The package also

contained in the following order, the Background Information Questions (see Appendix B), the Extracurricular Involvement Index (see Appendix C), the Past Involvement in Groups and Organizations Scale (see Appendix D), the Parental Involvement Scale (see Appendix E), the Social Provisions Scale (see Appendix F), and the Social Support Scale (see Appendix G). All participants received a questionnaire with the measures in the same order. The background questions were administered first to allow respondents to “settle in” with a few straightforward, factual questions. The ordering of the remainder of the questionnaire was determined by importance of material (involvement being assessed first) and logistics (with scales requiring similar response formats occurring together to minimize confusion).

Upon returning the materials, approximately 30 minutes later, participants were thanked again for their participation and given a feedback sheet (see Appendix H) that stated the purposes of the study and indicated a telephone number where the experimenter could be reached if they had any questions.

Results

Relationships Amongst Social Support, Involvement and Adjustment to University

It was hypothesized that social support would be positively correlated with adjustment to university. Correlations between adjustment, as assessed by the SACQ and its subscales, and social support, as assessed by the Social Provisions Scale and the Social Support Scale, are presented in Table 1. In general, these

correlations indicate that the greater the support, the better the adjustment to university.

Hypothesis 2 (p.14) stated that there would be a positive correlation between involvement and adjustment to university. Correlations between adjustment, as assessed by the SACQ and its subscales, and involvement, as assessed by the EII, are presented in Table 2. These correlations suggest that there is a significant relationship between involvement in university and social adjustment. No significant correlations were found between involvement and any of the other SACQ subscales or the SACQ total.

Also analysed for the purpose of this research were the differences in adjustment among students living in residence, off campus, and at home. A one-way analysis of variance demonstrated significant differences among the three groups, $F(2, 97) = 6.32, p < .01$. Examination of the means revealed those students living in residence scored higher on the measure of social adjustment ($M = 130.15, N = 45$) than did those students living off campus ($M = 117.52, N = 37$), and those students living at home ($M = 111.57, N = 16$). Post-hoc comparisons using the Student Newman-Keuls procedure indicated that those students living in residence adjusted to university better than did those students living off-campus and at home. These two groups, students living off-campus and students living at home, did not differ significantly from one another.

Hypothesis 3 (p. 15) stated that the relationship between involvement and adjustment would be mediated by social support. Baron & Kenny (1986) suggest

three steps in assessing the mediating properties of a particular variable (in this case, social support). First, multiple regression analysis should indicate a significant relationship between the predictor variable (involvement) and the criterion variable (adjustment). Second, multiple regression analysis should indicate a significant relationship between the mediating variable (support) and adjustment. Finally, multiple regression analysis in which both involvement and support are used to predict adjustment should show a reduction in the extent to which involvement, on its own, predicts adjustment.

Table 3 presents the results of the regression analyses in which involvement (as assessed the EII) was used to predict adjustment. As the table indicates, involvement is a significant predictor of social adjustment. Subsequently, only those instances in which involvement was significantly related to adjustment were assessed further for mediational effects.

The second series of multiple regression analyses was conducted to determine the extent to which social support predicted social adjustment. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4. These regressions indicate that social support (assessed by both the Social Provisions Scale and the Social Support Scale) is a significant predictor of social adjustment.

Finally, to assess mediating effects, in those instances where involvement and social support (individually) were significant predictors of social adjustment, a two-step multiple regression procedure was conducted in which involvement was entered on the first step, and support on the second, with social adjustment as the

criterion variable. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 5.

Results utilizing the Social Provisions Scale did not indicate that social support mediated the relationship between involvement and social adjustment. As Table 5 indicates, there was a reduction of less than 1% in the beta relating involvement and adjustment when the Social Provisions Scale was added to the regression equation. Results utilizing the Social Support Scale as the measure of support also did not indicate any mediation effects for social support on the relationship between involvement and adjustment. In fact, the addition of this support measure to the regression equation produced a slight increase in the beta for the relationship between involvement and adjustment. Furthermore, as table 2 indicates, social support (assessed by both the Social Provisions Scale and the Social Support Scale) was not significantly correlated with involvement, further evidence against a mediational hypothesis. A similar pattern of results was obtained when only the data from first-year students was subjected to the mediational analyses.

Predictors of Involvement

It was hypothesized that students who lived in residence would report more campus involvement than would students living off-campus. A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to assess whether there was a significant difference between the levels of involvement of those students living in residence, students living off campus and students living at home. Analyses demonstrated significant differences among the involvement levels of the three groups, $F(2, 95) = 3.74$, $p < .05$. A priori contrasts comparing students living in residence with both groups of

students living off-campus indicated that there was a difference between students living in residence and students living off-campus, $F(1, 95) = 6.69$, $p < .01$.

Examination of the means, presented in Table 6, suggests that students who live in residence do report more campus involvement than do those students who live off-campus.

It was hypothesized that past involvement in school activities and organizations would be significantly correlated with students' current involvement in university activities. Correlations between past involvement, as assessed by the Past Involvement Scale, and current involvement, as assessed by scores on the EII, are presented in Table 7. These correlations suggest that there is a significant positive relationship between past involvement and current involvement.

It was also hypothesized that parents' involvement in community activities would be significantly correlated with current involvement. Correlations between parental involvement, as assessed by the Parental Involvement Scale, and the current involvement of students are also presented in Table 7. No significant relationships were found between current involvement of students and the involvement of either their mothers or their fathers.

Discussion

Relationships Amongst Social Support, Involvement, and Adjustment to University

It was hypothesized that there would be a relationship between social support and adjustment to university and this was confirmed, consistent with the results of many other studies (Hays & Oxley, 1986; Jay & D'Augelli, 1991; Riggio et al.,

1993). Positive correlations revealed a relationship between almost all measures of adjustment and social support, suggesting that the greater the social support, the better the adjustment to university.

A relationship between involvement in university organizations and overall adjustment to university was also predicted. Results revealed some evidence of a relationship between involvement and social adjustment; that is, positive correlations were found between the social subscale of the SACQ and the EII. This indicates that the greater the involvement of students, the better they adjust socially to university life.

This may be due to the fact that this particular subscale of the SACQ, the social adjustment subscale, measures a social domain and involvement is a social concept. For instance, when students are involved in campus groups and organizations they spend time with other members (i.e., attending meetings or games) in a social fashion. As suggested earlier, when students are involved in various campus activities, this increases the possibility of meeting new people and developing new friendships and thus improving their social support network. This also may suggest that students who live in residence are better adjusted than those students who live off-campus, as they spend more time on-campus. The results of the present study indicate that on-campus students are better adjusted socially, than are off-campus students.

This study also hypothesized that social support acts as a mediating variable between involvement and adjustment; that is, it was expected that one way in which

involvement influences adjustment is through social support. Three steps were necessary in order to demonstrate the mediating properties of social support. First, multiple regression analysis should have indicated a significant relationship between involvement and adjustment, which it did; involvement was shown to be a significant predictor of social adjustment. Second, multiple regression analysis should indicate a significant relationship between support and adjustment, which it did as well; social support was also a significant predictor of social adjustment. Finally, multiple regression analysis in which both involvement and support are used to predict adjustment should show a reduction in the extent to which involvement on its own, predicts adjustment. Results did not show any reduction in the extent to which involvement, on its own, predicts social adjustment when social support (assessed by the Social Provisions Scale) was included as a predictor, indicating that social support does not mediate the relationship between involvement and adjustment.

It appears that social support, then, does not account for the relationship between involvement and adjustment; thus, it may be interesting to speculate upon what kinds of factors do influence the relationship between involvement and adjustment. It may be that those students who are actively involved in university life have more opportunities to develop the social skills necessary to adjust quickly to this life transition and therefore tend to relate better to those around them. It may be useful for future research to include a measure of social skills, and to compare the social skills of those students who are highly involved with the skills of students who are not so involved. Or perhaps highly involved students have certain personality

traits that aid them in their adjustment, such as higher self-esteem or more confidence in their social abilities. This suggests that future research might incorporate measures of these variables.

Thus, the present research also evokes some intriguing questions regarding the lives of those students who are highly involved compared with those students who are not so highly involved. Specifically, how do the lives of these students differ? Perhaps a more in-depth look at their backgrounds would produce some useful information. Also, what kinds of factors mediate the relationship between involvement and adjustment? It could be that such things as good social skills or high self-esteem mediate this relationship as well.

Predictors of Involvement

One possible predictor of involvement that this study examined was living in residence. It was predicted that those students living in residence would report more involvement than students living off-campus. Analysis of variance indicated that there was a difference between the three groups (living in residence, living off-campus, and living at home) and comparison of the means suggested that the difference was that students who live on-campus are generally more involved in campus activities than off-campus students. These results replicate the results of other researchers and it has been suggested in the past that this is due to the fact that students in residence have more opportunity to become involved (e.g., eating meals together, residence social gatherings) (Astin, 1975; Fitch, 1991).

Fitch (1991) found that students living on campus were highly involved in community service activities. He attributed this to the fact that the type of student who lives on campus may be different than the type of student who lives off-campus; that is, on-campus students may be more altruistic (exhibiting a desire to increase the well-being of others). He also suggested that perhaps living in residence fosters this sense of concern for others. However, it may simply be that students who choose to live in residence do so because they want to become involved in university life. The type of student who lives on campus may generally be more outgoing than the type of student who lives off-campus. Perhaps a measure of personality would be useful in determining these differences.

The literature suggests that another possible predictor of students becoming involved in university is past involvement of students in groups and organizations. This study predicted that there would be a relationship between past involvement and current involvement. The results replicated the findings of Fitch (1987), demonstrating evidence of a relationship between past and current involvement. Researchers suggest various reasons for this relationship. Fitch (1987) suggested that this is due to the fact that students who are involved in various groups and organizations started at a young age because they had parents who were involved themselves and thus served as role models for their children. Because they start at a young age it is simply a pattern that continues as they grow older and leave home.

However, it was also hypothesized that there would be a relationship between students' current involvement and the involvement of their parents in community

activities and there was no evidence to support this notion. Perhaps students are not really aware of what their parents are doing and therefore are not reporting accurately. Or it could be that the influence of their peers is more powerful than that of their parents. Thus, the involvement of the participants' peers may be a better predictor than that of their parents.

Limitations

One limitation of the present study concerns the fact that participants were tested only once at the beginning of the academic year. Their feelings about university life may change drastically as the year continues and they make friends and begin to fit into the university scene (Fitch, 1987; Fitch, 1991; Hays & Oxley, 1986), especially for the large portion of first-year students in this investigation. Also, students had only three months to become involved in campus activities at the time of testing and may have later joined a group or organization. Perhaps it would be beneficial to test participants at the first of the year, after first term, and then again at the end of the academic year and also to differentiate the first year students from the more senior students.

Also, students were asked to give their own retrospective accounts about any groups or organizations they may have belonged to in high school, as well as any groups of which their parents might be members. However, memories and knowledge are not always accurate. It might be useful to send a questionnaire out to the parents of the participants in order to assess more accurately the level of parental community involvement.

Contributions and Applications

Limitations aside, the present results were useful in demonstrating that there is a link, to some extent, between involvement and adjustment. Social support does not appear to mediate this link, but there may be other factors such as social skills and personality traits that need to be examined as well.

This leads one to ponder the applications of this research. In general, this research may allow researchers to further explore ways to keep students from dropping out of university. Since Astin's (1975) study on students dropping out, research has suggested that drop out rates have remained quite high (Levitz & Noel, 1989). Reducing student attrition rates is now even more important due to declining enrollments (Nelson et al., 1984). Therefore, it is of great importance to identify which factors may aid students in their adjustment to university in order to ensure that their learning and growth will continue.

The differences between on and off-campus students are of some concern to researchers. The current research found that students who live on campus socially adjust to university better than do students who live off-campus, and it has been suggested that this may be due to the higher levels of involvement of those on-campus students.

It may be useful to explore various techniques to get these off-campus students involved in university life. It could be that lack of information concerning university groups and organizations prevents students from joining. Perhaps it would be beneficial for universities to mail out a list of all groups and organizations available

for students to join. Perhaps increased guidance and counselling should also be more readily available to these students to that ensure students stay connected to the university outside of their classes.

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Table 1
Correlations between Social Support and Adjustment

Social Support Measure	SACQ				
	Total	Social	Personal	Academic	Attachment
Social Provisions Scale (Total)	.47***	.51***	.30**	.24**	.50***
Social Support Scale	.40***	.52***	.27**	.16	.41***

Note: **p < .05 **p < .01 ***p < .001
 All correlations are based on an N of 98.

Table 2
Correlations between Involvement, Adjustment and Social Support

EII	SACQ						
	Total	Social	Personal	Academic	Attach	Social Provisions	Social Support
Total Sample (N = 98)	.12	.31**	.07	-.09	.11	.00	-.04

Note: **p < .01

Table 3
Regressions for Involvement and Adjustment

	R ²	F	p	β
EII (Total Score) as a predictor of:				
SACQ Total	.01	1.45	.23	.121793
Academic	.01	.81	.37	-.091985
Social	.09	9.90	.002**	.305744
Personal	.004	.43	.51	.066516
Attachment	.01	1.08	.30	.105662

Note: **p < .01
 All regressions are based on a degrees of freedom of (1, 96).

Table 4
Regressions for Social Support and Social Adjustment

	R ²	F	p	β
Social Provisions as a predictor of: Social Adjustment	.26	34.14	.0000***	.512167
Social Support Scale as a predictor of: Social Adjustment	.26	34.64	.0000***	.516924

Note: *** p < .001

All regressions are based on a degrees of freedom of (1, 96).

Table 5
Regressions for Social Adjustment, Social Support, and Involvement

Involvement		
	Beta	Change in Beta
Prior to entry of social support	.305744	
After entering Social Provisions Total	.304829	-.03%
After entering Social Support Scale	.328084	+7%

Table 6
Mean EII Scores for Students Living in Residence and Students Living Off-campus

Involvement Measure	
Student Groups (N = 98)	EII
Students living in residence	21.76
Students living off campus	14.11
Students living at home	2.44

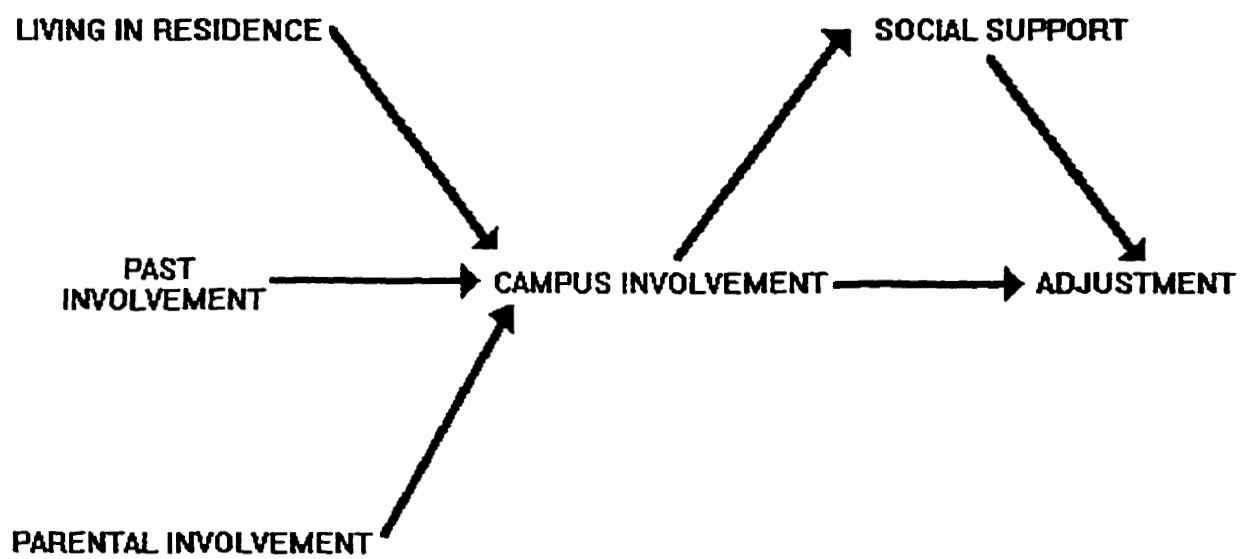
Table 7
Correlations between EII Scores and Current Involvement,
Past Involvement, and Parental Involvement Measures

	Involvement		
Measures of Current Involvement	Past	Mother	Father
EII Total Score	.20*	.06	.11

Note: * $p < .05$

All correlations are based on an N of 98.

Figure 1

Relationships Amongst Social Support, Involvement, and Adjustment to University

Appendix A

Instructions

Thank you for participating in this study. This research is being conducted to complete the requirements for a Masters of Arts degree in Psychology under the supervision of Dr. Mark Pancer.

The following is just a bit of information concerning of the purposes of this study and instructions to help you complete the study properly. This survey consists of a questionnaire that asks you some specific and general questions concerning your experiences at university, your attitudes about university, your relationships, the amount of social support you receive, and also a bit of information concerning your background, including your family life. The entire procedure will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Please note that your responses will be completely confidential. If at any time you wish to withdraw your participation from this study or you do not wish to answer a particular question please feel free to do so. If you do withdraw your participation you will still receive a bonus credit. You are in no way obligated to take part in this experiment. In order to ensure confidentiality, please do not place your name on the questionnaire. The results of this research will be kept in a locked cabinet and seen only by the experimenter, Krista Martin, and Dr. Mark Pancer.

Upon completion of the questionnaire, please hand in all materials to the experimenter and this will indicate your consent to participate in this research.

Once again, thank you for your participation.

Krista Martin

Appendix B

Background Information

1. Sex (circle one): M F
2. Age: _____ years
3. Where are you currently living?
 - ___ in residence
 - ___ off campus
 - ___ at home
 - ___ other (specify): _____
4. What program of study are you in?
 - ___ arts
 - ___ science
 - ___ business
 - ___ music
 - ___ phys-ed
 - ___ other (specify): _____
5. What year of study are you in? _____
6. How many groups or organizations are you a member of at university? _____
(e.g., departmental club, drama club, student government, sports teams)

Appendix C

The Extracurricular Involvement Inventory (EII)

The following questions focus on groups or organizations you may **PRESENTLY** be involved in. Please note that involvement in these groups or organizations must be **strictly VOLUNTARY AND WITHOUT PAY**. We ask that you please complete a section below for each group/organization you are involved in. For each group or organization, please indicate: (1) the name of the group/organization, (2) the type of organization it is, (3) the approximate number of hours you have been involved (for example, attending meetings, working on projects, or playing games) with this group or organization in the *last four weeks*, and (4) leadership held, if any. Then answer questions one through five below. If you are not involved in any groups or organizations please continue on to the next part of the survey.

Group/Organization #1

1. What is the name of the group or organization? _____

2. What type of organization is it? (Check one.)

- Social Fraternity/Sorority Intercollegiate Athletic Team
 Religious Academic (e.g., academic department or major related) club or society
 Academic Honorary Programming (e.g., Student centre/union, lecture or concert committee)
 Intramural Sports Team Student Publication (e.g., newspaper, magazine, or yearbook)
 Service or Charity Performing Group (e.g., choir, drama production, debate team)
 Governance (e.g., student government, student judiciary)
 Other (Please specify): _____

3. In the last four weeks, for approximately how many hours have you been involved with this group or organization and its activities or programs? _____ hours per month

4. In the last four weeks have you held an office in this organization or a position equivalent to one of the following offices? (Check one.)

- President/Chairperson/Team Captain/Editor Treasurer
 Vice-President/Vice-Chairperson Committee/Task Force/Project Chairperson
 Secretary I held no office or leadership position
 Other Office (Please specify): _____

Please respond to the following statements about your involvement in the above student group or organization. Check the one best response for each statement.

DURING THE PAST FOUR WEEKS....

1. When I attended meetings, I expressed my opinion and/or took part in the discussions.

- Very often Often Occasionally Never
 I attended no meetings in the last four weeks.
 The group/organization held no meetings in the last four weeks.

2. When I was away from the group/organization, I talked with others about the organization and its activities, or wore a pin, jersey, etc. to let others know about my membership.

- Very often Often Occasionally Never

3. When the group/organization sponsored a program or activity, I made an effort to encourage students and/or members to attend.

- Very often Often Occasionally Never
 The organization had no program or activity during the past four weeks.

4. I volunteered or was assigned responsibility to work on something that the group/organization needed to have done.

- Very often Often Occasionally Never

5. I fulfilled duties or responsibilities to the group/organization on time.

- Very often Often Occasionally Never
 I had no duties or responsibilities except to attend meetings.

Appendix D

The Past Involvement in Groups and Organizations Scale

The following questions focus on past groups or organizations you may have been involved in. Please note that involvement in these groups or organizations must be strictly **VOLUNTARY AND WITHOUT PAY**. We ask that you please complete a section below for each group or organization you were involved in during your last year of HIGH SCHOOL. For each group or organization, please indicate: (1) the name of the group/organization, (2) the type of organization it was, (3) the approximate number of hours you were involved (for example, attending meetings, working on projects, or playing games) with this group or organization *per month*, and (4) leadership position held, if any.

Group/Organization #1

1. What is the name of the group or organization? _____

2. What type of organization is it? (Check one.)

- Social Fraternity/Sorority Intercollegiate Athletic Team
 Religious Academic (e.g., academic department or major related) club or society
 Academic Honorary Programming (e.g., Student centre/union, lecture or concert committee)
 Intramural Sports Team Student Publication (e.g., newspaper, magazine, or yearbook)
 Service or Charity Performing Group (e.g., choir, drama production, debate team)
 Governance (e.g., student government, student judiciary)
 Other (Please specify): _____

3. On a monthly basis, approximately how many hours were you involved with this group or organization and its activities or programs? _____ hours per month

4. Did you hold an office in this organization or a position equivalent to one of the following offices? (Check one.)

- President/Chairperson/Team Captain/Editor Treasurer
 Vice-President/Vice-Chairperson Committee/Task Force/Project Chairperson
 Secretary I held no office or leadership position
 Other Office (Please specify): _____

Appendix E

The Parental Involvement Scale

The following questions focus on past groups or organizations YOUR MOTHER has been involved in the last year you were living at home. Please note that involvement in these groups or organizations must be strictly VOLUNTARY AND WITHOUT PAY. We ask that you please complete a section below for each group or organization she was involved in, please indicate: (1) the name of the group or organization, (2) the type of organization it was, (3) the approximate number of hours she was involved (for example, attending meetings or working on projects) with this group or organization *per month*, and leadership held, if any.

Group/Organization #1

1. What is the name of the group or organization? _____

2. What type of organization is it? (Check one.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Club | <input type="checkbox"/> Political (e.g., School board, political party) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourhood Organization (e.g., Neighbourhood Watch) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club or Society | <input type="checkbox"/> Publication (e.g., newspaper, magazine, or newsletter) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports Team or club | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Group (e.g., choir, drama production, debate team) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service or Charity | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic/National Organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | |

3. On a monthly basis, approximately how many hours was she involved with this group or organization and its activities or programs? _____ hours per month

4. Has she held an office in this organization or a position equivalent to one of the following offices? (Check one.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> President/Chairperson/Team Captain/Editor | <input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vice-President/Vice-Chairperson | <input type="checkbox"/> Committee/Task Force/Project Chairperson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secretary | <input type="checkbox"/> She held no office or leadership position |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Office (Please specify): _____ | |

The following questions focus on past groups or organizations YOUR FATHER has been involved in the last year you were living at home. Please note that involvement in these groups or organizations must be strictly VOLUNTARY AND WITHOUT PAY. We ask that you please complete a section below for each group or organization he was involved in, please indicate: (1) the name of the group or organization, (2) the type of organization it was, (3) the approximate number of hours he was involved (for example, attending meetings or working on projects) with this group or organization *per month*, and leadership held, if any.

Group/Organization #1

1. What is the name of the group or organization? _____

2. What type of organization is it? (Check one.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Club | <input type="checkbox"/> Political (e.g., School board, political party) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Religious | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbourhood Organization (e.g., Neighbourhood Watch) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Club or Society | <input type="checkbox"/> Publication (e.g., newspaper, magazine, or newsletter) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sports Team or club | <input type="checkbox"/> Performing Group (e.g., choir, drama production, debate team) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Service or Charity | <input type="checkbox"/> Ethnic/National Organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify): _____ | |

3. On a monthly basis, approximately how many hours was he involved with this group or organization and its activities or programs? _____ hours per month

4. Has he held an office in this organization or a position equivalent to one of the following offices? (Check one.)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> President/Chairperson/Team Captain/Editor | <input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vice-President/Vice-Chairperson | <input type="checkbox"/> Committee/Task Force/Project Chairperson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Secretary | <input type="checkbox"/> She held no office or leadership position |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Office (Please specify): _____ | |

-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

← _____

applies very closely to me

_____ →

doesn't apply to me at all

- 26.* _____ I enjoy living in a university residence. (Please omit if you do not live in a residence; any university housing should be regarded as a residence.) (Social)
- 27.* _____ I enjoy writing papers for courses. (Academic)
28. _____ I have been having a lot of headaches lately. (Personal)
29. _____ I really haven't had much motivation for studying lately. (Academic)
- 30.* _____ I am satisfied with the extracurricular activities available at university. (Social)
31. _____ I've given a lot of thought lately to whether I should ask for help from the Psychological/Counselling Services Centre or from a counsellor outside of university. (Personal)
32. _____ Lately I have been having doubts regarding the value of a university education. (Academic)
- 33.* _____ I am getting along very well with my roommate(s) at university. (Please omit if you do not have a roommate.) (Social)
34. _____ I wish I were at another university. (Attachment)
35. _____ I've put on (or lost) too much weight recently. (Personal)
- 36.* _____ I am satisfied with the number and variety of courses available at university. (Academic)
- 37.* _____ I feel that I have enough social skills to get along well in the university setting. (Social)
38. _____ I have been getting angry too easily lately. (Personal)
39. _____ Recently I have had trouble concentrating when I try to study. (Personal)
40. _____ I haven't been sleeping very well. (Personal)
41. _____ I'm not doing well enough academically for the amount of work I put in. (Academic)
42. _____ I am having difficulty feeling at ease with other people at university.
- 43.* _____ I am satisfied with the quality or calibre of courses available at university.
- 44.* _____ I am attending classes regularly.
45. _____ Sometimes my thinking gets muddled up too easily.
- 46.* _____ I am satisfied with the extent to which I am participating in social activities at university.
- 47.* _____ I expect to stay at this university for a bachelor's degree.
48. _____ I haven't been mixing too well with the opposite sex lately.
49. _____ I worry a lot about my university expenses.
- 50.* _____ I am enjoying my academic work at university.
51. _____ I have been feeling lonely a lot at university lately.
52. _____ I am having a lot of trouble getting started on homework assignments.
- 53.* _____ I feel I have good control over my life situation at university.
- 54.* _____ I am satisfied with my program of courses for this term.
- 55.* _____ I have been feeling in good health lately.

Appendix G

The Social Provisions Scale

Below you will find a number of statements about relationships with other people. Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with each statement using the following scale:

-4 = very strongly disagree	+4 = very strongly agree
-3 = strongly disagree	+3 = strongly agree
-2 = moderately disagree	+2 = moderately agree
-1 = slightly disagree	+1 = slightly agree
0 = neutral	

1. _____ There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it.
- 2.* _____ I feel that I do not have any close personal relationships with other people.
- 3.* _____ There is no one I can turn to for guidance in times of stress.
4. _____ There are people who depend on me for help.
5. _____ There are people who enjoy the same social activities I do.
- 6.* _____ Other people do not view me as competent.
7. _____ I feel personally responsible for the well-being of another person.
8. _____ I feel part of a group of people who share my attitudes and beliefs.
- 9.* _____ I do not think other people respect my skills and abilities.
- 10.* _____ If something went wrong, no one would come to my assistance.
11. _____ I have close relationships that provide me with a sense of emotional security and well-being.
12. _____ There is someone I could talk to about important decisions in my life.
13. _____ I have relationships where my competence and skill are recognized.
- 14.* _____ There is no one who shares my interests and concerns.
- 15.* _____ There is no one who really relies on me for their well-being.
16. _____ There is a trustworthy person I could turn to for advice if I were having problems.
17. _____ I feel a strong emotional bond with at least one other person.
- 18.* _____ There is no one I can depend on for aid if I really need it.
- 19.* _____ There is no one I feel comfortable talking about problems with.
20. _____ There are people who admire my talents and abilities.
- 21.* _____ I lack a feeling of intimacy with another person.
- 22.* _____ There is no one who likes to do the things I do.
23. _____ There are people I can count on in an emergency.
- 24.* _____ No one needs me to care for them any more.

Appendix H

The Social Support Scale

This section of the questionnaire asks you to list the people who are available to provide you with help and support. People can be supportive in many ways: they can help you do things, provide guidance and advice, listen to your problems, or just give you some company and consolation when you need it. On the page below, please list all the people you know whom you can count on for help or support. Give the person's initials and their relationship to you (e.g. TM – Brother). You should include anyone who might be able to provide some support – family members or relatives, friends, co-workers, teachers, professionals or others. In addition, please indicate how satisfied you are with the support you receive from this person.

- 3 = very dissatisfied
- 2 = dissatisfied
- 1 = slightly dissatisfied
- 0 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- +1 = slightly satisfied
- +2 = satisfied
- +3 = very satisfied

<u>Initials</u>	<u>Relationship</u>	<u>Satisfaction Rating</u>
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____
8. _____	_____	_____
9. _____	_____	_____
10. _____	_____	_____
11. _____	_____	_____
12. _____	_____	_____
13. _____	_____	_____
14. _____	_____	_____
15. _____	_____	_____

Appendix I

Feedback Sheet to Participants

Thank you for participating in this study. The following is just a bit more information concerning the study. If at any point you have any questions, please feel free to contact the experimenter, Krista Martin, at (519) 884-1970, ext. 2951.

This research focuses on the transition students make when they leave high school to attend university. It has been demonstrated in the past that this can be a very stressful time for many first year students. Many times new students have idealized expectations concerning university and find themselves disillusioned not long into first term. They are faced with a new social environment and they are leaving behind many of the individuals they feel closest to. The present research sought to determine what factors facilitate the transition to university.

My study examined various factors that may influence the adjustment process. In particular, I looked at factors such as the level of social support university students report, the degree to which students are involved in campus life, how this involvement affects their social support network, and determinants of getting involved in campus activities (i.e., living in residence, past involvement, and parental involvement).

It is possible that better understanding of adjustment to university will aid school officials in preventing students from dropping out and also in assisting them in adapting more positively to life at university.

The results of this study will be posted on the bulletin board outside the psychology department no later than March 30, 1996.

In order to receive your bonus credit, please keep this handout as a "receipt" for your participation.

Again, thank you for your participation.

Signed: _____
Krista Martin

Date: _____