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Social Disorganization in University Residence Halls

William Fennell

A THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Science in Criminal Justice
in the School of Graduate Studies and Research of
University of Mississippi

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ABSTRACT

Social disorganization theory researchers have paid little attention to college and university campuses. To build on this limited research the current study attempted to analyze the incident rates on The University of Mississippi's Oxford campus to ascertain if social disorganization theory explained any variance between the rates of the different types of residence halls. The presence of three different types of residence halls during the 2012-2013 school year, with three different approaches to socialization, created a unique opportunity to study if halls that promoted environments that encouraged social control according to social disorganization theory would have lower incident rates. The three types of halls were traditional, residential colleges, and contemporary halls. They respectively approached socialization through random room assignments, promoting diversity of academic pursuits, and organizing students by academic and other interests. The incidents were categorized as violent, property, and drugs and alcohol, similar to incidents that would be under criminal jurisdiction in traditional neighborhoods. The study found mixed results. There was a statistically significant difference between the traditional hall's incident rates and the rates of both residential colleges and contemporary halls. The non-parametric statistics, however, found no significant difference between the incident rates of the residential colleges and the contemporary halls. Social disorganization theory failed to explain the variance between the rates of the different types of residence halls.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to William G. Fennell and Patricia Slocum, my paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother. Their financial support in life and posterity opened many educational opportunities to me, which have helped lead me to this point in my academic career. While neither of them had above a high school degree, they understood the value education and sacrificed to increase my access to it.

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This thesis would not have possible without the help and support of many key individuals from across the University of Mississippi. I would first like to thank my thesis Chair Dr. Linda Keena Ed.D, whose guidance and proofreading made this thesis possible. Dr. Carl Jensen Ph.D. and Dr. Stephen Mallory Ph.D. served on my thesis committee and helped with everything from statistical analysis to identifying the study's limitations. Also, Dr. Michael Wigginton Ph.D., whose chairmanship of the Criminal Justice Master's program created an environment where I had all the resources necessary to do graduate research. Finally, in the Legal Studies department Ms. Carol Forsythe proved to be a tireless resource for when I trying to locate professors, and her constant cheer and encouragement made this long process tolerable.

Beyond the Legal Studies department several key individuals from helped me from across the university. First, this work would not have been possible without Ms. Tiffany Gregory, who was my contact in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, her timely tailoring of the secondary data this study relied upon was critical to my research. Also, from the housing department Dr. BJ Mann Ph.D. and Ms. Jennifer McClure provided helpful and relevant background information on the Housing Department. When it came to my statistical analysis, I was aided by Dr. Lori Wolff Ph.D. and Dr. Melinda Redding Ph.D. Finally, Ms. Mary Harrington from the Department of Institutional Research and Assessment gave me access to the secondary data that I needed.

On a personal note, this work would also have not been possible without the loving

support of Tasha my devoted wife, who encouraged me throughout the research and writing process. Overall, I cannot take credit for this work without acknowledging the vast amount of support I have received over the last three semesters.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

In the search to enrich the learning environment in higher education the role of the residence hall has received significant attention. Universities around the world have acted as real life laboratories to discover the impact of different living situations on their undergraduate students. Out of these efforts to provide a quality residential experience, living-learning communities and residential colleges have emerged along with traditional halls. Living-learning communities and residential colleges aspire to foster a sense of community in the residence halls. Living-learning communities focus on creating a community of students who share common academic interests. Residential colleges, however, promote a sense of community by combining a diverse group of students who benefit from its interdisciplinary atmosphere.

Research has shown that living-learning communities and residential colleges provide numerous benefits to the students they serve (Communities, 2013). For example, Jessup-Anger (2012) reported smaller communities in residential colleges helped produce the type of engagement often found at small liberal arts colleges, even when the residential college was located at a much larger institution. Similarly, Pasque and Murphy (2005) examined the effects of living-learning communities on students' academic achievement and engagement. They found a small, but significant, relationship between living-learning community participation, academic achievement and student engagement. Likewise, Inkelas, Vogt, and Weisman (2003) addressed this in their study of three different living-learning programs at one institution, an

honors program, a transition to college program, and a curriculum based group. Their findings on student engagement showed that there was a significant difference between the transition, honors and control group; however, all three rated enjoying classwork higher than the control group. As a result, researchers have observed varying degrees of success in living-learning communities when it came to different aspects of student achievement (Inkelas et al., 2003).

The University of Mississippi's Department of Student Housing defined its mission as "to provide, secure, supportive, and comfortable communities, designed to contribute to the personal and academic growth of each residential student."(Mission, 2013, par.1) This ambitious statement defined the University's priorities when it came to resident life. The objective was that students would benefit from creating a sense of community in their respective residence halls.

The University of Mississippi (UM) presented a unique situation in that it used three different types of residence halls on the Oxford campus during the 2012-2013 school year. These three types of halls employed different methods of developing community and created an opportunity to research which type was best at fostering a community where rules could be enforced. The three types of residence halls were traditional halls, residential colleges, and contemporary residence halls that utilized living-learning communities/freshman interest groups (Accommodations, 2013).

The three types of residence halls each approached the residential experience in a unique way. The traditional halls served the general student population with two person rooms and communal bathrooms (Accommodations, 2013). The residential colleges were based on the Oxford model and housed faculty along with students (Residential Colleges, 2013). Their purpose was to integrate student from different disciplines in one community to further learning (Residential College South, 2013; Residential Environment, 2013). The contemporary residence

halls that housed living-learning communities and freshman interest groups contained students with the same academic interests, or groups centered on common extracurricular activities (Communities, 2013). In essence, this last group was focused on building small homogenous communities of students.

The three types of housing had three different approaches to socialization. The first simply positioned students under a shared roof; the second sought to create a diverse community, and the final type attempted to create a close-knit group based on shared interests. With three different approaches to socialization, the questions arose, was there a difference in their ability to provide social control over their student populations? This study attempted to answer that question by applying the social disorganization theory to the residence halls' incident rates.

Conceptual Underpinning for Study

Social disorganization as a theory in criminology has its origins in the first half of the twentieth century. The term originated with William Thomas and Florian Znaniecki in 1918 with their work *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Veysey & Messner, 1999). In their two-volume work Thomas and Znaniecki (1918,1927) looked at the lives of Polish Peasants as they were in Europe and then how they adjusted to their new lives in the United States. Based on their observations, they defined social disorganization as a “decrease of the influence of existing social rules of behavior upon individual members of the group”(p. 1128). Thomas and Znaiecki (1918, 1927) noted that social disorganization started when individuals began viewing individual success, as they personally defined it, as more important than the community.

Robert Park (1925) added to the theory with his work in the collection, *The City*. Park (1925) emphasized the role social organizations, such as schools and churches, and how delinquency was a product of these institutions not functioning correctly. He also examined the

role of the automobile in increasing people's mobility and how it threatened the stability of social organizations. Park (1925) highlighted the impact of mobility and migration on delinquency rates in the northern urban African-American population and concluded that their move from the rural south caused social disorganization in their new communities.

The early work on social disorganization theory culminated with Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay in 1942 (Sampson & Groves, 1989). While working on research in Chicago, Shaw and McKay (1942, 1969) noticed that some neighborhoods had consistently higher crime rates even as different ethnic groups migrated in and out of the areas. To study this phenomenon, they divided Chicago into neighborhoods and then plotted juvenile crime data. They quickly noticed that neighborhoods surrounding the industrial core of Chicago maintained a constant and higher rate of delinquency. These areas were found surrounding the industrial and commercial center of the city and home to the newest and poorest residents of the city, and over time the population changed as new immigrants replaced older generations. Shaw and McKay (1942, 1969) concluded, "The development of divergent systems of values requires a type of situation in which traditional conventional control is either weak or nonexistent" (p. 188). These divergent systems presented themselves in economic disadvantage areas, with immigrant populations, who had conflicting social values. To generalize their findings, they observed delinquency rates in other major cities across the United States and found similar results, and continued to update their data throughout their careers (Shaw & McKay, 1969).

Social disorganization theory focuses on societal issues that allow for criminal cultures to develop and the aspects of a community that stop it from effectively asserting social control over its inhabitants. Social disorganization involves aspects of both control and strain theories (Kornhauser, 1978). Historically, the lack of social control focuses on three main aspects,

economic deprivation, a heterogeneous population, and an unstable resident population (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969). The low socio-economic status of a neighborhood disabled it from being able to properly invest in social institutions that would have helped create social control and at the same caused gaps between individual ambitions and the means to attain them legally. A diverse population often meant that the neighborhood would contain people with different customs and values, thus making unified social norms control more difficult, while leaving room for deviant cultures to develop (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969).

Finally, with a transient population, large numbers of people who continually moved in and out of the neighborhood, social control is difficult to maintain. It took people time to adjust to a new neighborhood and become invested in it. Organizations that were formed from the local population struggled to maintain stability and continuity (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969).

All three of these factors have been evaluated over the course of social disorganization research (Pratt & Cullen, 2005). Recently, as more complex statistical and survey methods have been developed the scope of social disorganization has been expanded. Modern research often focuses on the relationships between individuals in the society and their perceived ties to the community. This has been displayed in work on ideas such as, sense of community (Cantillon, Davidson & Schweitzer, 2003).

As with any theory, social disorganization has been critiqued and altered as years of research have challenged its accuracy and reliability. The greatest updates to the work established by Shaw and McKay (1942,1969) came during the 1980's. Bursik and Webb (1982) reevaluated the data sets that Shaw and McKay (1942, 1969) had used and included updated data from the proceeding decades. Their reanalysis both confirmed and contradicted Shaw and McKay's (1942, 1969) findings. For the original data through 1950, Shaw and McKay's (1942,

1969) conclusions held valid. The theory was further validated with the work of Sampson and Groves (1989), who examined two national surveys in Great Britain. Sampson and Groves (1989) found that “sparse friendship networks, unsupervised teenage peer groups, and low organizational participation had disproportionately high rates of crime and delinquency” (p. 799). These factors were tied to community structure issues described in classic social disorganization theory (Sampson & Groves, 1989). In the aftermath of these studies there has been some questions raised about current social disorganization theory research.

After 1950, neighborhoods with changing populations saw varying levels of delinquency that were not accounted for by Shaw and McKay’s (1942, 1969) projection of a transition zone around Chicago’s city center. Bursik and Webb (1982) contributed this in part to the Supreme Court rulings in both *Shelley vs. Kraemer* and *Hurd v. Hodge*. These rulings stopped the government from enforcing racist housing covenants. This opened large parts of many cities, including Chicago, to an influx of African Americans, who had previously had been overcrowded in some of the city’s poorest areas. This shift caused many neighborhoods to see changes in their delinquency rates. The change supported the social disorganizations explanation of the impact of a shifting population (Bursik & Webb, 1982). Thus, the theory was refined and opened to future research.

Kubrin and Weitzer (2003) addressed several aspects of current social disorganization research. They recognized that the research of Sampson and Groves (1989) started to address the role of social ties and subsequent research has built on the concept. They argued, however, that there was not enough known about the different types of social ties and the varying social capital produced by them to understand their impact on crime rates at the time. This point of contention was supported by Portes (1998), who found that social ties were much more complex than

previously understood. Historically, social disorganization theory accepted the role of deviant subcultures in producing crime in areas that were disorganized. Therefore, further research is needed to understand how these subcultures interact with the large culture. Kubrin and Weitzer (2003) acknowledged the research on informal control and its centrality to social disorganization theory, but also highlighted the need to address the role of formal control. The influence of police and society's formal control mechanisms for crime and delinquency has been observed to influence delinquency rates and thus deserved addressing in social disorganization theory (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003; Rose & Clear, 1998). Also, many factors outside of a communities control needed to be taken into account, such as the urban political economy and the introduction of specialized housing, all having drastic effects on crime rates. (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003).

The final aspect of social disorganization research addressed by Kubrin and Weitzer (2003) was how research was conducted. This included using longitudinal instead of cross-sectional studies to account for changing neighborhoods. They suggested using instruments to study the reciprocity between crime and social disorganization and the spatial inadequacies of using census tracts or other prefigured boundaries for communities.

Bursik (1988) had previously published a critique of social disorganization theory and made the following points. First, the emphasis on group behavior neglected the role and responsibility of the individuals who were part of the delinquency rates, resulting in an over emphasis on group behavior. Next, social disorganization was not operationalized clearly enough; this critique was before recent studies starting with Sampson and Groves (1989). Another critique was the use of official crime statistics that were influenced by biases in the criminal justice system. The final criticism was that social disorganization assumed a normative view of social control in the physical areas of study (Bursik, 1988). Research has addressed some

of these issues, such as in the work of Bellair (1997), finding that a combination of loose and close social ties were the best way to maintain social organization. Similarly, Pattillo (1998) examined how deviant groups infiltrated larger social networks. While the findings added to the understanding of the phenomenon, it still needs to be integrated into social disorganization theory.

Statement of the Problem

The premise is that a community with closer social ties and more homogeneity would be able to provide social control over its population, thus reducing the opportunity for deviance to develop. Since UM used three distinct types of residence halls, serving a pool of students who met the requirements for admission to UM and lived in close physical proximity on campus, it gave ample opportunity to address this premise. UM's Oxford campus provided a possible contrast of how different types of social communities could develop in a university setting. However, this was an area where social disorganization theory had not yet been explored. Thus, there was a need to conduct a study to ascertain whether the theory would accurately explain any variation in incident rates in the residence halls at UM.

Purpose of the Study

With the research problem stated, it is necessary to list the specific research questions that were tested. These questions focused on exploring the differences among the three types of residence halls, specifically looking for differences in their incident rates.

The hypotheses predicted that the social disorganization theory would or would not apply to the residence halls at UM. The null and alternative hypotheses for each question were mutually exclusive claims, where the data would indicate them as acceptable or rejectable. By

testing each of these smaller hypotheses, the larger research question of how does social disorganization theory applied to the residence halls at UM was answered.

Research Questions

1. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between traditional and contemporary halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?
2. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between residential colleges and traditional residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?
3. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between residential colleges and contemporary residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?
4. Is there a significant difference in the incident rates of the individual contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?

Hypotheses

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the contemporary residence halls and traditional halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H₁: The contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the traditional residence halls.

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the residential colleges and traditional residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H₂: The residential colleges on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the traditional residence halls.

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the contemporary residence halls and residential colleges on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H₃: The contemporary residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the residential colleges.

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates in residence halls with floors dedicated to specific majors or interests and residence halls that are not grouped by interest or major on The Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H₄: The contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi with floors dedicated to specific majors or interests will show lower incident rates than contemporary residence halls with greater heterogeneity.

Limitations and Assumptions

As with any academic study this research was subjected to certain limitations and assumptions. Understanding these issues was important as they put the study's results into context. Ignoring them would have led to the drawing of false conclusions. This study relied on data that had already been collected by the Dean of Students office at UM and processed by the Department of Institutional Research and Assessment. Document analysis removed the limitations associated with some other types of data collection such as surveys. These limitations could have manifested themselves in issues such as testing bias and the Hawthorne effect (Hagan, 2010).

The limitations of this study primarily surrounded the original data collection. The data available for analysis was limited to what UM had collected and chose to make available. This data represented the reported incident rates. Any violent, property, or drug/alcohol incidents that were committed in the residence halls and not reported to the dean of student's office were not represented in the collected data. This was a limitation common to research that relies on official

crime data (Barton et al., 2010). This concern was real as Hart and Colavito (2011) found that campus crimes were reported at lower rates than normal neighborhoods.

Another limitation was the potential for selection bias; a threat when the group that is being studied is not representative of the whole (Hagan, 2010). The study analyzed data from only one public university. This limited the findings of the study, as they may not have described outcomes of living-learning communities and residential colleges in other states or countries.

Selection bias also applied to internal differences among the three types of residence halls studied on the UM campus. While all three groups contained UM students, the differences in the three types of communities may have led to different students choosing the different types of residence halls. The Luckyday RC was composed primarily of students who belonged to the Luckyday scholarship program, creating a relatively unique population (Residential Environment, 2013). Similarly, the RC South required students to submit a secondary application, which forced more effort out of those applying (Residential College South, 2013). The Ridge halls, by basing their residence populations on living-learning communities and freshman interest groups, attracted a specific group of students (Accommodations, 2013). Another difference in population was reflected by the residential colleges' promotion of a program that offered single rooms to upperclassmen (Residential Colleges, 2013).

The final issue that promoted internal selection bias was the difference in cost of the different types of residence halls. The traditional residence halls cost \$2,075 a semester, while the Ridge halls and residential colleges cost \$2,600 (J.L. McClure, personal communication, March 14, 2013). This price difference had the power to entice students from different economic situations towards different types of residence halls; however, economic deprivation is a basic

tenet of social disorganization theory (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969). Thus, differences in the economic background of the students could be addressed in the larger scope of social disorganization and is mentioned in the context of this study's conclusions, even though it is outside the factors that were studied. The limitation of selection bias was not taken lightly, and is addressed in the conclusion of this study along with potential future research suggestions.

The next issue with the data set collected was its relatively small size. It included data from academic year 2012-13, starting on August 20, 2012 and concluding with final exams on May 7, 2013 (Academic Calendar, 2013). The data set was limited to these dates as the Ridge residence halls, containing the living-learning communities and freshman interest groups, first opened in August 2012 (Accommodations, 2013). Thus, any further comparison of residence halls would have been limited to the residential colleges and the traditional halls. With this limited data, it was impossible to study incident trends over multiple years, limiting the conclusions of the study. However, through the use of descriptive statistics, the available data were analyzed to evaluate if there were significant differences in the residence halls studied despite the small sample size. Since this study took place over a nine-month period maturation potentially was an issue, which was the threat that the population changed during the time it was studied (Hagan, 2010). Maturation was not a major concern to this particular study, due to the theory being evaluated. If social disorganization theory were to apply to the residence halls at UM a decrease in the incident rates would have been expected as communities formed over the academic year. Fortunately, the data that was collected was presented in two semester blocks, which allowed for possible changes in rates to be evaluated.

These limitations were real and needed be addressed. The study used non-probability sampling, which helped account for some variance by controlling for gender differences in

residence halls (Bachman & Schutt, 2014). Over variances were impossible to control for as this study relied on secondary data from non-standardized communities. This type of issue has been observed since Shaw and McKay (1942, 1969) were forced to divide the city of Chicago into different neighborhoods that contained varied populations. The study accommodated these limitations by acknowledging them in the study's findings and conclusions, with the understanding that they may have impacted the data. At the same time many of these factors such as economic affluence, the motivation to do extra applications to join a group, presence of residential stability in the form of upper classmen, and previous academic and social achievement did not fall under the guise of this study. The factors could be included under the larger role of what forms strong communities. This opened the door for further research, which could seek to isolate these factors individually.

In addition to the aforementioned limitations, there were also certain assumptions that were built into this study. The first assumption was the reliability of the collected data. The study assumed that the data were reliable. While it acknowledged the data was limited to the incidents reported, the assumption was that the data were collected and recorded correctly. It assumed that the data, from the initial reporting to when the incident was processed by the department of Institutional Research and Assessment, were handled correctly and no alterations were made either on purpose or by error. It then assumed that the office that processed the raw reports processed them correctly or at least made errors uniformly, and that their final products, the basis of this study, accurately described the raw data.

Next, it is assumed that the 2012-2013 academic school year was a typical year at UM. This assumption was important for the data if it was to have any level of generalization. Then, there was the assumption that the sample of residence halls reflected typical living-learning

communities, residential colleges, and traditional residence halls. Using the data from the entire 2012-2013 school year and not selecting a smaller unit of time minimized these assumptions. Finally, there was an assumption that outside variables such as student's academic and social backgrounds created differences in residence halls that were not large enough to have been fatal to the study. This assumption is based off of the limitation of a natural selection bias, which threatened the study because different types of students were attracted to the different types of residence halls. To address this concern the type of factors that could have influenced student decisions was accounted for in all of the conclusions that were drawn in chapter five. Regrettably, the secondary nature of the data forced this research to rely on these basic assumptions without an accurate way to test them. During the literature review, information on residence halls, campus crime, and social disorganization theory research is presented to examine these assumptions within the context of previous research.

Definition of Key Terms

The following key terms helped frame the topic of the study by creating a common understanding of some key concepts and terms used.

Property- "A very extensive and flexible term for various rights of ownership... Everything that is owned" (Gilmer, 1986, p. 268).

Residence Hall- Synonymous with dormitory. "A building as at a college, containing a number of private or semiprivate rooms for residents, usually along with common bathroom facilities and recreation areas" (Good, 1973, p. 194).

University- "An institution of higher education consisting of a liberal arts college, offering a program of graduate study, and having usually two or more professional schools or faculties and empowered to confer degrees in various fields of study"(Good, 1973, p. 632).

Violation- “An act which contravenes the provisions of a statute or administrative regulation” (Gilmer, 1986, p. 337).

Violent- “Physical force used against law, private rights, or public liberty; an assault or intimidation by a display of force” (Gilmer, 1986, p.337).

Summary

The conceptual underpinning of the study was based on the social disorganization theory that evolved out of the early work of Shaw and McKay (1942, 1969). This criminological theory has received relatively little study and attention on college campuses (Barton et al., 2010). However, as Barton et al. (2010) noted, college campuses do function as geographic neighborhoods and thus were open to the application of this theory. By focusing on the residence halls on UM’s campus, this study evaluated how incident rates in three different types of residence hall communities were explained by social disorganization theory.

The three types of residence halls in this study, residential colleges, living-learning communities and traditional halls functioned as three different types of communities (Accommodations, 2013). These differences and the incident rates in each set of residence halls raised the question, “did social disorganization theory apply in this context?” Social disorganization theory asserts that strong communities should lead to lower incident rates (Cantillon et al., 2003). While this study attempted to be as scientifically sound as possible, it was based off data gathered from an uncontrolled setting, which presented certain limitations and assumptions. These, along with the basic key terms were outlined in this chapter.

The proceeding chapters contain the culmination of this study. Chapter two discusses all relevant literature to this study. The review consists of an analysis of research related to residence halls, campus crime, and social disorganization research. Chapter three describes the

study's methodology. The sample population and data collection procedures are described. The data analysis process is also discussed to explain how the research questions were answered and hypotheses accepted or rejected. Chapter four presents the data analysis of the study, both in its original form and after statistical analysis. Finally, chapter five concludes the study with appropriate conclusion and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter will review the relevant literature associated with residence life on a college campus, campus crime, and social disorganization theory. Each of these subsections has valuable information to add from prior academic research and builds towards the application of social disorganization to the residence halls at UM.

In chapter one the topic of this study has been introduced. This included the central question of whether social disorganization theory explained incident rates among different types of residence halls on a university campus. To examine this, the incidents in the different types of residence halls on UM's Oxford campus were compared statistically and evaluated. Chapter one also laid the groundwork for the study by establishing the conceptual underpinning of the social disorganization theory. This framework was used to evaluate if the hypotheses were accepted or rejected based on the analyzed data. The chapter concluded with definitions of key terms and a discussion of the study's limitations and assumptions. The research questions that this study answered were as follows:

1. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between traditional and contemporary halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?
2. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between residential colleges and traditional residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?

3. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between residential colleges and contemporary residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?
4. Is there a significant difference in the incident rates of the individual contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?

This chapter's discussion of literature addresses several relevant subtopics. First, it looks at how social disorganization has been applied to higher education. Then, the review assesses the literature on living-learning communities and residential colleges, followed by a review of the literature on campus crime. This section will conclude with general literature on social disorganization theory.

Social Disorganization in Higher Education

The research on the application of social disorganization theory on the college campus was limited. However, there was an abundance of research on the impact of living-learning communities and residential colleges on students in general. This information coupled with relevant research on campus crime provided the context for this study. The addition of some other relevant social disorganization research connects the broad research on higher education to the purpose of the study. The rest of this chapter will build the context necessary for the study to fit into the wider world of Criminology and Crime Science. First, the relevant research on the theory of social disorganization as it was applied to higher education deserves examination.

In their inaugural study, Barton et al. (2010) sought to understand university campus crime through the application of social disorganization theory. They noted that reliable campus crime data was not widely available until 1990 when its release was mandated by the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act. Barton et al. (2010) observed an opportunity to apply social disorganization theory, as a college campus was a "neighborhood," with set borders. They

expected that the social structure of a campus and its organizations would explain their crime rates. The data set was large, pulling criminal data from the Uniform Crime Report, and analyzing 160 institutions in the United States. The results showed a positive relationship between campus organization participation and campus crime, which was the opposite of what social disorganization theory would predict. Barton et al. (2010) found there was a disconnect between social structure and community organizations and social structure played a role in influencing campus crime rates, among other factors. Social structure was a better predictor of property crime than violent crime. Some other aspects of social disorganization were supported. They found that campus racial heterogeneity was associated with increases in crime. This agreed with traditional social disorganization theory. While this study was the most direct application of social disorganization theory to higher education, an understanding of the research surrounding residence halls was also necessary for this study.

Living-Learning Communities and Residential College Literature

Understanding the current research on living-learning communities, residential colleges, and their potential benefits was critical to this study. These benefits were both social and academic, and varied depending on what programs were implemented (Inkelas et al., 2003). The sum of this research showed that living-learning communities and residential colleges did have the potential to positively impact students (Lichenstein, 2005; Muldoon & Macdonald, 2009; Inkelas et al., 2003; Petacchi, Weaver, Engel, Kolivoski & Das, 2010; Jessup-Anger, 2012). To understand these benefits it was necessary to look at how these resident halls impacted the different aspects of a student's life.

Socially, community oriented residence halls, such as living-learning communities and residential colleges, benefited students. Lichenstein (2005) found that students in a living-

learning community exhibited a strong sense of community in their residence halls, though this did not extend to a sense of community with the university as a whole. This information was highly relevant to this study, as sense of community has been seen as a factor in social disorganization research in neighborhood settings (Cantillon et al., 2003).

The policies set in place by the institution also had a significant impact on the social atmosphere. Arboleda, Wang, Shelley, and Whalen (2003) found that the noise level in a residence hall could impact student's socialization. They found that too much noise and too little noise were both detrimental to the students' socializing. Li, McCoy, Shelley, and Whalen (2005), also found that policies were important in creating a positive experience in the residence hall on an individual level with policies such as co-curricular requirements and limited visitation times. Thus, policies and structure in the community based residence halls served both individuals and the group.

In an Australian study, researchers found that students involved in living-learning communities in residential colleges showed positive outcomes in areas such as sense of purpose, isolation and loneliness (Muldoon & Macdonald, 2009). Students in these communities have also showed a more positive view of their residence halls than students in traditional residence halls (Inkelas, Vogt, Longerbeam & Owen, 2006). At the same time Inkelas et al. (2006) noted that they did not see significant differences in students' self-confidence or growth in personal philosophies when compared to the control group. With these positive outcomes noted, research has shown that different types of communities achieve different levels of success. This was noted in the work of Inkelas et al. (2003) who compared three different types of communities to a control group. These three groups were based off the themes of curriculum, transition to college, and honors recognition. All three groups were found to be supportive socially; however,

the honors and curriculum groups reported their residence halls as more socially supportive than the transitions group. These differing rates came from students on the same campus; this limited generalization, but did highlight the differences that living-learning programs could create on one campus. Inkelas et al. (2003) also noted that when comparing the effectiveness of the different residential communities the success and involvement rates varied across ethnic and gender groups. Arboleda, et al. (2003) explored the impact of residence halls and found the benefits were most substantial in several key demographics. Primarily, men at the institution had better involvement in their community based residence halls than women. However, this was contrasted with the work of Li et al. (2005) who found that women were more satisfied in their freshman community based residence halls than men, along with whites being more satisfied than minorities, and out of state students were more satisfied than their instate counterparts. These differences highlighted how different community programs could benefit different groups, but it should be apparent that community based residence halls have the potential to provide a supportive atmosphere for socialization.

The importance of socialization was highlighted in the research of Petacchi, Weaver, Engel, Kolivoski, and Das (2010), who found that students responded positively to social environments and helped explain the high retention rates in their community program. According to Petacchi et al. (2010) there is strong evidence that community based residence halls provide a supportive social environment, not only benefiting the individual, but also manifesting into a sense of community. In contrast, Stassen's 2003 study did not support the social impact of living-learning communities, but did support their academic benefits. This support for the academic benefits of the community based residence halls was not an isolated finding. In fact, many of the same studies that identified these social benefits also explored the role residence

halls in academic success and engagement and found compelling results there as well (Jessup-Anger, 2012; Muldoon & Macdonald, 2009; Pasque & Murphy, 2005).

When evaluating the value of community based residence halls, the role of academic success must be included. As with the social benefits, researchers such Muldoon and Macdonald (2009), Pasque and Murphy (2005), and Jessup-Anger (2012) have shown the impact of residence halls on academic success. Muldoon and Macdonald (2009) noted in their Australian research that students in living-learning communities reported being able to handle their first academic challenge, the transition to college. They also found that these communities supported their students as they adjusted to the different instructional techniques found in a college setting. Students responded to the survey with higher levels of motivation, purpose, and with a balance between their academic and social lives. These traits would be expected to correspond with academic achievement. Similarly, Pasque and Murphy (2005) examined the academic results of students living in living-learning communities and found that when other variables were controlled the students showed higher academic achievement and intellectual engagement than those in the control group. The findings confirmed that communal residence halls offered the same benefits of a much smaller college experience. Jessup-Anger (2012) emphasized this point when comparing the benefits of residential college involvement to those of a small liberal arts college. This benefit included developing the attitude of a lifelong learner in the residents. It should be clear that community based residence halls impacted students both socially and academically, however, these factors were not always separate and some key aspects of community based residence halls impacted both of these areas (Jessup-Anger, 2012; Muldoon & Macdonald, 2009; Pasques & Murphy, 2005).

The overlap between academic and social benefits was observable in many studies that evaluated living-learning communities and residential college programs. One area of overlap was the relationship between students and faculty. Jessup-Anger (2012) noted this relationship in the comparison of community based residence halls and small liberal arts colleges. Li et al. (2005) also noted that relationships with college staff members were a positive aspect of community based residence halls. Other studies found both social and academic benefits implying that these were not mutually exclusive (Inkelas et al., 2003; Inkelas et al., 2006; Petacchi et al., 2010). While these positive outcomes were promising, Inkelas et al. (2003) found different programs provided diverse levels of faculty/student interaction, with some not creating a significant change from the control group. Thus, not all community based residence halls were the same and did not produce identical benefits. With this established the current research available on campus crime was also relevant.

Campus Crime Literature

Campus crime and safety literature was an important part of this study as it helped establish the study's background. This research helped frame the problem of crime on college and university campuses in the United States. Incidents of crime on campuses were less frequent and less severe than in other communities (Henson & Stone, 1999). According to Henson and Stone (1999), media attention on campus crime events was unwarranted, in light of actual crime rates. Their findings were echoed in the work of Payne and Salotti (2007) who found that reported crime rates for both violent and property crimes were lower than national averages. However, one area that campuses showed a much higher rate than other communities were incidents involving drug and alcohol usage.

In terms of demographics, Payne and Salotti (2007) noted crimes on campuses were overwhelming committed by males, regardless of the type of incident. Payne and Salotti (2007) further noted students at their target liberal arts college showed higher crime rates when involved in campus organizations. Based off these results they rationalized that this relationship was explained by peer pressure resulting in a reinforcement of illegal behaviors.

Not only were campuses safe, but Baker and Boland (2011) found at their target institution that both students and university staff responded positively to questions about their safety and confidence in university authorities. The vast majority of respondents answered that they felt safe when walking to their car after dark and that they had confidence that the campus authorities would handle an accusation of sexual, verbal, or physical aggression if reported. Baker and Boland (2011) cautioned that they had a small sample size at one university, limiting the generalization of this study to other colleges and universities. A study like this and the work of Payne and Salotti (2007) suggested that campus crime data and news reports needed to be kept in context. One area that deserved significant attention was the discrepancy between campus crime and what was reported to authorities.

Campus crime was no different than crime in normal communities in the fact that not every crime was reported to the appropriate authorities. This lack of reporting stemmed from many different issues; however, it does complicate a study of crime and reported statistics. Henson and Stone (1999) noted that many of the unreported crimes were small, and the property crimes involved items that had little worth to the owners. Hart and Colavito (2011) noted in their study that roughly one third of campus crimes were reported, a reporting rate lower than the general population, including college-aged people who did not attend a university or college. Through their study they did find that social control positively influenced crime-reporting rates.

Hart and Colvavito (2011) feared that apathy toward reporting crimes was growing among college students.

Social Disorganization Literature

When approaching the literature of social disorganization theory it was important to understand the concepts that made up the larger theory. Several of these key components were relevant to the study. One aspect was that social structure in a neighborhood would reduce crime and that heterogeneous neighborhoods would contain smaller social structures (Kingston, Huizinga & Elliot, 2009). Similarly, Warner, and Rountree (1997) observed social ties were tied to a neighborhood's stability and homogeneity; however, they found mixed results on how this explained crime. Lack of sense of community was linked to disadvantaged neighborhoods, thus tying it into social disorganization theory (Cantillon et al., 2003).

Research has evaluated which types of social bonds were best, finding that communities that fostered both frequent and infrequent social contact with others were superior (Bellair, 1997). Bellair (1997) found that the percentage of residents who socialized at least once a year was an indicator of property crimes such as burglary, auto-theft, and robbery. It should be noted that outlying situations could reverse concepts such as the importance of homogeneity. Allen and Cancino (2012) found that when studying juvenile Latinos along the Texas border, urban homogenous neighborhoods had higher crime rates compared to heterogeneous neighborhoods. They concluded that the heterogeneous neighborhoods contained more middle class residents, explaining the difference in crime rates. Studies like Allen and Cancino (2012) showed the need to look at individual pieces of research to gain a fuller appreciation how social disorganization worked across many diverse settings.

Social disorganization theory has already been applied to many areas of society. These results while not directly related to residence halls or higher education helped by demonstrating different facets of the theory. These different revelations provided a context for the proposed hypotheses in the larger scope of social disorganization theory. An example of this was in the research of Sampson, Morenoff and Earls (2009) who found that children in stable and affluent neighborhoods had a high collective efficacy, and the areas surrounding these neighborhoods showed similar outcomes. High rates of collective efficacy were also important, as they have been linked to decreased rates of violent crimes in American urban neighborhoods (Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997). As the contemporary residence halls contained individual living-learning communities and freshman interest groups, the impact of one community on surrounding ones was applicable (Accommodations, 2013).

Hayes-Smith and Whaley (2009) applied the theory to their study of adolescent methamphetamine use in the state of Michigan. They found that schools that had students with lower socio-economic status and more residential instability had higher methamphetamine use. However, not all of their results were explained by social disorganization theory. They found, for example, that heterogeneity actually decreased methamphetamine use. Studies with mixed findings such as this showed how complex the causes of crime could be.

Bellair (2000) studied burglary and found a complex relationship between crime and surveillance. As Burglaries increased the residents of the neighborhood became more alert. This vigilance led to a decrease in stranger assaults and robberies. This reaction to crime was not always observed though; Markowitz, Bellair, Liska, and Liu (2001) found that rising criminal activity could reduce social organization. This in turn led to more violence and social disorganization.

Another study suggested that varying demographics could explain how social ties in different settings could function differently. Warner and Rountree (1997) explored this when they looked at white homogenous neighborhoods and ones with higher heterogeneity and found that social ties explained assault rates in the white neighborhoods, but did not predict assault in heterogeneous areas. At the same time, social ties did not correlate with rates of burglary in Seattle, prompting Warner and Rountree (1997) to suggest that the variables included in social disorganization needed expansion.

Differences in research findings were not uncommon to social disorganization theory research, and there have been some thorough critiques of studies that found results differing from the main tenets of social disorganization theory. These critiques were thoroughly addressed in the conceptual underpinning of this study and demanded that the data used in this study be analyzed carefully as social disorganization theory did not seem to apply equally in all circumstances. An example of this was found in the work of Pattilo (1998) who observed that even seemingly well-organized areas could experience crime when a minority of criminals was well connected. Likewise, Warner and Rountree's (1997) study of social ties as a predictor of assault, failed to find it as an accurate predictor in heterogeneous neighborhoods. However, these examples must be viewed in the context of research like the meta-analysis of crime data performed on the available data from 1960 through 1999 by Pratt and Cullen (2005). They found general support of social disorganization at a macro level.

Social disorganization theory has been sparsely applied at the university level. Barton et al. (2010) represented its main application. Historically, social disorganization theory was focused on delinquent juveniles (Shaw & McKay, 1942,1963). This emphasis made studying social disorganization in a secondary school environment a natural. Coleman (1988) used social

disorganization theory to explain his research on high school dropout rates. He found when comparing, public, private, and religious schools that the religious schools had the highest retention rate. This finding encouraged the rationalization that the students and parents involved in the religious schools were part of a larger religious social network that asserted social control over the students.

The idea that social disorganization theory could help predict academic outcomes was advanced in the work of Cantillon et al. (2003), who found through surveys that juveniles who reported a higher sense of community also had higher GPA's and were more likely to be involved in extracurricular activities. While these positive outcomes showed the upside of a social community, social disorganization theory also helped explain how its lack could have an adverse impact.

Hayes-Smith and Whaley (2009), in their study of adolescent methamphetamine use, also used secondary schools as their base population. The mixed results of this study supported residential stability as a significant factor in the rate of deviance. More recently, Ramirez, Ferrer, Cheng, Cavanaugh and Peek-Asa (2011) applied social disorganization theory to the Los Angeles public school system. They examined the relationship between school policy violations and crime rates in the same schools. The findings across all academic levels revealed rule violations were linked to an exponential increase in crime, though different school levels saw varying crime rates depending on the types of rule violations committed. Ramirez et al. (2011) hypothesized that the same lack of social control in schools that could not stop policy violations such as dress code violations and truancy, also allowed for more serious criminal acts to be committed. This study showed that social disorganization theory could be applied to a group of students who were only a few years younger than the subjects of the current study, culminating

the review of literature at a point where the current research could fit into the historical research of social disorganization theory.

Summary

In this chapter the relevant literature has been thoroughly explored. While there is limited research addressing the theory of social disorganization on a university campus, the research cited laid the groundwork for the current study. This research focused on residence halls, campus crime, and relevant social disorganization research. Relevant research helped place this study in relation to the work of previous researchers.

The rest of this study was built on the literature review and chapter three describes the study's methodology. The sample population and data collection procedures will be described. The data analysis process is discussed to explain how the research questions were answered and hypotheses accepted or rejected. Chapter four describes the results of the study by analyzing the raw data available. Then in chapter five presents final conclusions, implication, and future research ideas are discussed.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This focuses on the research design and methodology of the study. Providing the framework for how the research problem, questions, and hypotheses introduced in chapter one were evaluated. The original research problem was whether or not social disorganization theory would explain varying rates of incidents in the residence halls of UM. The research questions that guided this study were:

Research Questions

1. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between traditional and contemporary halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?
2. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between residential colleges and traditional residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?
3. Is there a significant difference in incident rates between residential colleges and contemporary residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?
4. Is there a significant difference in the incident rates of the individual contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?

Hypotheses

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the contemporary residence halls and traditional halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H₁: The contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the traditional residence halls.

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the residential colleges and traditional residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H₂: The residential colleges on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the traditional residence halls.

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the contemporary residence halls and residential colleges on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H₃: The contemporary residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the residential colleges.

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates in residence halls with floors dedicated to specific majors or interests and residence halls that are not grouped by interest or major on The Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H₄: The contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi with floors dedicated to specific majors or interests will show lower incident rates than contemporary residence halls with greater heterogeneity.

To test these hypotheses specific procedures had to be established. This included information on the population and sample of the study, data collection and instrumentation, and data analysis.

Population and Sample

To study the three different types of residence halls found on UM's Oxford, a sample of residence halls was selected by using a nonprobability sampling technique, specifically quota sampling. According to Bachman and Schutt (2014), quota sampling "simply involves

designating the population into proportions of some group that you want to be represented in your sample” (p. 118). This was a nonprobability based sampling method that was more intentional than simple availability sampling (Bachman & Schutt, 2014). The quota in this study sample was students’ gender, residence hall size, geographic location and types of residence halls. Residence halls were primarily selected on their presenting of relatively equal numbers of male and female students. This sampling was important, since traditional residence halls were gender specific. The three types of residence halls were traditional halls, residential colleges, and new contemporary halls containing living-learning communities and freshman interest groups (Accommodations, 2013). Out of these three groups, a sample was selected to test against the other two groups to evaluate their reported incident rates.

The Oxford campus of UM utilized eight traditional resident halls during the 2012-2013 school year. These halls were: Brown, Crosby, Deaton, Hefley, Kincanon, Martin, Stewart, and Stockard (Accommodations, 2013). These residence halls were not coed, thus to compare to the other types of residence halls, each which strictly segregated genders but did house them under the same roof, male and female residence hall were partnered. The female traditional residence halls outnumber the males, as only Stockard, Deaton, and Kincanon housed male students (Traditional Halls, 2013).

For this study two sets of traditional residence halls were evaluated, they were Stockard/Martin and Deaton/Hefley. These residence halls were selected because of their similarity in their size and geographic proximity. Stockard and Martin were adjacent towers identical in structure with a shared parking lot. They were actually connected by a hallway on the ground floor that contained a shared convenience store. Stockard housed 505 male residents and Martin housed 504 female residents in the fall of 2012 (T.L. Gregory, personal

communication, March 25, 2013). In the spring of 2013 Stockard's population fell to 481 and Martin's population shifted to 494 students (T.L. Gregory, personal communication, May 16, 2013). Deaton and Martin faced one another across a parking lot next to the university's student union, and shared similar size and populations. Deaton housed 94 males and Hefley housed 131 females in the fall of 2012 (T.L. Gregory, personal communication, March 25, 2013). Deaton's population changed to 92 and Hefley moved to 127 in the spring of 2013 (T.L. Gregory, personal communication, May 16, 2013). These samples were selected for convenience as they held fairly equal gender populations, and were most comparable with the populations of the residential colleges and the Ridge residence halls containing the living-learning communities.

There were two residential colleges operating during the 2012-2013 school year on the Oxford campus of UM. They were named the Luckyday Residential College and Residential College South (Accommodations, 2013). The Luckyday Residential College contained mostly students who had received the Luckyday scholarship, while non-scholarship students had to apply especially for the residential college and show a track record of outstanding academic achievement, community service and leadership. It should also be noted that two thirds of the students in the residence hall were freshman or sophomore Luckyday scholars (Residential Environment, 2013).

The Residential College South required a special application from interested students, but did not have any further requirements. It sought to bring together a diverse group of students in the classic mold of residential colleges (Residential College South, 2013). These residential colleges were comparable in size and geographic location. They were both included in the study, because unlike the traditional residential halls where there were several to choose from, The UM Oxford campus contained only two residential colleges. The two residential colleges had

populations of 428 and 310 during the fall of 2012 (T.L. Gregory, personal communication, March 25, 2013). These numbers adjusted to 425 and 300 students in the RC South and Luckyday RC during the spring of 2013 (T.L. Gregory, personal communication, May 16, 2013). This portion of the sample contained the whole relevant population.

The Ridge residence halls, which contained interest and academic based living-learning communities, were referred to as contemporary residence halls. The three Ridge halls were North, West and South. Each of the three Ridge halls contained living-learning communities or freshman interest groups (Accommodations, 2013). Ridge North housed 313 students, Ridge West housed 239 students, and the Ridge South housed 262 students during the fall of 2012 (T.L. Gregory, personal communication, March 25, 2013). During the spring of 2013 the populations adjusted to the following: North 319, South 257, and West 228 (T.L. Gregory, personal communication, May 16, 2013).

Ridge North, contained the FASTrack living-learning community, and the Honors College living-learning community (J.L. McClure, personal communication, March 14, 2013). The Honors college group was made up of students who belonged to the university's honor college (Honors College, 2013). While the FASTrack group, was focused around creating a small support group for students who took classes together during their freshman year (FASTrack, 2013).

Ridge West contained the Business living-learning community for business students (Business, 2013), the Global Perspectives living-learning community, along with the Foundations and The Well freshman interest groups (J.L. McClure, personal communication, March 14, 2013). The Global Perspectives living-learning community was for students who wanted to "incorporate a global perspective in their studies." (Global Perspectives, 2013, par. 1)

The Foundations group was a freshman interest group designed for students who wanted to grow as leaders (Foundations, 2013) and The Well was a freshman interest group designed for students who wanted to “foster balanced living through academic and personal journeys of wellness.” (Well, 2013, par. 1)

Finally, Ridge South housed the STEM and Provost living-learning communities (J.L. McClure, personal communication, March 14, 2013). The STEM living-learning community was for students interested in majors in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM, 2013), and the Provost living-learning community for students who qualified as provost scholars (Provost Scholars, 2013). The study included all of the contemporary halls as there was only three and they contained both male and female students. They were compared as a whole to the other two types of residence halls in the sample and then compared among themselves.

Ridge West was the exception when considering homogeneity in the incident rates. The four-story residence hall had a community on each floor, focused on a common interest or major. This was contrasted in the other two Ridge halls where they contained students who were attracted by their academic success, in the Honors and Provost living-learning communities, and may not have shared common interests or academic pursuits. Also, the STEM living-learning community was fairly diverse in its qualifying majors, and the FASTrack was for students who were attracted primarily by its academic success and retention rate. The quota sampling technique illustrated how the population was designated into groups as opposed to relying on availability sampling. With the data samples established, the data collection also needed further explanation.

Data Collection and Instrumentation

The study was based on previously collected data, which was collected and published by UM. The raw information that was analyzed was originally reported to the Dean of Students office, which handled the adjudication of the incident cases and then passed the data to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment at UM. This meant that the study applied the theory of social disorganization to secondary data. While UM collected data on all incidents that were reported on campus, the study only examined targeted incidents that were reported in the sample residence halls. The types of violations were selected by similarity to criminal activities and then collapsed into three categories: violent, property, and drug and alcohol incidents.

Violent incidents included: assault, arson explosive and emergency equipment, disorderly conduct, endangering others and assault, endangering the safety of others, harassment, harassment including stalking, personal safety violation, and weapons. Property incidents included: building access violations, fraud, fake id, fraud including fake id, noise, noise violations, property rights and theft, respect for property, unauthorized entry, and university furniture. The final category of incidents was drugs and alcohol. This category included: distribution of alcohol, drug paraphernalia, illegal possession of alcohol, illegal possession of drugs, monument to alcohol/evidence of prior consumption, use of illegal drugs, and visibly overcome by the consumption of alcohol.

Data Analysis

After the secondary data was received by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment from the Dean of Students office, it was coded and categorized by semester. The incident data was then divided by resident hall semester populations by the researcher to create incident rates for all the targeted residence halls. The data was then entered into the Statistical

Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software for analysis. Descriptive statistics and univariate analysis were conducted on the data to discover any relationships among constructs. Each sample population was compared to the others, analyzing three types of incidents: violent, property, and drugs and alcohol. Statistical tests examined whether there was a significant difference among the sample populations in each of these three types of incidents for both charges of incidents and those who were found in actual violation. The statistical analysis tested the null hypotheses. The rival hypotheses were accepted only if the nulls were rejected and the direction of the alternative was supported.

Summary

This chapter has thoroughly explained the methodology for the study. It explained the sampling for the study, creating three groups of residence halls, the traditional halls, residential colleges, and contemporary halls. The halls that comprised these three groups were carefully selected for the study through quota sampling. Secondary data from The University of Mississippi Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, which processed the data, was used. Data was coded and collapsed into violent, property, and drug and alcohol incidents. Finally, descriptive statistics were used to focus attention on the rate of incidents and to facilitate comparison among distributions. The data analyses were focused on relationships among variables to test the hypotheses and to explore the significance of any relationships that existed between the variables.

The rest of the study will focus on the analysis of the data. Chapter four includes the findings of the study, providing the relevant analysis for all four research questions. Chapter five concludes the study with conclusion, implication and ideas for future research.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data. The descriptive statistics were calculated with the use of SPSS, which processed the incident rates through non-parametric analysis. These statistics were all based on the original purpose of the study, to evaluate if social disorganization theory explained any significant variation among the incident rates in the different types of residence halls at UM. To accomplish this, secondary data from UM's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment was analyzed.

The secondary data was presented in two spreadsheets that recorded only the relevant information. They included the incidents in the three categories being measured, violent, property, and drug/alcohol incidents, along with the specific resident halls in which they occurred. The data was also separated by semester, enabling the researcher to easily match the residence hall populations presented in both the fall and spring census data. The first spreadsheet contained the data on incidents charged with a rule violation and the second contained numbers for only incidents that were found in violation by the Dean of Students judiciary process.

Presentation of Descriptive Characteristics of Data

The data that was analyzed was the incident rates for each residence hall. To establish this, two pieces of information were needed from each residence hall, the number of incidents that occurred in the individual halls and how many residents lived in each hall. The numbers

were organized by type of incident and semester in which they occurred. This format allowed for not only the basic analysis necessary to answer the four research questions of this study, but made further analysis, such as comparing the two semesters, possible. Statistics were separated by semester because the resident hall populations likely changed over the course of the academic year.

Table 1 presents the residence hall populations. The populations were the officially recognized numbers from the fall and spring census. The populations tended to decrease from the fall to the spring semester, and no two residence halls were exactly the same size. The residential colleges and Ridge halls contained male and female students, but the exact gender breakdown of the halls was not recorded in the census data.

Table 1

Residence Hall Populations 2012-2013

	Fall Population	Spring Population
Deaton	94	92
Hefley	131	127
Stockard	505	481
Martin	504	494
RC South	428	425
RC North	310	300
Ridge North	313	319
Ridge South	262	257
Ridge West	239	228

Table 2 displays the number of incidents that were charged during the 2012-2013 school year in the different residence halls. The numbers were further categorized by semester, and by the type of incidents included in this study. As previously discussed, the types of incidents were based on their similarity to crimes. These individual incident classifications were then combined into groups reflecting violent, property, and drug/alcohol incidents. The total classification

contained the total from these three sub groups of incidents. Not all residence halls had incidents of each type occur every semester, and for the halls that did have numerous incidents, the incidents need to be viewed in light of their varying populations.

Table 2

Incident Charges 2012-2013

		Violent	Property	Drugs/Alcohol	Total
Deaton	Fall	5	21	22	48
	Spring	9	1	12	22
Hefley	Fall	2	14	11	27
	Spring	3	2	0	5
Stockard	Fall	11	44	51	106
	Spring	9	18	84	111
Martin	Fall	0	19	25	44
	Spring	2	8	38	48
RC South	Fall	6	0	4	10
	Spring	0	1	3	4
RC North	Fall	0	1	5	6
	Spring	2	8	7	17
Ridge North	Fall	9	19	17	45
	Spring	2	31	10	43
Ridge South	Fall	1	10	12	23
	Spring	3	6	0	9
Ridge West	Fall	2	0	2	4
	Spring	1	2	4	7

Table 3 is similar in layout to Table 2, but represents only those incidents that were found in violation by the judicial process of the Dean of Students Office. These numbers are smaller than those of Table 2 because not all charges were found in violation, once adjudicated. Again, these numbers must be viewed relative to the residence halls differing populations.

Table 3

Incidents Found In Violation 2012-2013

		Violent	Property	Drugs/Alcohol	Total
Deaton	Fall	3	17	12	32
	Spring	9	1	4	14
Hefley	Fall	0	8	1	9
	Spring	1	0	0	1
Stockard	Fall	3	21	31	55
	Spring	2	6	23	31
Martin	Fall	0	9	11	20
	Spring	2	2	19	23
RC South	Fall	1	0	1	2
	Spring	0	0	2	2
RC North	Fall	0	1	3	4
	Spring	0	4	3	7
Ridge North	Fall	4	13	8	25
	Spring	2	4	3	9
Ridge South	Fall	1	2	2	5
	Spring	0	2	0	2
Ridge West	Fall	1	0	2	3
	Spring	0	1	0	1

Table 4 combines the information from Tables 1 and 2 to show the charged incident rates per student. In cases where no incidents occurred in a certain category in a residence hall the rate was .0000. These rates were used to compare the different type of residence halls in the study while controlling for the differing population sizes of each hall. All rates were uniformly rounded to the ten thousandth decimal point.

Table 4

Incidents Charged Per Student 2012-2013

		Violent	Property	Drugs/Alcohol	Total
Deaton	Fall	.0532	.2234	.2340	.5106
	Spring	.0978	.0109	.1304	.2391
Hefley	Fall	.0153	.1069	.0840	.2061
	Spring	.0236	.0157	.0000	.0394
Stockard	Fall	.0218	.0871	.1010	.2099
	Spring	.0187	.0374	.1746	.2308
Martin	Fall	.0000	.0377	.0496	.0873
	Spring	.0040	.0162	.0769	.0972
RC South	Fall	.0140	.0000	.0093	.0234
	Spring	.0000	.0024	.0071	.0094
RC North	Fall	.0000	.0032	.0161	.0194
	Spring	.0067	.0267	.0233	.0567
Ridge North	Fall	.0288	.0607	.0543	.1438
	Spring	.0063	.0972	.0313	.1348
Ridge South	Fall	.0038	.0382	.0458	.0878
	Spring	.0117	.0233	.0000	.0350
Ridge West	Fall	.0084	.0000	.0084	.0167
	Spring	.0044	.0088	.0175	.0307

Table 5 reflects the combined data of Tables 1 and 3. It is similar in presentation to Table 4 but shows incident rates for only incidents found in violation by the Dean of Students judicial process. By using this smaller subset of incidents, the rates are smaller and there are more halls with a zero incident rate. Again, all numbers were rounded to the ten thousandth decimal point.

Table 5

Incidents Found In Violation Per Student 2012-2013

		Violent	Property	Drugs/Alcohol	Total
Deaton	Fall	.0319	.1809	.1277	.3404
	Spring	.0978	.0109	.0435	.1522
Hefley	Fall	.0000	.0611	.0076	.0687
	Spring	.0079	.0000	.0000	.0079
Stockard	Fall	.0059	.0416	.0614	.1089
	Spring	.0042	.0125	.0478	.0644
Martin	Fall	.0000	.0179	.0218	.0397
	Spring	.0040	.0040	.0385	.0466
RC South	Fall	.0023	.0000	.0023	.0047
	Spring	.0000	.0000	.0047	.0047
RC North	Fall	.0000	.0032	.0097	.0129
	Spring	.0000	.0133	.0100	.0233
Ridge North	Fall	.0128	.0415	.0256	.0799
	Spring	.0063	.0125	.0094	.0282
Ridge South	Fall	.0038	.0076	.0076	.0191
	Spring	.0000	.0078	.0000	.0078
Ridge West	Fall	.0042	.0000	.0084	.0126
	Spring	.0000	.0044	.0000	.0044

The incident rates for each semester and for each type of incident in each residence hall provided the pool of data that created the foundation of the data analysis. The total incident rates for each residence hall during both semesters were also calculated allowing for comparisons from this larger data set and the incident rates for each classification of incident were included to create a larger data set for analysis.

Organization of Data Analysis

The presentation of the data as both charges and those found in violation, along with the incidents broken down by semester allowed for deeper analysis. This reporting structure was reflected in the organization of data analysis. The data has been reported both in terms of incidents charged and the incidents found in violation so that both ends of the judicial process

could be compared. For the first three research questions the total incident rates and those for the individual types of incidents in each residence hall were analyzed. The fourth research question surrounding the specific relationships among the three contemporary residence halls was examined using the incident rates for the three types of incidents, this was necessary because of the small sample size.

The analysis presented is the result of non-parametric analysis. Initially, the incident rates were analyzed using two and three factor analysis of variance; however, the results of this analysis failed the Levine's test. The failure of Levine's tests indicated a lack of homoscedacity among the sample populations, leading to the suggested use of nonparametric statistics (Green & Salkind, 2003).

The first three research questions used Kruskal-Wallis tests (H-test) to test the hypotheses generated from unpaired samples that originated from the same population (Cohen, 2008; Gibbons, 1978). In cases where the H-test's results were significant, Mann-Whitney tests were used to answer the first three research questions. The Mann-Whitney test is a non-parametric post-hoc test for the H-test. It was used because the data were not normally distributed (Cohen, 2008). Four H-tests were used for the first three research questions, both for the charged and in violation data. Each was tested using the total incident rates from the residence halls and the three individual incident rates for each residence hall. The fourth research question specifically addressed the relationship among the contemporary residence halls. In response to the small sample size, the individual incident rates for each of the three incident types were used in the H-test, with Mann-Whitney tests used as the post-hoc tests when necessary.

Analysis of Data

Table 6 depicts the asymptotic significance of the four H-tests used in the first three research questions. A significant relationship was found using both total incident rates for the different residence halls and the rates for each of the three individual types of incidents specified in the study. This relationship was observed in both the incident rates for incidents charged with violations and those that were actually found in violation of the incidents. These results permitted use of the Mann-Whitney tests to answer the first three research questions.

Table 6

Significance of H-tests for Research Questions 1-3

Incident rates	Total Incident Rates	Individual Incident Rates
Charged	.011*	.001**
In Violation	.024*	.009**

* p<.05

**p<.01

Research Question 1- Is there a significant difference in incident rates between traditional and contemporary halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the contemporary residence halls and traditional halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H_A: The contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the traditional residence halls.

Four Mann-Whitney tests were used to test the null hypothesis that there were no significant differences among the incident rates of the contemporary residence halls and the traditional halls at UM. Table 7 reports the asymptotic significance of the four tests. The tests were for the charged and in violation data and for both the total incident rates and for the

individual types of incidents. All four tests were statistically significant with levels of .05 or lower.

Table 7

Significance of Mann-Whitney Tests for Research Question 1

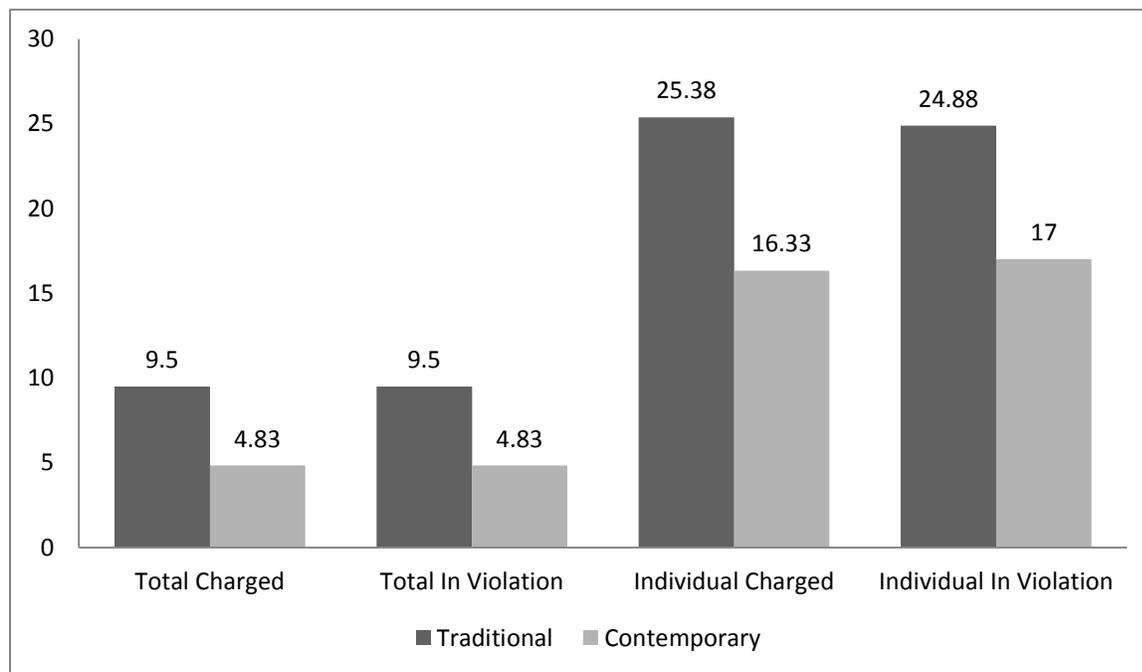
Incident rates	Total Incident Rates	Individual Incident Rates
Charged	.039*	.018*
In Violation	.028*	.039*

*p<.05

With the significance of the Mann-Whitney tests established, the question became which set of residence halls had the lower mean rank. This data presented in Figure 1 shows that the contemporary residence halls had lower mean rank than the traditional halls for both the charged and in violation data using both total and individual incident rates.

Figure 1

Mean Rank of Traditional vs. Contemporary Hall Incident Rates



With all four tests rejecting the null hypothesis of no difference between the contemporary and traditional residence halls, the conclusion to this question became clear. The alternative hypothesis that the contemporary residence halls showed a significantly lower incident rate per student than the traditional residence halls was accepted. This supported the relevance of social disorganization theory in the residence halls of UM.

Research Question 2- Is there a significant difference in incident rates between residential colleges and traditional residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the residential colleges and traditional residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H_A: The residential colleges on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the traditional residence halls.

The results of the four Mann-Whitney tests that were used to test the null hypothesis of no difference in incident rates among the residential colleges and the traditional residence halls at UM is presented in Table 8. All four tests showed an asymptotic significance of .05 or lower, rendering them statistically significant. The four tests were for the charged and in violation data, separated by individual and total incident rates.

Table 8

Significance of Mann-Whitney Tests for Research Question 2

Incident rates	Total Incident Rates	Individual Incident Rates
Charged	.011*	.001**
In Violation	.017*	.005**

* p<.05

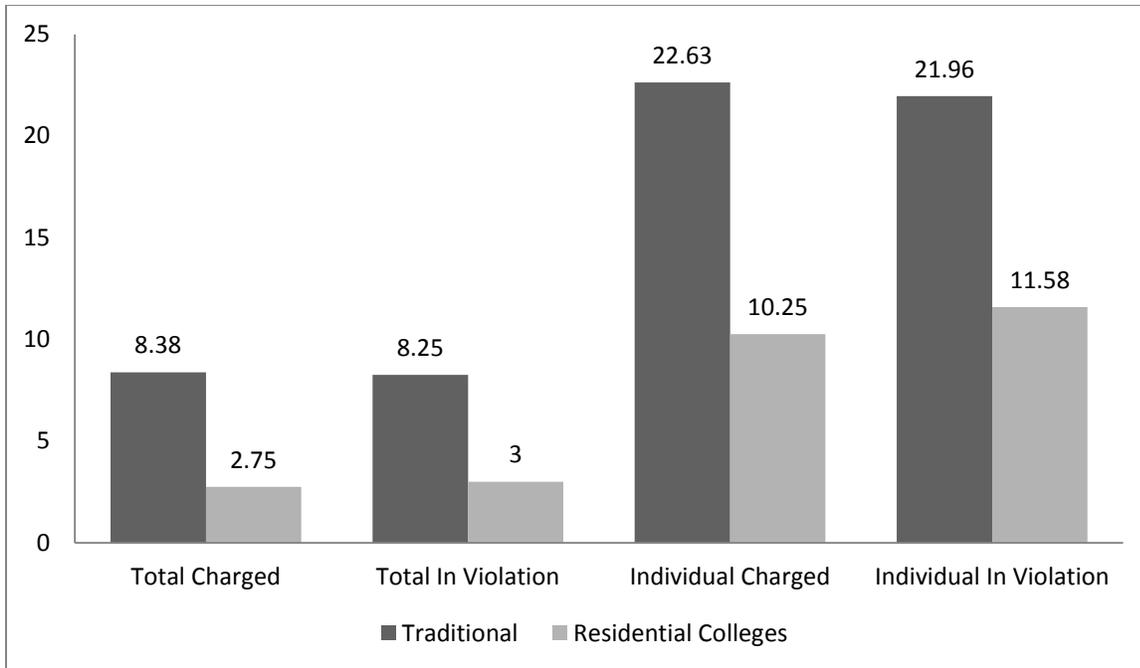
**p<.01

Given these significant results, the mean rank of the traditional halls and residential colleges were compared in Figure 2 to determine which had lower incident rates. The results

showed that in all four comparisons, for both the charged and in violation data separated by individual and total incident rates, the residential colleges had lower mean ranks compared to traditional residence halls.

Figure 2

Mean Rank of Traditional vs. Residential Colleges Incident Rates



The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the residential colleges and traditional residence halls incident rates was rejected, accepting the alternative hypothesis that there was a significance difference between the two types of halls, with the residential colleges experiencing lower incident rates than the traditional halls. This finding was consistent with the idea that social disorganization would adequately describe the differences in incident rates among the residence halls of UM.

Research Question 3- Is there a significant difference in incident rates between residential colleges and contemporary residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates of the contemporary residence halls and residential colleges on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H_A: The contemporary residence halls at the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi will show lower incident rates than the residential colleges.

Table 9 shows the four Mann-Whitney tests used to test the null hypothesis that there was no difference in the violation rates of the residential colleges and the contemporary residence halls at UM. The four tests analyzed the charged and in violation data, separated by individual and total incident rates. All four of these test failed to find an asymptotic significant level of difference between these two types of halls. None of these failures neared the .05 probability level used in this study.

Table 9

Significance of Mann-Whitney Tests for Research Question 3

Incident rates	Total Incident Rates	Individual Incident Rates
Charged	.136	.065
In Violation	.521	.219

*p<.05

These findings led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis that there was not a significant difference between the residential colleges and the contemporary residence halls. This did not support the application of social disorganization theory to the incident rates of residence halls at UM as the homogenous contemporary halls were expected to have lower incident rates than the heterogeneous residential colleges if the theory applied.

Research Question 4- Is there a significant difference in the incident rates of the individual contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi?

H₀: There will be no difference in the incident rates in residence halls with floors dedicated to specific majors or interests and residence halls that are not grouped by interest or major on The Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi.

H_A: The contemporary residence halls on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi with floors dedicated to specific majors or interests will show lower incident rates than contemporary residence halls with greater heterogeneity.

To assess the research question of whether there were significant differences between the three contemporary residence halls, H-tests and Mann-Whitney tests were used. When the H-tests were performed on both the charged and in violation data a conflicting result was produced. The charged had an asymptotic significance of .052, which did not meet the .05 probability used in this study. The in violation test found a significant relationship with an asymptotic significance of .009, well below .05.

Three Mann-Whitney tests were used to determine the differences and direction among incident rates of the three Ridge halls. Table 10 shows the asymptotic significance of each of these tests. Two of the relationships were significant while the third failed to reach the .05 level.

Table 10

Significance of Mann-Whitney Tests for Research Question 4

Incident Rates	North*South	North*West	South*West
In Violation	.016*	.006**	.618

* p<.05

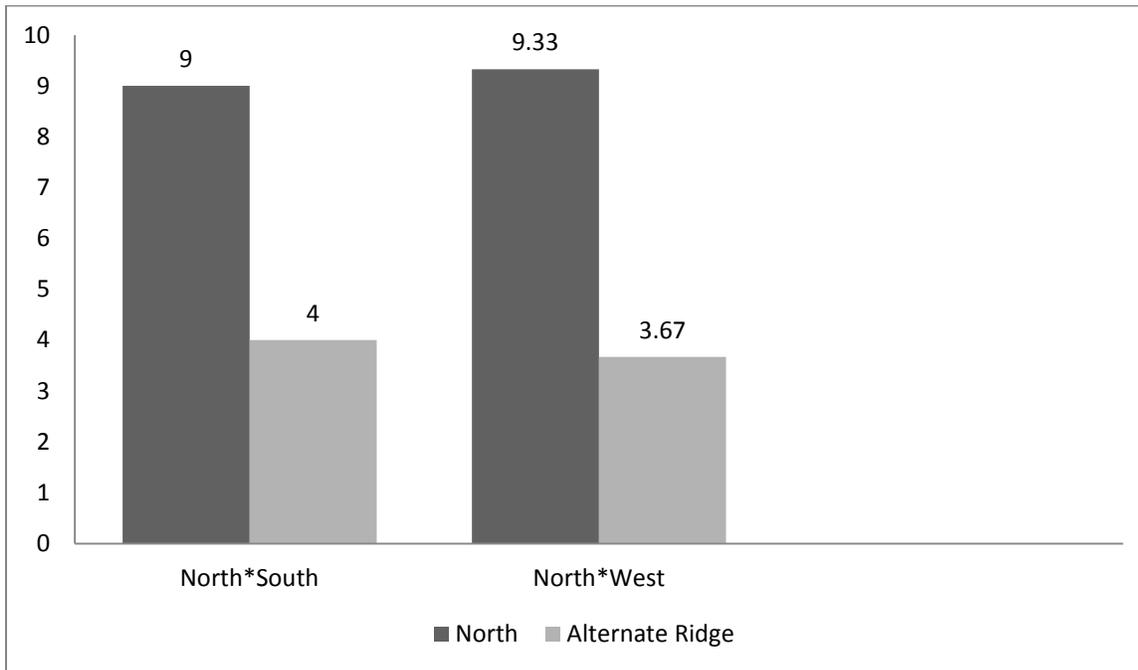
**p<.01

Figure 3 illustrates the differences in the mean ranks for the two significant Mann-Whitney tests. In both of these statistically significant relationships the North Ridge Hall experienced a higher mean rank than the other Ridge hall to which it was compared. Ridge

North, therefore, had a significantly higher incident rate when compared to both Ridge South and West. There was no significant difference, however, between Ridge South and West.

Figure 3

Mean Rank of Contemporary Halls Incident Rates



The lack of a consistent pattern in Ridge Hall incident rates was puzzling to the researcher. Also, with only one H-test reaching significance the null hypothesis could not be fully rejected. The alternative hypothesis was not accepted because it suggested that Ridge West would have significantly lower incident rates than those of Ridge North and South.

Thus, it was difficult to use the answers from research question four to plausibly justify the application of social disorganization theory in explaining the differing incident rates found among the contemporary halls of UM residence.

Summary

Chapter four answered the four research questions by assessing the null and alternative hypotheses of each research question through statistical analysis. Questions one and two rejected

the null hypotheses, establishing that both the contemporary residence halls and residential colleges had significantly lower incident rates than the traditional residence halls. Question three failed to reject the null hypothesis that no significant difference was found between the contemporary residence halls and the residential colleges. The final question received mixed results from the data analysis. The researcher rejected the null hypothesis for the in violation data, but failed to reject it for the charges. The Mann-Whitney test also failed to support the alternative hypothesis when assessing the individual relationships among the three Ridge halls. Accepting or rejecting the null hypotheses for each research question based on the data analysis warrants several conclusions. These conclusions and their implications will be explained thoroughly in chapter five.

Chapter five will explore how the answers to these four research questions answered the broader question of how well social disorganization theory related to the social programming of residence halls at UM. The study needs to be summarized before final conclusions are discussed. The conclusions will be related to the specific research questions. From these conclusions, implications will be drawn which will lead to ideas for further research. The chapter and the study will be then be concluded with a final summary.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter will answer the research problem, does social disorganization theory explain variance in the incident rates in the different types of residence halls on the UM Oxford campus, by assessing the findings presented in chapter four. The conclusions to this problem will have implications for both UM and for Criminology. The conclusions also create an opportunity for further research, which could expand the knowledge of social disorganization theory and campus safety.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the applicability of social disorganization theory to a college campus. Specifically, the study examined if social disorganization theory explained differences in incident rates among different types of residence halls when mediated by their approach to socialization. This was explored by evaluating the three different types of residence halls found on the Oxford campus of The University of Mississippi: contemporary, traditional, and residential colleges. The Dean of Students office at UM maintained detailed records of where incidents occurred on campus and the outcomes of the adjudication process that followed. This raw data was delivered to the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment for processing in which they removed all student identifiers and compiled it into readable spreadsheets before releasing it for the current study. This secondary

data allowed insight into where on campus incidents occurred with the greatest frequency. This study sought to interpret this information through the lens of social disorganization theory.

Social disorganization theory was pioneered in the work of Shaw and McKay (Sampson & Groves, 1989). Shaw and McKay (1942, 1969) attributed the high juvenile crime rates in certain neighborhoods in Chicago to a lack of social control. They hypothesized that three main factors contributed to these higher frequencies of juvenile delinquency; economic deprivation, conflicting social values, and residential instability. Social disorganization theory was later reaffirmed in the work of Sampson and Groves (1989), basing their evaluation on the British Crime Survey. There has been relatively little application of social disorganization theory to higher education, with the lone exception Barton et al. (2010), who found mixed results. This study built on prior research, primarily outside of education, and expanded the pool of knowledge of how social disorganization applied to different areas of society.

This study's population was based on incidents on the Oxford campus of UM during the 2012-2013 school year. It analyzed incident rates from traditional residential halls, including Deaton, Hefley, Stockard, and Martin, residential colleges including RC South and the Luckyday RC, and contemporary residence halls including the three Ridge halls, North, South, and West. The three types of halls approached the residential experience differently. The traditional halls were open to the general student population, placing students in two person rooms and providing communal bathrooms (Accommodations, 2013). The residential colleges were based on the Oxford model and housed faculty along with students (Residential Colleges, 2013). They integrate students from different disciplines into one community to promote learning (Residential College South, 2013; Residential Environment, 2013). The Ridge halls housed living-learning communities and freshman interest groups. The living-learning communities focused on

gathering students with similar academic interests and freshman interest groups focused on social and extracurricular interests (Communities, 2013). The freshmen interest groups and living-learning communities sought to promote several small homogenous communities in each Ridge hall. With those proposed differences noted, this study did not evaluate how affective UM was at seeing these structures realized. This limitation needed to be accounted for in the conclusions of the study.

The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, who had received the data directly from the Dean of Students office, provided the data for the study. The Dean of Students office was responsible for handling the disciplinary actions resulting from the incidents that comprised the data. The processed data included spreadsheets on those charged with an incident and those found in violation by the judicial process. The data was separated by residence hall and incident and only included the specific residence halls and types of incident being studied. This information was bundled by type of residence hall and type of incident, including violent, property, and drugs and alcohol incidents for both the fall and spring semesters. Non-parametric analysis allowed for the incident rates to be compared among types of halls after univariate analysis failed. This process was repeated for those in violation as well as those charged. The final analysis of data involved comparing Ridge West to the other two Ridge halls, to determine if there were any significant differences in incident rates. The analysis answered the four research questions and rejected the appropriate null hypotheses.

Conclusions

Chapter four presented the collected and processed data and addressed the research questions along with their hypotheses. The first three questions asked if there were significant differences among the incident rates of the residential colleges, traditional and contemporary

residence halls. The fourth asked if there were significant differences in incident rates among the three contemporary residence halls. With these specific questions answered and the appropriate hypotheses rejected, fuller conclusions could be drawn on the impact of social disorganization among college residence halls. Before the conclusions are fully discussed, an important finding was that the significant relationships observed among the charged data were mirrored to a large extent in those incidents that were actually found in violation. While this finding was not supported across all tests, it was seen perfectly in questions one, two and three. Question four was the only one to have conflicting results between charged and in violation data, which came out of the smallest sample size. This finding gave credibility to the Dean of Students' judicial process in that it was prosecuting incidents in different areas of campus in proportion to the students being charged. One other area that warranted discussion was the possibility that the socialization promoted by UM's policies may not have occurred.

With only quantitative data available for the incidents that occurred in the various residence halls, there was no qualitative data to evaluate how the communities actually developed in these residence halls. This left no accurate way to assess if the contemporary halls really created homogenous communities, or if there was significant diversity in the residential colleges, and if the random traditional halls created diversity or homogeneity. The fact that significantly different incident rates were observed among some of the types of residence halls suggested that there were some differing factors among them, but this study's limitations restricted definitive conclusions. The conclusions that can be drawn still helped add to the general pool of knowledge of what drives campus incident rates.

The first three research questions can be grouped by their common theme of the differences among the types of residence hall's incident rates. There was a statistically

significant difference between the traditional hall's rate and the rate of both residential colleges and contemporary halls. The non-parametric statistics, however, found no significant difference between the incident rates of the residential colleges and the contemporary halls. These findings led to a number of conclusions.

The first and most prominent conclusion from these results was that when it came to providing a safe environment, defined by lower incident rates, the residential colleges and contemporary halls were more successful than the traditional halls. Both the contemporary halls and residential colleges attempted to establish a community, but in different ways. The lower incident rate among the contemporary halls lent credibility to the role of social disorganization theory applying to UM's residence halls. These findings also are consistent with research on living-learning communities and residential colleges being beneficial to their residents, when compared to students in traditional residential settings (Inkelas et al., 2003). Since there was no significant difference between the residential colleges and the contemporary halls, findings challenge the application of social disorganization in the UM residence halls. Social disorganization theory suggested that communities with homogeneity of residents would have lower incident rates than those that contained a more diverse population (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969). This was clearly not observed in the residence halls at UM and led to the conclusion that social disorganization theory was not a primary mediator of campus incident rates. Shaw and McKay (1942, 1969) focused on urban environments reflecting a cross section of society; it should not be surprising that the theory did not align with the incident rates on a college campus, an atypical environment for crime (Henson & Stone, 1999). Still there were external variables that, based on the results of the study, seemed to impact the differing incident rates that were observed.

Selection bias, as acknowledged in the study's limitations, was a very real threat, and based on the findings of the study, likely affected the findings. Two factors separated the residential colleges and contemporary halls from the traditional halls, but did not separate the residential colleges and contemporary halls. These factors were cost and requirements for admittance to the individual residence halls. While every student who lived in the residence halls was an attending student of UM, the cost and application structure for the various residence halls may have had the contributed to differences in populations and incident rates.

The cost of the traditional residence halls was lower than both the residential colleges and contemporary halls, but the residential colleges and the contemporary halls shared the same price for double student rooms (J.L. McClure, personal communication, March 14, 2013). This cost structure mirrored the difference in incident rates among the residence hall types. Economic deprivation is considered a factor in social disorganization, however, that was beyond the scope of this study (Shaw and McKay, 1942, 1969). This study sought to evaluate how the variance of incident rates in the residence halls was mediated by the socialization techniques instituted by UM. While the pricing structure of the residence halls as a determining factor of incident rates was outside the scope of this study, the evidence suggested that this is worth further investigation.

Selection bias also may have been a factor when the application process was paired with the answers to the first three questions. Both the residential colleges and contemporary halls required a more involved application process. Some floors of these halls catered to students who had been accepted into specific groups, such as the Luckyday RC, while the RC South only required an additional application (Residential College South, 2013). This was also reflected in some of the groups that composed the living-learning communities and freshman interest groups

in the contemporary halls, for example the Honors LLC was composed of members who had been admitted to the university's Honor's College (Honors College, 2013). Even by setting the slight barrier of simply requiring an additional application, these residence halls potentially distinguished themselves from the traditional halls that were designed for the general student population (Accommodations, 2013). This difference in population was not within the scope of the study, nor directly related to social disorganization theory. This was one of several factors that indicated that social disorganization theory may not be the best explanation for the variance in incident rates among the different types of residence halls at UM.

Additional analysis of the data also led to the conclusion that there was not a significant difference in terms of incident rates between the fall and the spring semester. The way the data was reported allowed for easy comparison between the two semesters. Social disorganization theory recognizes the role of residential instability in a community's loss of social control (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969). From that tenet of the theory, it can be reasoned that one would have expected an increase in social control as the population stabilized. However, the fact that the residence hall populations were reported quantitatively and not qualitatively, limits the conclusions that can be drawn from this analysis. It is clear that there were changes in the residence populations as most halls had smaller populations in the spring than in the fall (T.L. Gregory, personal communication, March 25, 2013). This did not account for students who moved into different residence halls, or even changed floors in the same hall. With these changes left un-quantified, there cannot be a definitive conclusion drawn. If the population did not vary significantly from semester to semester the observed incident rates would contradict the expectation that incident rates would decrease as the population stabilized.

A last note regarding the conclusions drawn from questions one through three was that there were no significant difference among the three classifications of targeted incidents. These findings indicated that what was ever impacting the incident rates across the different types of residence halls at UM appeared to be able to mediate violent, property, and drug/alcohol incidents at the same rate. This contradicted the findings of Payne and Salotti (2007) indicating that while property and violent crimes on campus were lower than national averages, drug crimes were higher. A possible explanation of this contradiction was that drug and alcohol incidents may not have been reported as often as violent or property incidents at UM. However, since the study relied on secondary data there was no way to evaluate the reporting rates of the different types of incidents.

The answers to questions one through three clearly did not fully support the expectations drawn from social disorganization theory. The fact that there was no significant difference between the residential colleges and the contemporary halls indicated that there were external factors affecting the incident rates. These factors beyond the residence halls' approaches to community building may have included things such as different pricing levels and application processes that led to differing populations. This left only question four to be evaluated.

Question four dealt specifically with the incident rates among the three contemporary halls. After univariate analysis failed non-parametric statistics showed that there was a difference between the North and both the South and West Ridge halls; however, there was not a significant difference between South and West Ridge halls. Based on the intended development of small homogenous communities in Ridge West and social disorganization theory, it was hypothesized that their rates would be significantly different from both the Ridge North and South. The finding that Ridge West did not have significantly lower incident rates than the other

Ridge halls led to the conclusion that social disorganization was not the primary mediating factor in describing the difference in incident rates among the contemporary residence halls at UM.

The selection bias that may have been present in the first three research questions may have been present on a smaller scale among the contemporary halls. The fact that Ridge North contained the Fastrack LLC may also have contributed to the slightly elevated incident rate when compared to Ridge West and South. The Fastrack LLC was for students in the Fastrack program was focused on helping students make the transition to college by placing them in small designated cohorts of classes (FASTrack, 2013). This may have attracted students who were less prepared for the adjustment to college and may have reflected itself in a slightly higher incident rate. With only one residence hall significantly different than the other two it appeared that social disorganization was not a good explanation for the incident rates among this type of residence hall. Specifically, intended homogeneity did not seem to be a significant factor since Ridge West did not have a lower incident rate than both Ridge North and South.

From lack of difference between contemporary halls and residential colleges, and among the contemporary halls the findings of the study suggested that intended homogeneity was not a major factor in incident rates in the residence halls at UM. This is an interesting finding in the larger context of social disorganization theory, which has placed homogeneity of residence as a predictor of social control (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969). This furthered the conclusion that social disorganization was not the primary mediating factor in the variance in incident rates among the residence halls at UM.

Overall, social disorganization theory did not accurately explain the variances in incident rates among the three different types of residence halls at the Oxford campus of UM. Theoretically, three different levels of incident rates should have been observed if the theory was

applicable to college residence halls. The actual incident rates showed two levels, which more appropriately reflected the differences in residence hall pricing and application structures. This finding was further reinforced in the evaluation of the individual contemporary residence halls that theoretically should have shown Ridge West with a significantly lower incident rate than the other two Ridge halls if the proposed social organization of the residence halls mediated the incident rates. However, only Ridge North showed a significant difference from Ridge West and Ridge South. The differences in incident rates among the three Ridge halls did not support social disorganization as the primary mediating factor, which was consistent with the conclusion drawn from the first three research questions.

Implications

The conclusions of this study lead to several direct implications for UM. While social disorganization theory did not accurately describe the variations in incident rates as mediated by the social design of the residence halls, there were significant variations that need to be addressed. The differences stem most significantly from the higher incident rate found in the traditional halls. While a few incidents in a college resident hall may not seem that important, the fact that the ones tracked in this study pertained to violent, property, and drug/alcohol incidents should make administrators pause. These types of incidents have the potential to be life changing not only for the victims, but for the offenders, and the other residents of the halls who may have lived in fear. With other research indicating the benefits of programs such as living-learning communities both socially and academically it is commendable that that the university has moved in this direction (Muldoon & Macdonald, 2009; Pasque & Murphy, 2005; Jessup-Anger, 2012). Even with this new direction in residence life, there are some practical

steps that could be explored in the search to create a more even residential experience in terms of incident rates.

The issue of differing fees for different types of residence halls could be addressed. If these fees were standardized across all residence halls it may stop the economic “ghettoization” of traditional residence halls and lead to a more economically integrated residential experience (St. Clair & Kishimoto, 2010, p. 18). As previously noted, diversity in the residential experience did not appear to affect incident rates as the diversity-based residential colleges did not significantly differ from the contemporary halls which sought to bring like-minded students together (Communities, 2013). The changing of the pricing structure may not be an easy move for the university, and if the decision was made to raise the price of the traditional halls it would require substantial living upgrades to match the amenities of the new contemporary halls and residential colleges, along with bolstered financial aid options for low-income students.

The application process and barriers to enter certain residence halls should also be revisited. It is understandable that the university would want to reserve specific housing areas for special groups, such as members of the Honor’s College or Luckyday scholars, but the university should do everything in its power to make the residential college and contemporary hall experiences as open as possible to the average student. The university has taken some steps in aiding this access by introducing freshman interest groups which are not restricted to challenging majors or past academic success, but to common interests (Communities, 2013). The same can be said about RC South, which only requires an additional application for admittance (Residential College South, 2013). However, if these types of groups like RC South require a second level of application it could self-select students who were not motivated or did not understand the value and opportunities associated with these communities and direct them

toward the traditional halls. If the prices were standardized and all students were required to complete a two-step housing application, this would help standardized the residential experience. Additional communities, such as freshman interest groups, could be added to traditional halls, and more educational materials about the benefits of being involved in residential communities could also be distributed before students apply for any specific residence hall or program.

As mentioned previously, intentional diversity in residence halls did not appear to increase incidents rates in comparison to halls that promoted homogeneity; this similarity was observed when there was no significant difference in the incident rates between the residential colleges and the contemporary halls. This equality in incident rates should act as further encouragement to the university to enact policies that encourage diversity in the residence halls. This includes diversity of majors and interests.

These implications could be implemented immediately if UM chose. At the same time, there are several other areas that would benefit from future research before any changes would be warranted. This future research involves addressing issues such as selection bias and sample size that limited the conclusions of this study.

Future Research

Further research is needed to better understand if social disorganization has any role on college campuses. The current study was launched to address this need, as college campuses had received little attention by social disorganization theory researchers (Barton et al., 2010). The results of the data analysis in this study raised many questions that deserve further investigation. The results raised questions of sample size, control of outside variables, how qualitative input would expand the pool of knowledge, and why some groups of residence halls that approached socialization differently actually demonstrated the same incident rates.

The sample for the current study only contained data from one university over one academic year. Future research could easily expand, tracking incident rates over a number of years and /or across multiple universities. Using different universities would give a much fuller evaluation of how these types of residence halls socialization approaches really affected incident rates. This would be challenging, however, as different universities are not bound to a common judicial system for non-criminal incidents and each campus may institute programs like living-learning communities and residential colleges in a unique manner. Using a time series of data, while time consuming, would also create a larger pool of data to analyze, and could either be from a single university or several. The use of multiple years would decrease the chance that an abnormal group of residence halls could corrupt the findings of the entire study. Also, using larger data sets would open future research to more powerful parametric statistics if the data had a normal distribution.

As previously explained, the results of this study suggested that external factors played a significant role in the different incident rates observed. To control this issue in future studies the random assignment of students to different types of residence halls would help correct selection bias. This would take significant cooperation from the administration of any university in involved, but would help control for variables such as residence halls costs and application process that may have shaped the current study. It would be difficult to apply random housing to an entire campus, but if even a small subset of housing was assigned at random it could aid in controlling selection bias in future research. Also, a positive benefit would be the exposure of students who typically would not opt into the more expensive residence halls with more complex admissions processes to the academic and social programs these residence halls offers.

The final aspect that future research could approach is the role that qualitative data could play in understanding social disorganization theory in college residence halls. The current study's reliance on secondary data was designed for quantitative analysis. If qualitative tools were included in future research they would help broaden the scope of knowledge. From these types of instruments, variables such as sense of community could be evaluated in the different residence halls and placed in the larger scope of social disorganization theory. Qualitative data would prove useful in not only investigating the relationships between the types of residence halls that were different, but why other types were similar.

The fact that there was no significant difference between the contemporary residence halls and the residential colleges, even though UM advertised very different approaches to socialization, could be addressed. This similarity questions how effective UM's measures to build different communities are and whether there were other significant factors driving incident rates and socialization in the residence halls. Qualitative instruments would provide insight into what was motivating and controlling the students. The containment theory could be used in future research to explore what factors were important in the containment of incidents on the UM campus. The containment theory in criminology contributes behavior control to both internal and external factors, originating in the work of Walter Reckless (Roberts, Gunes & Seward, 2011). The fact that everyone on campus is subjected to the same rules and Mississippi laws would be a good initial control for external factors. Undoubtedly, the answers gained from qualitative research would also benefit the university administrators who could use the feedback to further tailor the residence hall experience to the needs of students.

Summary

Social disorganization theory is new to higher education research (Barton et al., 2010). This created an ample opportunity to assess its application to the residence hall structure found at UM. This study sought to accomplish this purpose by analyzing selected secondary data from the 2012-2013 school based off specific types of residence halls and specific type of incidents that occurred in them on UM's Oxford campus. The findings and the conclusions that were drawn from them better defined the role of social disorganization theory on college campuses.

The findings were reported in response to four specific research questions. The first three dealt with the incident rates observed in the three different types of residence halls found at UM, traditional, contemporary, and residential colleges. The fourth question looked specifically at the three contemporary residence halls as they each held different communities of students. Non-parametric statistics showed that there was a significant difference between the traditional residence halls and both the contemporary halls and the residential colleges, with these halls showing lower incident rates than the traditional halls. However, the residential colleges and the contemporary halls did not have significantly different incident rates. The results for question four were mixed. The incident rates reflecting those charged with incidents were not significantly different across the three contemporary residence halls. The conviction data did show significant differences, with Ridge North being significantly different than both Ridge South and West. Ridge South and West did not differ significantly. These findings created the basis of the conclusions of the study.

The main conclusion of the study was that social disorganization theory was not a good explanation of the differences in incident rates observed in residence halls using different communities during the 2012-2013 school year at UM. This conclusion was supported by the

failures to reject all four null hypotheses. While both the contemporary halls and the residential colleges had lower incident rates than the traditional halls the fact that they did not differ from each other discredited social disorganization theory. The fact that the residential colleges were built on a model that promoted diversity among their residents conflicted with a major tenet of social disorganization theory, the importance of homogeneity in a population to promote stability (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969). While the differences in incident rates did not correspond with homogeneity of majors, they appeared to be mediated by the different prices of the residence halls, however, this was outside the scope of the study (J.L. McClure, personal communication, March 14, 2013). It should be noted that economic deprivation in general is a classic indicator of social disorganization (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969). Also, the additional barrier of an extra application was present in both the residential colleges and the contemporary residence halls, adding another common denominator that separated them from the traditional residence halls. These variables were uncontrollable as the study was based on secondary data.

Among the contemporary residence halls, the expectation was that if the promoted community structure in the halls was able to predict the differences in incident rates then Ridge West would have significantly lower incident rates than both Ridge North and South. This was hypothesized because Ridge West had very specific communities placed on each of the hall's floors, and the other two Ridge halls had larger and more diverse communities (J.L. McClure, personal communication, March 14, 2013). Ridge West did not have significantly lower incident rates than the other two Ridge halls, leading to the conclusion that social disorganization was not the primary mediating factor of the differences in incident rates.

In summary, the fact that the types of communities fostered in the different types of residence halls at UM did not correlate with their incident rates based off the theory of social

disorganization, necessitates future research on what variables correlate with the incidents on the UM campus. These factors fell outside the scope of this study, but factors such as residence hall pricing and application structure need to be investigated to ensure that future residents of all UM residence halls have an opportunity to live in the safest possible setting.

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