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ABSTRACT

Student activities relating to the "Vietnam Moratorium" during the month of November, 1969, at the University of Maryland were assessed using observer ratings and descriptions and a pre-post questionnaire. The observational procedure included: an adaptation of Bales Interaction Process Analysis; estimates of crowd size, participation, and mood; and a behavioral description. Ten different settings or events were observed. The questionnaire included items related to opinions and attitudes toward the moratorium, the Vietnam war, and the Nixon administration, and extent and type of participation. One hundred sixty-six subjects took both pre- and post-test questionnaires. The results show clear differences among settings: those settings or events that were focused specifically on protest of a given issue showed a greater degree of expressed hostility and tension-reducing interaction, as opposed to information-oriented interaction. The results of the pre-post questionnaire indicate a general reduction in extent of participation by students in moratorium-related activities from October to November. It was found that after the moratorium subjects tended to be more extreme toward either pole in their attitude. Theoretical implications of the results are briefly discussed and statistical data are appended. (Author/SW)

COUNSELING CENTER

Office of Vice President for Student Affairs

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

College Park, Maryland

AN ANALYSIS OF THE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOR ASSOCIATED WITH THE NOVEMBER, 1969 MORATORIUM ON THE VIETNAM WAR

Du Mont K. Schmidt & William E. Sedlacek

Research Report # 2-70

Summary

Student activities relating to the "Vietnam Moratorium" during the month of November, 1969 at the University of Maryland were assessed by means of observer ratings and descriptions, as well as a pre-post questionnaire. The observational procedure included an adaptation of Bales Interaction Process Analysis, estimates of crowd size, participation, mood, and a behavioral description. Ten different settings or events were observed. The questionnaire included items related to opinions and attitudes toward the Moratorium, the Vietnam war; and the Nixon administration, and extent and type of participation. One hundred sixty-six Ss took both pre-and post-test questionnaires.

The results showed clear differences among settings. Those settings or events which were focused specifically on protest of a given issue showed a greater degree of expressed hostility and tension-reducing interaction, as opposed to information-oriented interaction.

The results of the pre-post questionnaire indicated a general reduction in extent of participation by students in Moratorium-related activities from October to November. It was found that after the Moratorium Ss tended to be more extreme toward either pole in their attitude. Theoretical implications of the results were briefly discussed.

Introduction

In recent years there has been an increase in student activism on college and university campuses. Student demonstrations and protest activities have become rather common phenomena, and the speculations as to their causes have abounded, (Rubinstein, 1969). A review of litefature, however, indicates very few empirical studies of student demonstration (as opposed to riots or mob violence). Those studies which have appeared have often been post hoc interpretations based on interviews and questionnaires (e.g. Blumberg, 1968; Blackstone, 1968; Trimberger, 1968; Solomon and Fishman, 1964), although Meier (1961) employed a participant-observer technique.

A variety of interpretations of peaceful demonstrations have come out of this literature. Solomon and Fishman (1964) hypothesized developmental periods which involve increasing political awareness, and a phenomenon they term "pro-social acting out" to describe the process of synthesizing rebellion against and identification with parental values.

Berger (1968) interpreted mass demonstrations as having a symbolic, or "rehearsal" function, which precedes the revolutionary function itself. He describes the role of the demonstration as that of publicly displaying the inhumanity and cruelty of the existing state authority by provoking violence on itself.

Blumberg (1968) offered a conceptual model to account for the development of a mass demonstration. The following processes are hypothesized:
1) Evolution, or the development of protest over a series of encounters. A typical phase movement would be from sit-ins to boycotts to picketing to mass

demonstrations. 2) Contagion: where the perceiver in turn becomes a source. 3) Reinforcement (positive or negative) whereby the scope of future events is determined.

Trimberger (1968) discussed student rebellion at Columbia in terms of lack of communication between administration, students, and faculty; and the increased polarization effect which destroyed all moderate positions.

In general, these studies focused on descriptions of demonstrations as a phenomenon rather than on the effects of the demonstrations on the individual. The attitudes and perceptions of the individuals involved in the demonstration, and the possible changes in attitudes taking place, were not often studied.

This study is a continuation of an earlier one (Van Arsdale, et al., 1970) which described the behavior of students in a wide variety of campus settings during the "Moratorium" on October 15, 1969, at the University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland. This Moratorium was a part of a series of planned demonstrations of student protests concerning the war in Vietnam. The plan of the demonstrators was to hold monthly "moratoriums" (or peaceful demonstrations) until there were promising indications that the American troops were being withdrawn from Vietnam, and that the war in Vietnam was being immediately brought to an end. This study is focused on the "November Moratorium" which took place on November 13, 14 and 15 on a nation-wide basis. (See The Washington Post, Sunday, November 16, 1969.) The activities on the University of Maryland campus (College Park) occurred November 14. Again, as in the earlier study, an attempt was made to sample a wide variety of settings and/or events, although this study limited itself more to those which were directly related to the Moratorium. A further modification was to supplement the observational

data with questionnaire data obtained from a pre-and post-administration.

Purpose

The purposes of this study encompassed several main goals. These were as follows: 1) To describe student behavior as it occurs during a relatively "crisis-oriented" event. That is, an event widely interpreted as relating to student protest, not only against the war in Vietnam specifically, but against many other issues as well; 2) To differentiate subgroups of students which relate to differences in behavior and attitudes related to the Moratorium; 3)To describe changes in attitudes and perceptions that occur in connection with the Moratorium; and 4) To try techniques of naturalistic observation which have generally been neglected in research on student behavior.

One attractive feature of this research was that the University of Maryland is situated near the nation's Capital, making it convenient for observation of planned events focused specifically on the Capital, and the students' involvement in these events.

Method

Instruments

The two instruments used in this study were: 1) an observational format; and 2) a questionnaire.

The observational format contained several subdivisions. The first consisted of an application of Bales' Interaction Process Analysis (Bales, 1950) to facilitate observation of interpersonal interaction occurring during the events. The technique of using frequencies for classifying interaction was modified such that the categories were ranked. This was done in an effort to

obtain maximum observer reliability. The observers simply ranked the six major Bales categories according to how frequently they occurred during their allotted observation period. (Usually each observer was allotted 15 minutes.) The judgement was based on the group as a whole; that is, the observers were instructed to make a global judgment on the nature of the interaction occurring during their observation rather than observing individual conversations among group members. Reliability coefficients (using Kendall's W) were calculated between observers who were recording the same event at the same time (within 1/2 hour of each other) during the actual data gathering on November 13, 14, and 15. Three such opportunities were available on November 14. These observer reliabilities were .58, .96 and .81.

The second aspect of the observational format dealt with a general description of events observed. The observers were instructed to fill out the eight items following observation of their assigned event. This included ratings on intensity of participation, extensiveness of participation, an estimate of the number of people present, the composition of the crowd, a description of the mood of the crowd, the behavior which transpired, clothing trends observed, and any signs, placards, or symbols present.

The questionnaire was designed to be brief and easy to answer, yet covering a number of areas. These included student behavior relating to the Moratorium and attitudes relating to various aspects of the Nixon administration, the war, and the Moratorium. The attitude items were constructed using a Likert-type format, with a 5-point scale on an agree-disagree dimension.

Procedure

The naturalistic observations were conducted by assigning observers (N=7) to various times of observation, such that each event deemed significantly related to the Moratorium was covered by at least one person at all times

from its beginning to its end. The events thus observed included some on-campus functions as well as several demonstrations in Washington, D.C. The on-campus functions were a Teach-in, a march to a local industry (Litton Industries), a student-administration confrontation, the Moratorium headquarters, and a Moratorium information center. The total number of events observed was 10.

The questionnaire dealing with opinions and attitudes was administered to two Introduction to Psychology classes three days before the November Moratorium (27 days after the October Moratorium); and again 3 days after the November Moratorium, with slight rewording so as to make it appropriate for the situation. The first administration will be designated T_1 and the second T_2.

Subjects

The total N for the first administration of the questionnaire was 300. The N for the second administration was 183. Further attrition of Ss because of improper marking of response sheets reduced this to a final total of 166 usable response sheets for analyzing the changes that took place from the first to the second administration. Examination of the frequency distribution for each item, however, revealed no case in which the pattern was changed as a result of this subject attrition.

Results

Observational Data

With regard to the type of interaction observed at each event, some rather striking differences between events emerge (see Table 1). Those events which were specifically related to the protest (the marches and the student-administration confrontation) received high rankings in those categories dealing with Integration and Tension-Management. These are events in which solidarity

and cohesion with respect to value-laden issues are the focal point of group behavior and are high in tension and expressed feeling.

Other results, shown in Table 1, are as follows: The Moratorium Information Center ranked high on "Orientation" (which is defined by the giving and receiving of information), the Teach-in ranked high on "Evaluation" (which is defined by the giving and receiving of opinions and analysis), the Moratorium Headquarters ranked high on "Control" (which is defined by the giving and receiving of directions). The student-administration confrontation ranked low on "Orientation," and the rallies and marches ranked low on "Control." These results indicate considerable face validity in the use of the Bales system for describing group processes in a field setting.

The number of persons in each event was estimated by observers, but did not prove to be reliable for events involving more than 100 to 200 persons. The composition of the groups observed was predominantly (80-95%) students and/or young persons of college age. Other identifiable subgroups were University faculty and administration (1-5%), undifferentiated adults or older persons (0-5%), police (0-3%), press or cameramen (1-5%), children (0-5%), and marshalls (1-5%). The different events were very similar with respect to composition.

Those events rated highest in intensity of participation were the marches and demonstrations. Observer descriptions of crowd mood also differed somewhat between events, with the mood of the University Teach-in being described as more attentive or supportive, while events aimed at specific protest were described as antagonistic, angry or demanding. The Moratorium headquarters were described as business-like.

Taken together, the observational data show characteristic differences that existed between settings which have considerable face validity from the standpoint of their explicit function as related to the Moratorium. These

results are also significant in a methodological sense, in that they demonstrate a way to achieve valid descriptions of group processes in a field setting.

Questionnaire Data

With regard to participation, 50% of the students sampled spent at least some time participating in Moratorium-related activities during the October, 1969 Moratorium; while 36% of this same group did so during the November Moratorium. Thus, the level of participation was lower during November. However, the reasons for participation differed. Proportionately fewer students participated out of curiosity during the November Moratorium. Other students and the press were most often mentioned as the most important sources of influence on attitudes.

Attitudes toward the Moratorium showed considerable diversity among students. The respondents were broken down into subgroups on the basis of sex and degree of participation, and a separate analysis of variance was conducted for each attitude item (a total of 5 items were included). These analyses showed that participators consistently held significantly more favorable attitudes towards the Moratorium and more unfavorable attitudes toward the Nixon administration and the war than did non-participators. Males did not differ from females in their attitudes.

There were no significant changes in attitudes in the group as a whole, although the significant interaction effects shown in Table 2 were present in 3 of the five attitude items. The data in Table 2 demonstrate the typical pattern found in the attitude items. There is a significant main effect of participation (indicating the differences in attitudes between participators and

non-participators), and significant interaction effects which suggest a polarization effect, especially among males. That is, those Ss who held initially favorable attitudes (the high participators) became more extreme in this regard after the Moratorium, while those holding initially unfavorable attitudes (the non-participators) did likewise.

Discussion and Conclusions

Taken together, the results support several general observations. First of all, a surprisingly large percentage of the students sampled participated in some form of protest; and those protesting were largely students. Although many participated, there was no violence observed on the University of Maryland campus. Those events designated specifically as demonstrations generated more verbal expressions of hostility, but the general atmosphere was peaceful, and the leadership seemed responsible and anxious to avoid physical violence.

Regarding the general trends observed from the October to the November Moratoria, it was apparent that there was considerably less student participation in the November Moratorium events taking place on the University of Maryland campus. An earlier report (Van Arsdale, et al., 1970) showed a generally quiet atmosphere on the University campus during the October Moratorium, with a large number of people attending the main event (Teach-in), and very little Moratorium-related activity in other settings. This general low-keyed atmosphere also prevailed during the November Moratorium, the difference being that far fewer persons participated during November. Among those that did participate, fewer were motivated by curiosity.

The observational data reveal a considerable scope of activities related to the Moratorium. This was in part a function of the geographical location of the University of Maryland. The housing of demonstrators coming for the mass demon-

stration in Washington, D.C. was coordinated through the campus Moratorium headquarters, and the providing of transportation to this demonstration was an important function of one observed setting. Thus, the logistics involved in the November Moratorium were quite extensive. The varying functions performed in the different settings was also reflected clearly in the observer's ratings of interaction and description of mood.

In an effort to capture some of the more qualitative characteristics of the events, observers were asked to describe crowd mood in their own words. On the basis of this and the ratings of interaction, the events observed can be classified into several main "types." First of all, there is the most visible aspect of student protest, the demonstration itself. The events observed which fall into this category were the march to Litton, the student-administration confrontation, the rally and march in Washington, D.C., and the Justice Department demonstration. All of these ranked highest in dealing with problems of tension management and/or integration and relatively low in problems of orientation. These settings also accounted for all the hostile mood description, and represented the highest ratings of participation intensity.

The second type of event was more properly called a setting, since it was a semi-permanent place set up for dealing with Moratorium logistics. The settings falling in this category are the Moratorium headquarters and the Moratorium information center. The characteristics of these settings seem to fall in line with giving and receiving directions and/or suggestions. As opposed to the first type noted, they get the lowest ranking on interaction dealing with the problem of group integration.

The third type of event observed was that which essentially is unrelated to the Moratorium. Examples of this were the library area and Litton Industries before the March. These represented very diffuse settings, with no clear pattern emerging from the observer ratings.

The results also indicated considerable diversity of attitudes and perceptions among students regarding Moratorium-related issues. There is no way in which students in general can be given a label such as "conservative" or "liberal". However, the behavior of students proved to be intimately tied to their attitudes. High participators held very different attitudes than did non-participators.

Changes in individual attitudes and perceptions associated with the Moratoria cannot be made in global statements. Rather, changes must be discussed with reference to particular subgroups. The nature of the change taking place depended on the degree to which the individual participated. Based on the correlational data, it may be stated that the high participators compared to non-participators held generally favorable attitudes toward the Moratorium, and unfavorable attitudes toward the Nixon Administration and the Vietnam war. These attitudes were often more extreme after the Moratorium than before. The possibility that events such as Moratoria may have a polarizing effect for some individuals is an interesting notion which should be pursued. This same phenomenon was noted in Trimberger (1968). On a theoretical level, this effect might be explained in terms of the assimilation-contrast principle, well documented in the attitude change literature (Sherif and Hovland, 1961). This approach makes a clear distinction between the recipients and the source ("Communicator") of the appeal. In this case, it would be difficult to specify

any single "communicator," although the New Mobilization Committee and various speakers at the Teach-in do represent specific sources of persuasive appeals. Applying the assimilation-contrast principle in this case, one would predict, assuming highly favorable attitudes toward the Moratorium on the part of its leaders, an assimilation effect on the part of those holding initially favorable opinions, and a contrast effect on those holding initially unfavorable opinions. This is generally supported by the results. The assimilation effect is particularly apparent. Further support for this effect is supplied by the correlational data, which shows larger correlations between participation and attitudes at T_2 than at T_1.

One note of caution in interpreting these results should be added. First of all, the effects did not in every case show polarization; and second, the generality of this result should be tested on a more adequate sample. The Ss participating in the questionnaire part of this study did not represent a cross-section of University of Maryland students or, of course, students in general. Rather, they represented a rather heterogeneous sample of first-semester freshmen and some sophomores at the University. However, the observational data indicate a broad cross section of students and non-students.

It is hoped that this study will provide some better understanding of behavior and attitudes change surrounding the November Moratorium. While the results are generally compatable with previous research their generalizability must be studied.

Table 1.

Events Ranking High (Median Rank:1) and Low (Median Rank:6) on Type of Interaction (Bales)

	High Rank	Low Rank
"Orientation"	1) Moratorium Information Center	1) Student-Administration Confrontation
"Evaluation"	1) Teach-in 2) Litton, before Demonstration	
"Control"	1) Moratorium Headquarters	1) Rally & March, D.C. 2) "March on Death" 3) Justice Department Demonstration 4) Library area 5) Litton, before demonstration
"Decision"		1) Teach-in 2) March to Litton
"Tension-Management"	1) Justice Dept. Demonstration	
"Integration"	1) March to Litton 2) Student-Administration Confrontation 3) Rally & March, D.C. 4) "March on Death"	1) Moratorium Headquarters 2) Moratorium Information Center

Table 2.

Summary of Analysis of Variance for Item 14;

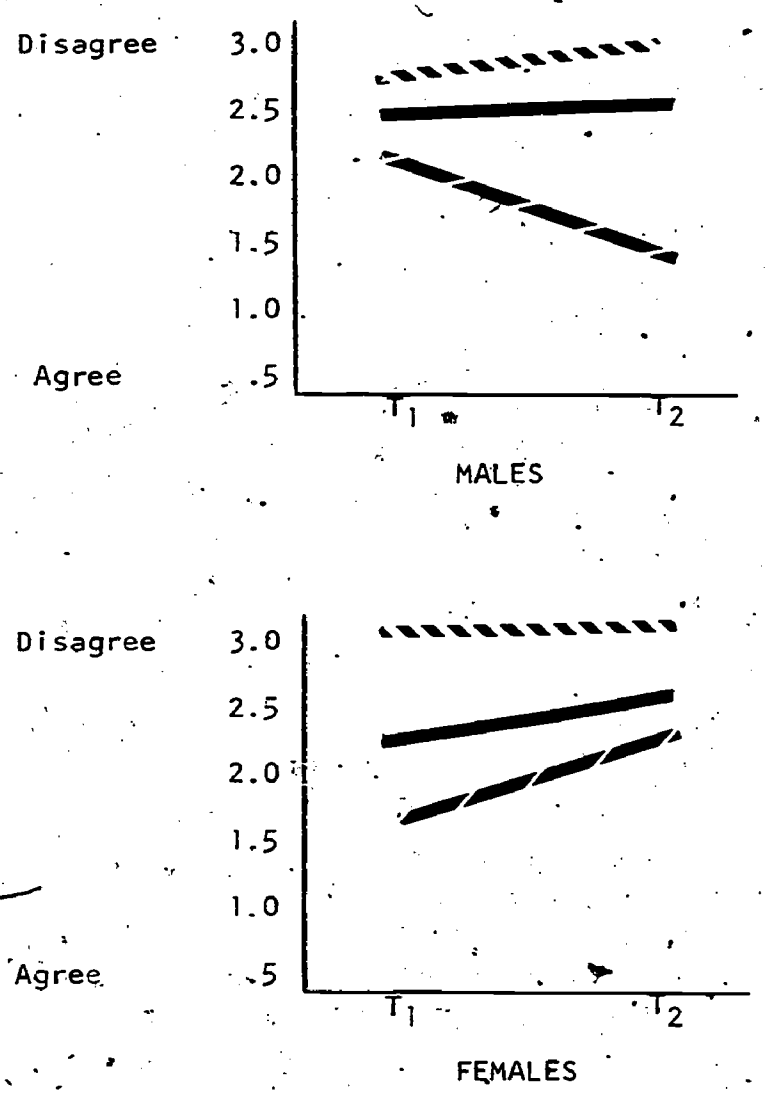
Unilateral Withdrawl from Vietnam (Agree-Disagree)

Source	d.f.	SS	MS	F
Among Subjects				
B (Participation)	2	71.76	35.88	14.17**
C (Sex)	1	.47	.47	.19
BC	2	.65	.33	.13
S (Subjects)	158	400.12	2.53	
Within Subjects				
A (Repitition - Pre-Post)	1	.11	.11	.22
AB	2	1.73	3.45	7.05**
AC	1	.77	.77	1.57
ABC	2	10.01	20.01	40.58**
AS	158	77.39	.49	
Total	327	563.01		

** $p < .01$

Figure 1.

Plotting of Means of Data in Table 2 (Item 14).



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