

## ADJUSTMENT AND SELF-ESTEEM OF USERS AND NONUSERS OF A UNIVERSITY COUNSELLING SERVICE\*

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### Abstract

A Version of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale was used to measure self-esteem and adjustment in groups of users and nonusers of the counselling center at a French Canadian University. The sample of 110 male and 50 female college students was divided into subgroups of vocational-educational and personal-problem users and nonusers. Users were found to have significantly lower self-esteem scores than nonusers. When type of problem was controlled these differences appeared to be essentially due to the lower scores of the personal-problem groups. Sex seemed neither related to being a user nor to type of problem.

### Résumé

On a utilisé une version du Tennessee Self Concept Scale pour mesurer l'estime de soi et le niveau d'adaptation chez des groupes d'usagers et de non-usagers du service de consultation d'une université canadienne-française. L'échantillon de 110 étudiants et de 50 étudiantes fut réparti en sous-groupes de non-usagers et d'usagers présentant soit des problèmes d'orientation, soit des difficultés personnelles. Les usagers ont obtenu des scores d'estime de soi significativement inférieurs à ceux des non-usagers. En contrôlant la variable type-de-problème, il est apparu que ces différences étaient surtout attribuables aux scores des usagers présentant des difficultés personnelles. La variable du sexe n'a pas semblé être reliée au type de problème présenté ni au fait d'être un usager.

The relevance of different intervention methods to meet the needs of users and nonusers of university counselling facilities is largely dependent on the inferred psychological make-up of these two clientele. This study endeavors to provide data for a more precise picture of that psychological make-up. This aim is to help clarify the influence of some personality components associated with counselling seeking and nonseeking by delineating the problem male and female students presented when they came to the counselling center of a North American French speaking university.

Results of earlier studies on the subject remain somewhat perplexing. Rossman and Kirk (1970) reported that in three studies conducted at the University of Minnesota, few or no differences were found between users and nonusers of counselling in terms of abilities, interests, family

background, or personality characteristics. Yet, in other investigations at other universities (Cooke & Kiesler, 1967; Danet, 1965; Mendelsohn & Kirk, 1962; Meadows & Oelke, 1968; Parker, 1961), several significant differences were found between seekers and nonseekers, particularly on the scales of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI). In their own study, Rossman and Kirk (1970) concluded that the results generally supported the findings from the Minnesota studies in that there were essentially no differences between the 1966 entering freshmen who subsequently used or did not use the University of California Berkeley Counselling Center. However, a sex difference was found in that women seeking counselling seemed more concerned about career decisions while men seemed more concerned about social-emotional problems. Four years later, further analyses with essentially the same population, also including those students who had sought help at the Berkeley Psychiatric Service, Kirk (1973) found significant differences between users of one or both facilities and nonusers of either on the scores of the School and College Ability Test, the Strong Vocational Interest Blank and the Omnibus Personality Inventory (OPI).

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However, a glance at the displayed profiles comparing the four groups suggested that these differences might have been somewhat academic.

In analysing the data of the studies quoted so far, the researchers considered counselling users as a homogeneous group with respect to the reason of their request for counselling, that is, regardless of whether they or other people received the nature of the request as pointing essentially to an emotional-personal or a vocational-educational problem. This lack of specificity may help account in part for the perplexing aspect of negative and positive results obtained in some studies of the personality differences between counselling users and nonusers. Indeed, when the type-of-problem variable is taken into account (Apostal, 1968; De Blassie, 1968; Elton & Rose, 1973; Galassi & Galassi, 1973; Goodstein, Crites, Heibrun & Rempel, 1961; Heilbrun, 1960; Minge & Bowman, 1967; Sharf & Bishop, 1973), the results do point to frequent personality differences in terms of traits and level of adjustment between counselling users and nonusers. These differences are seemingly imputable to the significantly higher maladjustment scores of the personal-problem as opposed to the vocational-educational or no-problem students. A similar remark could be made for the sex variable. Thus, contrary to Rossman and Kirk (1970) who had found a sex difference on some of the OPI scales of users and nonusers. Elton and Rose (1973) found no such difference on this instrument when, in addition to type of problem, the sex variable was also controlled.

According to Frank (1972), and on the basis of the preceding review of the literature, it would seem that entering university students come with different psychological profiles and needs with regard to the nature and amount of counselling they may look for during their college years. This study investigated whether these different needs of counselling users are basically associated with their self-esteem and level of adjustment, and whether the sex and type-of-problem variables have any influence on these differences. To that end, the student's personality differences were assessed by means of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale. This instrument has the advantage of providing separate data on both the subject's self-esteem profile and his or her level of emotional stability or adjustment.

## METHOD

### *Subjects*

A total sample of 160 University of Montreal undergraduate males and females (mean (M) = 21.5 years) took part in this study. This sample was first divided into two main groups of 83 users and 77 nonusers of the university counselling center. The users' group was further divided according to type of problem (vocational-

educational vs. personal) as perceived and presented by the student user. Six subgroups were thus established: 28 male vocational-educational users (M = 22.9 years), 19 female vocational-educational users (M = 24.1 years), 18 male personal-problem users (M = 21.5 years), 18 female personal-problem users (M = 20.8 years), 64 male nonusers (M = 20.8 years), and 13 female nonusers (M = 20.5 years). The users' group was representative of its population with respect to academic affiliation, age, and sex ratio. The nonusers' group was drawn primarily from the freshman and sophomore classes of the school of engineering; 29 of the 77 subjects in this group belonged to other departments.

### *Instruments*

At the counselling center during the 1969-70 academic year, all 320 new users who presented themselves were handed a letter of invitation to participate in the study while waiting for a first individual interview. The 83 who accepted were then given the Toulouse French version (Toulouse, 1968) of the Clinical and Research Form of the Tennessee Self Concept Scale (TSCS). The 77 nonusers filled out this version of the TSCS in class after having expressed their willingness to serve as subjects for the study. In addition, users were initially given a French translation and adaptation of the Personal History and Data Form elaborated by Gaudet and Kulick (1954). This questionnaire was used to identify the student's motive for seeking counselling as he or she perceived the main problem in either vocational-educational or personal terms.

Studies of the concurrent validity of the Toulouse translation of the TSCS have shown that it does discriminate between psychologically disturbed and normal French Canadians, and that the distribution of scores on the 29 scales are roughly comparable to those of the original American test, although not sufficiently comparable to justify the direct use of American norms (Lamarche, 1968). The raw scores were therefore used in computations. Also, considering that factorial analysis has shown that two primary factors, namely self-esteem and degree of inner conflict or level of adjustment, can account for the variance of the 29 scales (Rentz & White, 1967), the symmetry of the distribution of all subjects' raw scores was first established, and only those scales that had correlation coefficients of less than .70 were used for further analysis. Seven self-esteem scales (self-criticism, total positive score, identity, self-satisfaction, behaviour, physical self, and family self) and three level-of-adjustment scales (general maladjustment, psychosis, and personality integration) constituted the final test form.

## RESULTS

*Comparisons Between Users and Nonusers*

Table 1 presents the data for the comparison between all users and nonusers on all seven self-esteem and three level-of-adjustment scales of the TSCS. As can be seen, results of the two-tailed *t* tests for the mean differences between these two groups are significant at the .01 level in the case of four of the self-esteem scales. According to these results, users have a more negative self-image; are less self-satisfied, have a less favorable perception of their behaviour; and have more feelings of inadequacy as family members than nonusers. Evidence from this study thus indicates that nonusers had a better self-esteem than users of counselling services, when each of these two groups is considered as a whole. However, Table 1

TABLE 1  
Comparisons between Users and Nonusers of Counselling on Ten TSCS Scales

| Scale                   | Users (N = 83) |           | Nonusers (N = 77) |           | Difference | <i>t</i> |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|-------------------|-----------|------------|----------|
|                         | <i>M</i>       | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i>          | <i>SD</i> |            |          |
| <b>Self-Esteem</b>      |                |           |                   |           |            |          |
| Self-Criticism          | 32.32          | 5.49      | 31.58             | 4.92      | .42        | .89      |
| Total P Score           | 324.36         | 42.28     | 340.71            | 28.97     | -16.43     | 2.83**   |
| Identity                | 115.12         | 14.67     | 118.97            | 11.22     | -3.85      | 1.85     |
| Self-Satisfaction       | 102.79         | 16.34     | 109.83            | 11.90     | -7.04      | 3.09**   |
| Behavior                | 106.44         | 14.04     | 111.90            | 10.79     | -5.46      | 2.74**   |
| Physical Self           | 66.33          | 8.92      | 68.77             | 6.82      | -2.44      | 1.93     |
| Family Self             | 64.03          | 10.24     | 68.05             | 7.79      | -4.02      | 2.77**   |
| <b>Adjustment</b>       |                |           |                   |           |            |          |
| General Maladjustment   | 105.53         | 24.22     | 105.24            | 23.12     | -7.1       | .2       |
| Psychosis               | 50.83          | 6.65      | 50.23             | 5.77      | .6         | .6       |
| Personality Integration | 8.98           | 3.87      | 10.16             | 3.99      | -1.18      | 1.90     |

\*\**p* < .01

also indicates that there were no significant differences between users and nonusers on any of the three level-of-adjustment scales.

*Comparisons Between Types of Problems*

Vocational-educational and personal-problem users of counselling in this study did not form a homogeneous group with respect to self-esteem. As table 2 indicates, the values of the two-tailed *t* tests for the mean differences between these two groups of users are significant on all of the self-esteem scales, in addition to the personality integration scale. It is thus apparent that vocational-educational users are less self-critical; have a higher level of self-esteem; a greater sense of self-identity; a better image of their body and of themselves with which they feel more satisfied; a more favorable perception of their behaviour; and a better feeling of themselves as family members than personal-problem users.

*Comparisons Between All Six Groups of Users and Nonusers*

Tables 3 and 4 present the results of the one-way analysis of variance on the differences between users classified according to sex and type of problem and nonusers. The critical values of the *F* ratios show significant differences on all but one of the self-esteem scales, in addition to one (personality integration) of the three level-of-adjustment scales. The Newman-Keuls simultaneous comparison between groups indicates that female and male personal-problem users, in that order, have lower self-esteem than the subjects in either the vocational-educational or the nonuser male and female subgroups. Female and male personal-problem users also seem to

TABLE 2  
Comparison between Vocational-Educational and Personal Male Users of Counselling on Ten TSCS Scales

| Scale                   | Vocational-educational (N = 28) |           | Personal-problem (N = 18) |           | Difference | <i>t</i> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|------------|----------|
|                         | <i>M</i>                        | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i>                  | <i>SD</i> |            |          |
| <b>Self-Esteem</b>      |                                 |           |                           |           |            |          |
| Self-Criticism          | 30.92                           | 5.08      | 35.05                     | 5.05      | -4.13      | 2.69**   |
| Total Score             | 348.57                          | 31.02     | 307.                      | 42.20     | 41.57      | 3.85**   |
| Identity                | 122.39                          | 10.92     | 109.72                    | 15.77     | 12.67      | 3.22**   |
| Self-Satisfaction       | 111.14                          | 13.03     | 95.66                     | 15.09     | 15.48      | 3.69**   |
| Behavior                | 115.03                          | 10.80     | 101.61                    | 13.89     | 13.42      | 3.67**   |
| Physical Self           | 70.21                           | 5.12      | 63.11                     | 10.46     | 7.1        | 3.08**   |
| Family Self             | 68.25                           | 9.31      | 61.77                     | 9.14      | 6.48       | 2.32*    |
| <b>Adjustment</b>       |                                 |           |                           |           |            |          |
| General Maladjustment   | 110.57                          | 22.74     | 100.83                    | 30.14     | 9.74       | 1.24     |
| Psychosis               | 48.64                           | 6.43      | 51.44                     | 7.04      | -2.8       | 1.39     |
| Personality Integration | 10.50                           | 3.62      | 7.55                      | 3.07      | 2.95       | 2.85**   |

\**p* < .05

\*\**p* < .01

TABLE 3  
Means and Standard Deviations of the Six Groups on Ten TSCS Scales

| Scale                   | Users                  |           |                 |           |                  |           |                 |           | Nonusers      |           |                 |           |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
|                         | Vocational-educational |           |                 |           | Personal-problem |           |                 |           | Male (N = 64) |           | Female (N = 13) |           |
|                         | Male (N = 28)          |           | Female (N = 19) |           | Male (N = 18)    |           | Female (N = 18) |           | M             | SD        | M               | SD        |
|                         | <u>M</u>               | <u>SD</u> | <u>M</u>        | <u>SD</u> | <u>M</u>         | <u>SD</u> | <u>M</u>        | <u>SD</u> | <u>M</u>      | <u>SD</u> | <u>M</u>        | <u>SD</u> |
| <b>Self-Esteem</b>      |                        |           |                 |           |                  |           |                 |           |               |           |                 |           |
| Self-Criticism          | 31.8                   | 5.5       | 30.8            | 5.6       | 33.9             | 5.1       | 33.1            | 5.7       | 31.6          | 4.9       | 31.3            | 5.3       |
| Total Score             | 338.6                  | 36.3      | 339.7           | 36.4      | 315.5            | 46.9      | 294.7           | 36.2      | 339.4         | 28.5      | 347.3           | 31.4      |
| Identity                | 119.6                  | 11.3      | 119.1           | 13.5      | 112.4            | 17.5      | 106.7           | 13.9      | 118.3         | 10.8      | 122.1           | 12.8      |
| Self-Satisfaction       | 108.2                  | 14.8      | 107.9           | 14.6      | 98.5             | 17.4      | 93.3            | 14.7      | 109.8         | 11.7      | 110.3           | 13.2      |
| Behavior                | 110.8                  | 12.8      | 112.7           | 11.1      | 104.6            | 14.9      | 94.8            | 10.7      | 111.3         | 10.8      | 114.9           | 10.4      |
| Physical Self           | 68.2                   | 8.5       | 68.4            | 7.5       | 65.7             | 11.8      | 61.9            | 8.2       | 68.3          | 7.1       | 70.8            | 5.4       |
| Family Self             | 68.1                   | 8.9       | 66.5            | 10.2      | 61.1             | 10.9      | 58.1            | 8.2       | 68.1          | 8.3       | 67.8            | 4.7       |
| <b>Adjustment</b>       |                        |           |                 |           |                  |           |                 |           |               |           |                 |           |
| General Maladjustment   | 110.9                  | 15.9      | 105.7           | 28.6      | 110.4            | 29.6      | 92.2            | 20.6      | 106.1         | 22.7      | 107.0           | 26.1      |
| Psychosis               | 49.2                   | 4.9       | 50.1            | 7.7       | 51.2             | 7.8       | 53.7            | 6.1       | 50.4          | 5.9       | 49.4            | 4.9       |
| Personality Integration | 9.9                    | 3.8       | 10.3            | 4.1       | 7.9              | 2.8       | 7.2             | 3.8       | 9.8           | 3.8       | 12.0            | 4.3       |

TABLE 4  
ANOVA of the Mean Differences for the Six Groups on Ten TSCS Scales

| Scale                   | <u>SS</u> |          | F        | Conclusion |  |
|-------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|------------|--|
|                         | Group     | Error    |          |            | Totsl                                      |
| <b>Self-Esteem</b>      |           |          |          |            |  |
| Self-Criticism          | 129.6     | 4209.3   | 4338.8   | .95        | ---  |
| Total P Score           | 38682.6   | 182375.8 | 221058.4 | 6.53**     | PPF < VEM, VEF, NUM, NUF<br>PPM < VEM, NUF |
| Identity                | 3029.8    | 24810.1  | 27839.9  | 3.76**     | PPF < VEM, VEF, NUM, NUF                   |
| Self-Satisfaction       | 5240.5    | 29407.2  | 34647.7  | 5.5**      | PPF < VEM, VEF, NUM, NUF                   |
| Behavior                | 5106.5    | 21114.6  | 26221.1  | 7.45**     | PPF < PPM, VEM, NUM, NUF<br>PPM < NUF      |
| Physical Self           | 837.5     | 9472.5   | 10310.   | 2.72*      | PPF < VEM, VEF, NUM, NUF                   |
| Family Self             | 2033.6    | 11841.2  | 13874.8  | 5.30**     | PPF < VEM, VEF, NUM, NUF                   |
| <b>Adjustment</b>       |           |          |          |            |  |
| General Maladjustment   | 4474.5    | 84285.   | 88759.5  | 1.63       | ---  |
| Psychosis               | 250.9     | 5932.8   | 6183.7   | 1.30       | ---  |
| Personality Integration | 245.7     | 2255.8   | 2501.5   | 3.35**     | PPF < NUF<br>PPM < NUF                     |

Note.  $df = 5,154$ . Abbreviations: VEM = Vocational-Educational Males (N = 28); VEF = Vocational-Educational Females (N = 19); PPM = Personal-Problem Males (N = 18); PPF = Personal-Problem Females (N = 18); NUM = Nonusers Males (N = 64); NUF = Nonusers Females (N = 13).

\* =  $p < .05$

\*\* =  $p < .01$

have significantly lower personality integration than female nonusers. Female personal-problem users are found to be significantly different from their male users counterpart on only the behaviour scale where they appear to have a less favorable perception of the way they act. It is noteworthy that no differences are found between any of the nonusers and vocational-educational subgroups.

#### *Interaction Effects of Sex, Type of Problem, and Clientele*

The differences shown in Tables 1 to 4 raise the question of whether counselling seeking and nonseeking is more a function of one's sex or of one's problems. The answer to this question in this study is provided in Tables 5 and 6 which show the results of analyses of variance to test the interaction effects of sex on the type-of-problem

TABLE 5

ANOVA for the Effect of Sex and Type of Problem on the TSCS Scores of Counselling Users

| Scale                   | Sex                   |          | Type of problem       |          | Interaction           |          |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|
|                         | <i>M</i> <sub>S</sub> | <i>F</i> | <i>M</i> <sub>S</sub> | <i>F</i> | <i>M</i> <sub>S</sub> | <i>F</i> |
|                         | Self-Criticism        | 12.5     |                       | 133.38   | 4.35*                 |          |
| Total P Score           | 4371.1                | 3.05     | 29494.01              | 20.57**  | 405.68                |          |
| Identity                | 392.                  | 1.98     | 2244.5                | 11.37**  | 20.05                 |          |
| Self-Satisfaction       | 410.88                | 1.85     | 3990.22               | 18.01**  | 4.50                  |          |
| Behavior                | 678.34                | 4.62*    | 3741.12               | 25.48**  | 238.34                |          |
| Physical Self           | 177.34                | 2.51     | 616.34                | 8.77*    | 6.12                  |          |
| Family Self             | 196.68                | 2.18     | 1540.12               | 17.09**  | 1.68                  |          |
| Personality Integration | .01                   |          | 110.01                | 8.33**   | 11.68                 |          |

Note. *df* = 1,68. *F* ratios less than 1 were omitted.

\* = *p* < .05.

\*\* = *p* < .01.

TABLE 6

ANOVA for the Effect of Sex and Type of Clientele (Users or Nonusers) on the TSCS Scores

| Scale                   | Sex                   |          | Source of variation   |          | Interaction           |          |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|-----------------------|----------|
|                         | <i>M</i> <sub>S</sub> | <i>F</i> | <i>M</i> <sub>S</sub> | <i>F</i> | <i>M</i> <sub>S</sub> | <i>F</i> |
|                         | Self-Criticism        | 50.01    | 1.82                  | 58.17    | 2.12                  | 26.32    |
| Total P Score           | 672.48                |          | 8150.01               | 5.40**   | 18.48                 |          |
| Identity                | 76.32                 |          | 792.48                | 3.54*    | 2.32                  |          |
| Self-Satisfaction       | 56.07                 |          | 999.69                | 4.97**   | 1.23                  |          |
| Behavior                | 94.23                 |          | 930.76                | 5.29**   | 15.07                 |          |
| Physical Self           | 56.07                 |          | 184.69                | 2.33     | 11.07                 |          |
| Family Self             | 30.76                 |          | 335.07                | 5.07**   | 1.92                  |          |
| Personality Integration | .69                   |          | 148.92                | 9.19**   | 0.00                  |          |

Note. *df* = 1,48. *F* ratios less than 1 were omitted.

\* = *p* < .05.

\*\* = *p* < .01.

and clientele (users' or nonusers') variables. The data in Table 5 indicate that there is no interaction effect between sex and type of problem in counselling seeking. The difference on the behaviour scale noted in Table 4 between the male and female personal-problem users and between these two subgroups and other subgroups appears to be supported. This is the only sex effect which is significant. On the other hand, the critical values of the *F* ratios for the type-of-problem effect is systematically significant for all the seven self-esteem scales and also for the one adjustment scale (personality integration) previously found to differentiate between subgroups of users and nonusers. These results lead to the conclusion that the students who decided to seek counselling did so regardless of sex because they felt themselves to be persons who had a personal or a vocational-educational problem.

The results shown in Table 6 further confirm the conclusion that being a user or a nonuser of counselling is not related to being a male or a female. As can be seen, the interaction effect between sex and being a user or a nonuser is not significant. On the other hand, the critical values

of the *F* ratios for the group effect, that is being a user or a nonuser, is significant at the .05 or the .01 levels for six of the eight scales tested. Again these data lend themselves to the conclusion that the sex variable did not play a significant role in the students' decision to ask for counselling in this study, although it should be remembered that there was a noticeable sex imbalance in the nonusers group (drawn primarily from the school of engineering).

## DISCUSSION

The first conclusion of this study is that when each of the two groups of counselling users and nonusers is taken as a whole, there are personality differences in that users are found to have significantly lower TSCS scores with respect to self-esteem, self-satisfaction, perception of one's behaviour, and feelings of worth as family members. However, without further specification as to the composition of the users' group, most of these observed differences could be misleading, because they can be essentially accounted for by the lower scores of the personal-problem users, the profiles of the vocational-educational users being quite similar to those of the nonusers. These findings are consistent with the results of many studies quoted earlier, and particularly with those showing that when the why of counselling seeking, or type of problem, is controlled (Apostal, 1968; De Blassie, 1968; Elton & Rose, 1973; Galassi & Galassi, 1973; Goodstein et al., 1961; Heilbrun, 1960; Minge & Bowman, 1967; Sharf & Bishop, 1973), personality differences, both in terms of traits and level of adjustment, do emerge between counselling users and nonusers, and more particularly between vocational-educational and personal-problem users. These findings also reinforce the often but cautiously voiced observation that many counselling users do not suffer from any significant maladjustment and lack of self-esteem, and that their needs are best served with unrestrictive intervention methods specifically aimed at the vocational-educational problems they perceive themselves to have.

Further examination of our results shows that comparisons between the various groups yielded significant differences more often with the self-esteem than with the adjustment scales. In fact, only one of the three adjustment scales, personality integration, yielded significant differences. These findings are consistent with those studies that have reported personality differences between counselling users and nonusers, but they possibly differ from the results of some studies on the question of degree of disturbance. In effect, most studies of the personality differences between groups of counselling users and nonusers seem to have yielded more often positive than negative results, and as far as the concept of adjustment is

concerned, with instruments as varied as the MMPI (Cooke & Kiesler, 1967; Danet, 1965; Dahlstrom & Craven, 1952; Parker, 1961), the OPI (Kirk, 1973; Rossman & Kirk, 1970), the California Psychological Inventory (Goodstein et al., 1961), the 16 Personality Factors (De Blassie, 1968), the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule (Minge & Bowman, 1967; Rosenkrantz & O'Halloran, 1965), the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Mendelsohn & Kirk, 1962), and the Mooney Problem Checklist (Doleys, 1964). Also, despite the differences between these instruments, it seems that the bulk of the evidence points to an ordering of the groups, along the adjustment continuum, from personal-problem users to vocational-educational users to nonusers, with the latter being the best adjusted in some studies, but no more than the vocational-educational in other investigations such as this one. The results of the present study might contribute to a further refinement of the interpretation of previous findings in that, as far as a distinction between self-esteem and level of adjustment can be considered valid in the case of the TSCS scales, it would appear that in seeking help for their personal problems the students were not so much concerned with serious personality disorders as they were with finding ways of clarifying their self-concepts and enhancing their self-esteem. This interpretation would be compatible with the theory that, depending on the gravity of their problems, students would look for different amount and type of counselling (Frank, 1972), and with data indicating that those who are the most disturbed and the least personally integrated would more often have recourse to the psychiatric than to the counselling service (King, 1968; Kirk, 1973).

The second important finding of our investigation is that the results corroborate those of previous studies in which no clear personality differences appeared between male and female users and nonusers (Berdie & Stein, 1966; Kirk, 1973; Mendelsohn & Kirk, 1962; Rossman & Kirk, 1970), and no significant sex effect at all on the dependent personality variables when the type-of-problem and group variables were controlled (Elton & Rose, 1973; Galassi & Galassi, 1973; Sharf & Bishop, 1973). It thus appears more and more clearly that, generally speaking, there are few, if any, major personality and adjustment differences between male and female counselling seekers, although such differences could possibly emerge as a function of the time when counselling is initiated in the four-year college program (Sharp & Kirk, 1974). These conclusions would seem all the more valid in that the present relatively small sample was drawn from a French speaking university, and could therefore be presumed to be rather more than less culturally

different from comparable samples of most other North American colleges. These results are also strikingly compatible with those of studies in which the sex and type-of-problem variables were controlled (Elton & Rose, 1973; Galassi & Galassi, 1973; Sharf & Bishop, 1973). On the other hand, the fact that the subgroups of male and female personal-problem users were somewhat younger, on the average, than the vocational-educational male and female users in the present study is consistent with the idea that personality differences between male and female users are more likely to result from time factors, such as age and year when counselling is initiated, than from sex differences.

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