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ABSTRACT

Preparation for employment and improved economic status are the primary objectives of vocational education for high school dropouts. To accomplish these objectives, greater knowledge is needed concerning the participation, characteristics, and motivation of those dropouts who participate in vocational education. Of an estimated 14,258 Wisconsin male dropouts for 1966-67, this study identified only 600 dropouts or 4 percent who were enrolled in vocational education programs. A sample of 286 completed a forced-choice questionnaire to determine demographic characteristics (age, race, marital status, socioeconomic class), geographic mobility patterns, educational attainment, work experience, attitudes about vocational education, and achievement motivation. The sample represented private voluntary vocational schools, public compulsory vocational plus basic schools, and public voluntary total education schools. The best explanation for the low percentage of enrollment is that not all available vocational programs are accessible to high school dropouts. Too often prohibitive educational or test requirements and tuition discourage dropout participation. (CH)

HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS

AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN WISCONSIN

by

Myron Roomkin

CENTER FOR STUDIES IN VOCATIONAL

AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

RESEARCH REPORT

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF TABLES

INTRODUCTION

In 1961, the National Committee for Children and Youth adopted an almost alarmist viewpoint on the general problem of high school dropouts by referring to it as "social dynamite."[1] Since then, the problems of youth employability and premature school leaving have been the subjects of many analyses and evaluations. These efforts have ranged in form from the general essay approach to the more sophisticated experiment with control groups. The product of these investigations has been a beginning of an appreciation of the characteristics of this population. No longer do we believe the stereotype of a dropout--a nonwhite male of low intellectual ability who "flunked out" of school.[2] Unfortunately, our current understanding of premature school leavers is still far from adequate.

One area in which information is badly needed is that of correction or rehabilitation for the young person who becomes and remains a dropout. The majority of our research efforts are usually made, first, to identify high school dropouts relative to high school graduates, and second, to identify reasons for

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[1]National Committee for Children and Youth, Social Dynamite: The Report of the Conference on Unemployed, Out-of-School Youth in Urban Areas (Washington: May 24, 1961).

[2]Bartell W. Cardon, "Vocational Interests and Personality Patterns of School Dropouts of High Ability," in Research in Vocational and Technical Education (Madison: Center for Studies in Vocational and Technical Education, The University of Wisconsin, 1967), p. 3.

staying in school. It is in the latter area that literature is most abundant. Finally, comparisons have been made between dropouts and graduates to determine the labor market success of each group. More recently, studies have been undertaken to ascertain the long-run effects of a high school education.

In general, these research perspectives overlook one central point: in comparing dropouts to graduates, researchers are assuming that this comparison will remain constant. "Rarely do we ask whether dropouts remain dropouts, why some dropouts change their status, or what sequence of positions is typically occupied by dropouts as they increase in age and maturity."[3] The evidence seems to indicate that dropouts do alter their status over time. For example, the results of the 1963 Dropout Campaign of the President's emergency board showed that 90 percent of some 157,000 dropouts and potential dropouts in 22 states were persuaded to return to or remain in school.[4] Indeed, the phenomenon of the returning dropout is so common that some school systems have

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[3]Donald E. Super, "Vocational Development of High School Dropouts," in The School Dropout, ed. Daniel Schreiber (Washington: National Education Association, 1964), p. 56.

[4]Jeanette H. Sofokidis and Eugenia Sullivan, "New Look at School Dropouts," HEW Indicators (April 1964), p. xii. These data, however, do not differentiate between actual and potential school leavers. A standard method for dealing with the dropout problem is to enhance the retention powers of the school. For a detailed treatment of the costs and benefits associated with the prevention of premature school withdrawal, see Burton A. Weisbrod, "Preventing High School Dropouts," in Measuring Benefits of Government Investments, ed. Robert Dorfman (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1963), pp. 117-67.

created special programs to deal with the unique problems caused by this group.[5] Furthermore, dropouts can change their status in other ways. Some dropouts obtain high school diplomas many years after leaving school by fulfilling general equivalency requirements; others advance occupationally in spite of their relative educational disadvantages.

One way for a dropout to alter his status is through vocational training. A dropout can receive such vocational instruction either on or off the job. On-the-job instruction is conducted at the work place and is usually geared towards the needs and production process of a particular employer. Classroom instruction is usually broader in scope. This study concentrates on those dropouts who decide to continue their education in terms of off-the-job classroom vocational education.

Vocational Education for High School Dropouts

Vocational education for high school dropouts has two primary objectives. First, vocational instruction is a means of preparing students for the world of work; second, it is oriented towards removing differentials that exist between graduates and dropouts. In educating the dropout for the world of work, vocational educators are providing classroom programs and opportunities for all

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[5] For example, see Los Angeles City School Districts, The Dropout Who Returns to Graduate From Adult High School (Los Angeles, 1965).

students, not only the academically talented and ambitious.[6] Very simply stated, such programs are familiarizing students with the ways of productive and responsible citizens. In this pursuit, vocational education seeks to develop the skills, appreciations, knowledge, and attitudes that are necessary for vocational success.

Second, vocational education seeks to maximize the position of dropouts relative to that of graduates. This is usually achieved by compensating the dropout for the academic, technical, and attitudinal deficiencies by which he is usually characterized. The criteron for success is the nature of the labor market experiences of the vocationally educated dropout. Thus, vocational education for this population seeks to increase wage rates and occupational growth. The optimization of these conditions for dropouts depends upon the relative labor market performance of those graduates and dropouts who do not undertake vocational instruction but are otherwise comparable, and upon the costs associated with this training.[7]

Criticisms of Vocational Instruction

An often-raised criticism of vocational instruction is that high school dropouts are unable to partake in school vocational

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[6]The Board of Education of the City of Detroit, Preparing Pupils for the World of Work: A Report and Recommendations of a Special Staff Committee Appointed by the Superintendent of Schools (Detroit, 1962), p. 6.

[7]Currently, research into the relative costs and benefits associated with vocational instruction for many population groups is extremely popular. One such study has shown that favorable cost-benefit ratios exist for the vocationally trained high school dropout. See Glen G. Cain, "Benefit/Cost Estimates for Job Corps," mineographed (Madison: Institute for Research on Poverty, The University of Wisconsin, 1967).

programs. Student participation in vocational instruction is often restricted to the high school, and often, no formal public instruction is available once the dropout leaves school. This unresponsiveness of the vocational educational structure to the needs of the high school dropout was detected by the President's Commission on Civil Disorders. The Commission reported, "The special need (vocational instruction) of the dropout is still being neglected. ...With an unemployment rate for Negro youth more than twice that of white, this need is particularly acute."[8] The unemployment rate and racial consequences, however, do not reflect the true severity of this need. "Unemployment rates do not reflect discouraged abstention from the job market, underemployment, or frustrating occupational misfits that may lead to quits and unemployment."[9] "Remedial manpower and antipoverty programs as the Manpower Development and Training Act and the Job Corps can currently enroll only tens of thousands when hundreds of thousands need help."[10]

Vocational education alone cannot be the panacea for all of these attitudinal and economic needs of the high school dropout. However, some form of vocational instruction may be the principal vehicle around which a more complete rehabilitation program can best be built. If vocational education is to occupy this central

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[8]The Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (New York: Bantam Books, 1968), p. 454.

[9]U.S. Department of Labor, Manpower Report of the President and a Report on Manpower Utilization Requirements, Resources, Utilization, and Training (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 112.

[10]National Advisory Council on Vocational Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, The Bridge Between Man and His Work (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1968), p. 53.

role in the salvaging of the premature school leaver, then a number of questions remain to be answered.

The initial questions are: (1) What type of vocational education should be offered? (2) How long should this training be? (3) Who should pay the training costs? The answers to these and other questions are difficult to obtain at this time. A primary reason for this difficulty is the general lack of knowledge and information about the high school dropout and his relationships with the existing vocational education structure.

The Aims of the Study

This research effort concentrates on filling some of this knowledge gap. Specifically, it examines the nature of the relationship between the high school dropout and existing vocational structure in the State of Wisconsin.

One of the aims of this investigation is to determine the characteristics of high school dropouts presently enrolled in vocational educational institutions in Wisconsin. Since neither all dropouts nor all vocational settings are identical, an additional aim of this study is to determine what type of dropout attends what type of vocational institution. A third aim is to ascertain the extent to which different types of dropouts attend the different types of vocational institutions. Finally, this effort seeks to determine the reasons or rationale behind the selection, by the different types of dropouts, of particular vocational schools.

It is hoped that the information gained from this investigation will show the need for additional research in this area. Furthermore, it is believed that this investigation can produce a body of knowledge to aid school administrators, educators, and teachers in their policy-making functions.

CHAPTER I

METHODOLOGY

To fulfill the aims of this investigation, it is assumed that both disadvantaged dropouts and vocational institutions are concepts that can be measured and quantified. The burden becomes one of creating a research design which defines these differences and then quantifies them. Given the diverse nature of the dropout population, and the wide proliferation of institutions that offer vocational instruction, a number of operational definitions were employed to assist in the construction of the design.

Conceptual Definitions

Dropouts Defined

A dropout is defined as an individual who has left high school prematurely (before the completion of the twelfth grade), without fulfilling the necessary requirements for a high school diploma. The key element in this definition is the actual withdrawal from school. All dropouts to be studied will be from 16 to 21 years of age. To simplify matters, this investigation will exclude female dropouts. Approximately 50 percent of all dropouts are female. However, most female dropouts are married and/or pregnant, and thereby pose particularly unique problems in vocational education.[1] Finally, for purposes of this study, a dropout must also be presently enrolled in vocational instruction.

Defining Vocational Education

At the present time, there is a myriad of agencies and institutions which offer vocational instruction in the State of Wisconsin. For example, 256 agencies (both public and private) claim to provide services in the Milwaukee Inner-Core.[2] Forty-one of these agencies provide vocational instruction and training. The problem is to define a conceptual framework by which to classify all of these efforts.

One simple definitional aid is to limit the investigation solely to institutional vocational instruction as opposed to correspondence-type instruction. "For many years a significant amount of technical instruction has been provided by correspondence schools."[3] Study of instruction by correspondence entails a set of circumstances significantly different from that of institutional training.

Institutional vocational instruction consists of three basic elements. First, there is the ownership or administration of the

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[1]The most recent national statistics on high school dropouts show female dropouts to be 47.1 percent of the total dropout population. For a more detailed analysis of the female dropout population see Harvey R. Hamel, "Employment of High School Graduates and Dropouts," Monthly Labor Review (June 1966), p. 643-49.

[2]See Anthony J. Mensah, "Agency: A Survey of Areas of Social Action in Milwaukee," mimeographed (1968).

[3]National Manpower Council, "Types of Vocational Schooling," in Education and Manpower, ed. Henry David (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 175-76.

school. The students' involvement in terms of pupil attendance is a second element basic to any vocational instruction. Finally, all vocational education has to contain a body of knowledge or curriculum.

Administration: An institution may be publicly or privately administered. That is to say, either its facilities are open to all who desire them, or they are restricted in terms of the selection policy and courses offered. In general, a good proxy for this feature is the nature of the school's accountability to governmental agencies, the public, or other institutions. The source of operating revenue might appear to be a better indicator of ownership, but in reality, it is impossible to rely upon this as a proxy. An outstanding characteristic of the American educational system is the extent to which public funds have been used to support increasingly extended education for all young people.[4] Thus, many totally private vocational institutions receive federal grants to subsidize the education of certain groups.

Attendance: We can classify the nature of the student involvement in an institution. A student's enrollment can be either a function of law, and therefore compulsory, or a function of his own volition, and therefore voluntary in nature. In the case of a student who must attend some sort of school, but has a specific

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[4]Eli Ginzberg, "Education and National Efficiency," in Education and Manpower, p. 21.

choice as to the specific school he wishes to attend, his enrollment is viewed as compulsory in nature.

Curriculum: "It has often been pointed out that all education is vocational education, since all things taught in schools have some applicability to work."[5] However, specific vocational instruction contains any of three basic components. These components are: (1) instruction in vocational material, (2) instruction in basic and general educational skills, and (3) an emphasis on attitudinal education or cultural education. These components are usually found arranged in the following typical groupings.

1. A concentration on vocational subjects (VOC)--This research effort defines vocational education as that form of instruction which will enhance the immediate employability of an individual by supplying him with skills and/or knowledge. The emphasis in vocational education is on mastering these skills rather than on achieving some familiarity with them.

2. Vocational courses plus basic educational instruction (VOC+B)--This combination offers the dropout an educational emphasis on reading, writing, and arithmetic. In addition, vocational instruction is provided.

3. Total education (TOT)--Training the high school dropout often entails that the dropout be persuaded to re-evaluate his

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[5]National Manpower Council, "Issues in Vocational Education," in Education and Manpower, p. 129.

attitudes as they relate to school, work, and himself.[6] Attitudinal education is combined with vocational instruction, and more often than not, the dropout is also provided with basic educational skills. When all three types of elements are present (vocational, basic, and attitudinal), the institution is said to be total in scope, and is hereafter referred to as total education (TOT) for the high school dropout.

When the curriculum, administration, and attendance dimensions are combined in chart form, a matrix of the possible types of vocational institutions is created. Figure 1 combines these dimensions and reveals the possibility of twelve categories of vocational institutions for high school dropouts.

Figure 1. A Matrix of Possible Types of Vocational Schools Based on Three Key Dimensions

	Administration					
	Public			Private		
Attendance	VOC	VOC+B	TOT	VOC	VOC+B	TOT
Compulsory	1	2	3	4	5	6
Voluntary	7	8	9	10	11	12

Each cell represents a theoretical type of vocational setting; not all cells or settings are likely to occur. Matrix cells 4, 5, and 6 are situations that cannot exist by the definitions of private and compulsory. It is difficult to imagine a totally private

[6]Harold T. Smith, Education and Training for the World of Work (Kalamazoo, Mich.: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, 1963), p. 37.

vocational school which one is required to attend. An institution in cell 1 would also be difficult to locate. Most public schools which offer vocational education also offer basic educational development. Although training in the Armed Forces is of the cell 1 type, military training is excluded from this investigation. Cell 7 consists of adult educational facilities. This author feels that this type of program is relevant for high school dropouts, but preliminary investigation has shown that such schools enroll a very small number of high school dropouts with the previously-stated characteristics. Those institutions which are described by cell 11 are almost nonexistent. There would be a tendency for the institutions in cell 11 to eventually move into the twelfth cell. Finally, those institutions described in cell 3 can also exist, but again the tendency would be for these schools to move into the cell 9 category as they became increasingly involved with the education of dropouts.[7]

The cells that remain can be considered to represent the majority of vocational institutions that are available for the high school dropout. First, there are those schools in cell 2 which are administered by the public board of education. Such schools require compulsory attendance by all high school students

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[7]A similar movement from cell 2 to cell 3 was found to be empirically invalid. One could still advance the argument that strong pressures upon cell 2 type schools to approach a cell 3 curriculum are present whenever large numbers of disadvantaged students are involved.

who refuse to continue in the regular school tract. In these schools, the student receives instruction in vocational and basic educational skills. Second, the public sector can also create and maintain a set of voluntary vocational institutions such as those in cell 9. Both types of program emphasize the total education approach. Third, the private sector offers the dropout the opportunity to obtain training in trade schools (cell 10). Finally, the private sector can offer the high school dropout the chance to obtain total training as in cell 12.

With the aid of these operational definitions and constructs, it is possible to proceed to the next step in design construction--the development of a sample dropout population now engaged in vocational education. The next section describes the methodology associated with the sample selection and the process by which data were gathered.

Compiling a Sample

Sample Construction

Information on high school dropouts who are presently enrolled in vocational institutions was gathered with the cooperation of their vocational schools. This section describes the procedure employed to determine the number of these schools in each of the described school-type categories, the size of the total enrollments for each of these categories, and the criteria for including specific schools in the sample.

Private/Voluntary/Vocational Schools: At this time very little is known nationally about this type of vocational institution. We do know that its purpose appears to be (1) education for employment, (2) preparation for licensing, or (3) a combination of both.

In 1958, a survey of all vocational facilities in Wisconsin was conducted by the Department of Public Instruction. An updated version of this survey lists all privately administered vocational facilities in the state, along with the admission requirements for each school.[8] With the cooperation of the Department of Public Instruction, an additional updating procedure was conducted on all proprietary schools in Wisconsin.

One-hundred eighty private vocational schools were found to be in operation in the state as of January 1968. It is of course important to remember that the schools listed with the Department of Public Instruction need not represent the total population of such institutions. Rather, they represent only those schools which are accredited by the state, and, in all likelihood, an overwhelming majority of the total number of institutions.

The report also provided information concerning the admission requirements of these schools. All schools which posted as their minimum entrance requirements anything less than a high school diploma were included in the initial subsample. The distribution

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[8]The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, "Wisconsin Educational and Training Facilities," mimeographed (1966).

of these schools by subject matter is stated in Table 1. Only 17, or not quite 10 percent, of these proprietary schools had admission requirements which favored the admission of high school dropouts.

Table 1. Number of Private Vocational Schools, by Type and Questionnaire Return Status

School Type	Number Surveyed	Surveyed Returned
Broadcasting arts	1	1
Religious	1	1
Trade schools	2	2
Truck driving	1	1
Cosmetology	12	12
TOTAL	17	17

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, "Wisconsin Educational and Training Facilities," mimeographed (1966).

Cosmetology schools represented the largest single type of proprietary school in Wisconsin. Although a national survey of proprietary schools does not exist, a 1965 study in California revealed that cosmetology schools represented the largest number of proprietary schools.[9]

The 17 schools were contacted via mailed questionnaires[10] to determine:

1. The number of male students 16-21 years old who have not obtained a high school diploma.
2. The percentage of total enrollment that these present students represent.

It is worth noting that the response rate to this mailing was 100 percent.

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[9]Harry V. Kincaid, "An Exploratory Socio-Economic Study of Private Vocational Schools," in Research in Vocational and Technical Education (Madison: Center for Studies in Vocational and Technical Education, The University of Wisconsin, 1967), p. 203.

[10]A copy of this questionnaire appears in Appendix B.

Public/Voluntary/Total Education Schools: On the federal, state, and local levels, programs have been instituted specifically to aid the disadvantaged youth. An effort was made to determine which public agencies were actively involved in this assistance. The more popular total education programs were studied to determine whether they merited inclusion in this study. The less well-known programs were also sought. A series of telephone searches was conducted to determine whether state or local agencies operated voluntary total education programs. When the existence of a program was determined, communications followed to ascertain whether such a program was oriented towards the population of school dropouts, and whether it offered instruction in total education.

The typical public-voluntary programs were found to be designed for the disadvantaged, with no specific orientation towards high school dropouts. They were of short duration with no training component included. Usually, these programs concentrated on achieving attitudinal change through intensified cultural education.[11]

The U.S. Job Corps was the major--if not the sole--public-voluntary program which offered the total educational approach for the school dropout. The general aims of the Job Corps are to provide vocational and basic educational instruction, and to attempt to

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[11]For example, the Wisconsin State Employment Service conducts an orientation program for disadvantaged workers, called Community Involvement Towards Employment (CITE). The program has no specific vocational training element and is designed to orient the disadvantaged worker to the proper values and norms associated with acquiring and holding a job. Although high school dropouts can apply for this program, few have participated since the program's inception.

familiarize the dropout with the nature of work. A great deal of stress is placed upon this latter attitudinal education.[12]

In September 1967, Wisconsin boasted three Job Corps Centers: an urban center at Sparta (Camp McCoy), and two smaller rural camps (at Laonia and at Clam Lake). The Sparta operation was phased out in February 1968. The remaining two camps were contacted to determine whether their cooperation would be forthcoming. In addition, with the cooperation of the Wisconsin Office of Economic Opportunity, summary statistics were acquired from the federal Office of Economic Opportunity on all corpsmen with Wisconsin residence.

In discussing the Job Corps, it is important to realize that this research gathered data on corpsmen who are Wisconsin residents. It was felt that corpsmen without this residence characteristic would distort the findings as they relate to Wisconsin. Hereafter, any allusion to the Job Corps, unless specifically stated to the contrary, is a reference to the corpsmen from Wisconsin.

Public/Compulsory/Vocational Plus Basic Schools: Wisconsin's compulsory attendance law requires that all students attend school until their sixteenth birthday. In those school districts which offer day class programs in vocational, technical, or adult education, the student must attend the vocational school until his eighteenth birthday. The pupil may choose to attend the vocational school in lieu of attending the regular high school.

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[12]Smith, Education and Training, p. 38.

In Wisconsin, the responsibility for vocational education in the public schools and in the adult educational schools is administered through the Wisconsin Board of Vocational, Technical, and Adult Education (WBVTAE). Predominantly, the WBVTAE provides training for the post-high school student. Programs are oriented either towards the completion of an Associate of Arts degree, or towards non-matriculated adult courses.

A branch of the WBVTAE in Milwaukee, the Continuation School, has as its purpose compliance with the state attendance statute by offering the present high school student the opportunity to continue his education in the vocational education division. Students who express a desire to leave school permanently are given the option of attending the vocational school or remaining in the regular high school. The student is not permitted to leave high school per se. While the decision to attend the Continuation School is voluntary, attendance in the vocational school is compulsory once the student opts for the change. Instruction is offered in general vocational courses and classromm time is spent on mastering educational skills.

While the formal curriculum is vocational with basic educational emphasis, it is impossible to limit or delete attitudinal change. At the Continuation School, the first task is:

> ...to help the student make a fresh start and regain a sense of self-confidence. A student comes to us (the Continuation School) with many problems and past failures in schools and with a degree of hostility that has often been cumulative over his life history. He has had problems with his parents, teachers, police, judges, and other disciplinary agencies which have led him to the conclusion that society is against him and no one wants him.[13]

Teachers attempt to reach a social rapport with students. However, formal cultural education is not provided.

Public/Voluntary/Total Education Schools: The manpower revolution of the 1960s has witnessed a rapid growth in training programs designed for the disadvantaged worker. Of particular interest has been the large number of self-help programs. A well-known example of this type of program is the Opportunity Industrialization Center (OIC). Milwaukee is the home of an OIC branch operation. At the time of this study, it was the only such program in operation in Wisconsin. Course offerings at the OIC are given on two levels of concentration. The feeder program constitutes the first level, and it concentrates on basic educational skills and minor vocational instruction. The second level of concentration offers the individual the opportunity to partake of specialized training situations. In each facet of the program, a strong attempt is made to achieve an alteration in the student's perspective--from student recruitment to job placement.[14]

Identifying the Dropouts and Data Retrieval

Arrangements were made to contact each school that reported high school dropouts as current students. Table 2 shows the distribution of high school dropouts by the type of vocational school.

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[13] Milwaukee Vocational Technical and Adult Schools, Continuation School Faculty In-Service Institute: Group Couseling with the Disadvantaged Adolescent (Milwaukee, 1967), p. 2.

[14] Unfortunately, a recent controversy within the management of OIC in Milwaukee has pre-empted any cooperation of the OIC with this research.

In general, large samples were compiled in each of the possible school-type categories, relative to the size of the population from which they were drawn.

Table 2. The Distribution of High School Dropouts Reported and Surveyed, by School Type

	Dropouts Reported		Dropouts Surveyed			
			Surveys Sent Out		Surveys Usable	
School Type	No.	% of All Students in Category	No.	%	No.	%
PRIV/VOL/VOC	34	10.9	34	100	28	82.3
PRIV/VOL/TOT	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
PUBL/COM/VOC+B	550[a]	100.0	250	45.4	238	95.2
PUBL/VOL/TOT	26	2.5[b]	26	100	20	76.9
TOTAL	600		300		286	

n.a. = not available for inclusion in this study.

[a]This total includes only the Continuation School. Therefore, it is a partial category total. A final total would include all these students and the remaining students with the proper characteristics in the WBVTAE system. This larger total will be discussed in Chapter VIII.

[b]This percentage represents only those members of the Job Corps rural camp population who were both dropouts and residents of the State of Wisconsin. Data from Camp McCoy are excluded from this total.

During the 1968 fiscal year, male Wisconsin input into all Job Corps Centers consisted of 1,092 enrollees. Present Wisconsin rural camps corpsmen are about one percent of this total.

Once the size of the dropout population in each cell was identified, each participating school administered a questionnaire to its respective students.[15] A return glance at Table 2 reveals

[15]This questionnaire, of the forced-choice variety, had been pretested through the assistance of the Madison Office of the Youth Opportunity Center on eleven high school dropouts who had returned to school.

that a discrepancy exists between the number of dropouts originally reported in each cell and the eventual number of usable questionnaires. The reason for this discrepancy lies in the fact that some students either left or graduated from their schools during the time lag associated with the processing of the initial requests to the schools. Other students returned improperly completed questionnaires. The usable questionnaires had an over-all nonascertained rate that was tolerable. Where a particularly high number of nonascertained responses appeared, an effort is made to explain them in light of the particular question.

Categorization of Factors

A wide spectrum of information was requested in the questionnaire, reflecting the basic effort to establish those variables which differentiate among dropouts. All questionnaires were coded, keypunched, and verified. The gathered data were categorized into five groups of influencing factors. First, there are those qualities descriptive of any population: age, race, and educational attainment. Second, there is the residential history of the respondent. The educational experiences of the dropout comprise the third set of relevant factors. A fourth group of factors are economic influences, or those economic pressures which allocate dropouts to jobs in the labor market. Finally, there are the socio-psychological pressures which influence the allocating process and prompt dropouts to attend a particular school.

The body of this report will discuss each group of factors. Efforts are made to isolate the true or more significant factors both within major groupings and between them.

Since sample size for each school type approximated a complete census of the population within each cell, it is not necessary to test the null hypothesis that differences between school types are significant. An absolute difference between these schools is by definition statistically significant. Alternatively, however, statistical tests can be used to determine whether the present results are indicative of this population at other periods in time.

In all testing operations, a confidence limit of 5 percent is used as the cutoff for accepting the null hypothesis that differences between schools are significant. This level was chosen because this research is to a great extent exploratory. A higher level of confidence would tend to obscure relevant factors that by chance have been submerged; a lower level homogenizes all factors so as to make the extraction of forces almost impossible.

CHAPTER II

A GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DROPOUTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: THE DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

To provide an overview of the dropouts studied, concentration on their broad "socio-demographic" attributes is needed. These qualities are: age, race, marital status, and the socioeconomic class of the student. The most significant demographic differences among the studied schools were attributable to the race and age of the respondents.

Age

Dropouts attending private vocational schools were found to be significantly older ($p>.01$) than either rural corpsmen or continuation students. Pupils of the Continuation School were found to be the youngest of all the students studied.

Wisconsin rural Job Corpsmen in Conservation Centers were, on the average, 17.9 years of age. However, data on Conservation Centers for the entire United States reveal an average age of 18.22 years.[1] This difference is significant at the .01 level. Furthermore, statistics for all Wisconsin residents as inputs into all Job Corps facilities (both rural and urban) in 1968 show that 34 percent of these inputs are over 18 years of age.[2] In Wisconsin's

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[1] A and R Reports No. 2 (Washington: Office of Economic Opportunity, January 3, 1967), p. 4.

[2] Data provided by the U.S. Job Corps, Office of Economic Opportunity.

rural centers, 91 percent of the inputs measured by this study were 18 years and older. These findings seem to indicate that Wisconsin rural corpsmen are younger than both other rural corpsmen and the average high school dropout in the Job Corps system.

The low mean score for the Continuation School is perhaps explained by the nature of the institution. This school receives large inputs of disadvantaged 16-year-old students. It is impossible to guarantee student attendance until the eighteenth birthday to comply with the law, and many students leave this vocational school prematurely.

Race

The distribution of race in the sample is depicted by Table 3. The most startling observation from these data is the complete absence of all nonwhite races from private vocational education in the State of Wisconsin. Nonwhites, however, are represented in the Continuation School and the Job Corps.

Table 3. Percentage Distribution of Race, by School Name

Race	School Name		
	Job Corps	Continuation	Private
White	70.00%	62.70%	100.00%
Negro	10.00	30.29	---
Puerto Rican	---	1.76	---
Indian	20.00	1.32	---
Mexican-American	---	3.96	---
Oriental	---	1.97	---
TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

The Continuation School has the largest percentage of Negro students in the sample. In fact, 97.18 of all Negroes in the total sample are Negro continuation students. Other nonwhites such as Mexican-Americans, Orientals, and Puerto Ricans are also well represented in the Continuation School.

Job Corps students from Wisconsin are more likely to be Indian than Negro. National Job Corps statistics show twice as many nonwhites, on a percentage basis, than were displayed by the conservation subsample.

Of particular importance was the finding that racial representation in each school was not indicative of the over-all racial proportions for youth in Wisconsin. Two percent of Wisconsin's youth population between 14 and 18 years of age are nonwhite.[3] However, 30 percent of the measured Wisconsin Job Corpsmen are of nonwhite racial identities; nonwhite enrollment is 62 percent of white enrollment in the Continuation School.

Marital Status

Of all the situations studied, only the private schools had a noticeably large positive response to the question: "Have you ever been married?" In private schools, about 36 percent of the students reported being presently or previously married. The corresponding figure for the Continuation School was 1.26 percent of the surveyed students, while none of the Job Corps students were ever married.

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[3] U.S. Census, 1959.

It appears that the marital status of the private students is a function of their older age distribution. Table 4 attempts to hold constant the effects of age on the marital status of the private school students. The distribution reveals that two-thirds of all private students were aged 19-21; all married students were in this older category.

Table 4. The Marital Status of Private Students, by Present Age

	Marital Status		
Age	% Married at Least Once	% Never Married	Total
16-18	---	100.0%	100.0%
19-21	55.5%	44.5%	100.0%

At this time marriage can be linked to age as an allocating influence. However, it remains unclear whether marriage has an independent influence as a motivating factor in the decision to attend private vocational instruction.

Socioeconomic Class

Each student was asked whether his father was presently living and the father's occupation. From this occupational information an appropriate socioeconomic index number was assigned.[4] The assigned index number was a function both of occupational title and of earnings. The highest possible index level was set at 86. Table 5

[4]The U.S. Census, Socio-Economic Index for Detailed Occupations was used to determine the social class of the respondents. NORC prestige scales were not used in this study.

states the distribution of these socioeconomic levels for the three schools studied.

Table 5. Percentage Distribution of Socioeconomic Indexes, by School Name

Socioeconomic Index	School Name		
	Job Corps	Continuation	Private
0- 9	28.5%	8.5%	4.7%
10-19	71.4	38.3	38.1
20-29	---	16.3	19.0
30-39	---	19.1	19.0
40-49	---	7.8	4.7
50-59	---	3.5	14.3
60-69	---	.7	---
70-79	---	---	---
80-86	---	---	---
TOTAL[a]	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
MEAN INDEX	12.71	26.43	27.52
Differences Between Means			
Job Corps	0.0	13.72*	14.81*
Continuation	-	0.00	1.09
Private	-	-	0.00

[a]Totals may not equal 100 percent due to rounding.

*Significant at the .01 level.

It is interesting to note that on an absolute basis, all schools were characterized by a generally low level of socioeconomic

status. This conclusion seems to be one major finding in most studies about dropouts.[5]

Differences in mean scores show that the continuation and private students are of higher social and economic strata than the Job Corps students. Continuation and private students are approximately equal on this dimension.

To check the validity of the socioeconomic index, additional information was sought on the social class of the respondent's family.

In terms of the educational attainment of the parents, one-half of the fathers of private vocational students completed high school, whereas 34 percent of the fathers of continuation students completed the twelfth grade. Among corpsmen, only 5 percent reported that their fathers graduated from high school.

Generally, fathers with college educations were not very common. The highest incidence of a college education for male parents was recorded in the private schools, where almost 15

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[5]A University of Michigan study reported that among all families with children no longer in school, these children had gone through high school and beyond in 65 percent of the cases. The families defined as poor in this study displayed a completion rate of 45 percent. See James Morgan, Income and Welfare in the United States (New York: McGraw Hill, 1962), p. 216. Similar findings are reported by S,M. Miller of Syracuse University. In his study, census data were employed and reanalyzed. Miller claims 70 percent of all dropouts come from families whose income is below $5,000 per year. See Daniel Schreiber, ed. The School Dropout (Washington: National Education Association, 1964), p. 12. Finally, Bowen and Matthews provide additional evidence. Employing a socioeconomic class breakdown, they determined that 87.7 percent of all dropouts were in the lower class interval. See Paul H. Bowen and Charles V. Matthews, Motivation of Youths for Leaving School (Quincy, Ill.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1960), p. 57.

percent of the fathers had received college diplomas. Continuation students and corpsmen reported 8 and 6 percent respectively of their fathers had obtained college educations.

This relationship between schools was essentially similar for the mothers of these students. In all schools the education of the female parent was usually terminated before high school. Those female parents who completed high school were twice as likely to be the mothers of continuation and private students than the mothers of corpsmen. Again, corpsmen ranked lowest in social class indicators. The incidence of college educations for female parents was negligible in all schools.

In summary, the educational attainment of the parents varies in accordance with the nature of the distribution of socioeconomic indexes.

These variances in socioeconomic strata were also reflected in the incidence of car ownership for the dropout during high school. One-third of all private students related that they had owned their own automobile while they were high school students. Only 15 percent of the continuation students and 10 percent of the corpsmen reported car ownership during this period.

The pattern of demographic qualities for each subgroup that emerges reveals that these characteristics can partly describe each of the three situations. Private students are significantly older white students with relatively high socioeconomic status. Continuation students are essentially of the same socioeconomic

strata in spite of the large representation of minority groups among them. Continuation students are also generally the youngest students studied. Wisconsin conservation corpsmen were found to be of a different subsample than the rest of the U.S. Job Corps system. These rural students are younger than dropouts in the total Job Corps system, and are better represented by Indian students than by Negroes.

In future chapters, these sociodemographic qualities will be studied in the light of added variables. Wherever necessary, the already disclosed differences between schools are controlled in the analysis of school differences that follows. The impact of the relationship between demographic qualities and other relevant factors is seen the the next chapter on the mobility patterns of the high school dropout.

CHAPTER III

THE GEOGRAPHIC MOBILITY PATTERNS OF THE HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT

The significance of residential factors in this study is twofold. First, residential histories are descriptive in nature. The particular residential pattern of the student often sets him apart from other students in terms of personal and family experiences. The implication of this type of information rests heavily upon such items as the curriculum needs, educational attainment, and occupational outlook. In this study, however, we are interested in those residential patterns which could influence the choice of vocational education for the high school dropout. The second use of residential information lies in its predictive rather than its descriptive function. Residential histories can be used to determine whether the propensity towards future mobility is influenced and/or explained by past mobility. The predictive value of this information lies in the ability of vocational school administrators to enhance the placement process for their students.

Educational institutions often fail to acquire complete sets of residential histories from their students. Often, such detailed information is not known by the student himself--particularly the more mobile students. For this reason, it was decided that only the broadest residential and mobility information could be acquired

through the student via questionnaire. In the discussion that follows, we are looking for these broad patterns.

Descriptive Geographic History

Place of Birth

Respondents were asked to report the city and state of their birth. Table 6 reports the cumulative distribution of city sizes indicated by the students. Also shown is a level of significance matrix which employs the Kolmogrov-Smirov Chi Square Transformation on cumulative percentages from two samples. This tabulation reveals that differences exist in the town size of the respondent's birthplace. The most significant difference is between the Job

Table 6. Cumulative Percentage Distribution for Size of City of Birth and A Corresponding Significance Matrix[a]

	School Name		
City Size	Job Corps	Continuation	Private
Unincorporated	15.00(15.00)	1.83(1.83)	00.00(00.00)
Incorporated- 2,499	40.00(25.00)	5.02(3.19)	3.57(3.57)
2,500-9,999	60.00(20.00)	15.06(10.04)	10.71(7.14)
10,000-24,999	60.00(00.00)	20.96(5.90)	14.28(3.57)
25,000-49,999	60.00(00.00)	24.15(3.19)	28.57(14.29)
50,000-99,999	65.00(5.00)	26.89(2.17)	39.28(10.71)
100,000-249,999	80.00(15.00)	30.08(3.19)	39.28(00.00)
250,000+	100.00(20.00)	100.00(69.92)	100.00(60.72)

X^2 Significance Matrix With 2 Degrees of Freedom

Job Corps	---	.001	.001
Continuation	---	---	.500
Private	---	---	---

[a]Actual percentage distribution given in parentheses.

Corps and the other types of schools. Mean town sizes on this characteristic were approximately 13,000 for the Job Corps,

80,000 for the private students, and 85,000 for the continuation students.

Pupils in the Conservation Center system generally appear to be less rural in nature than the Wisconsin Corpsmen studied. Nationally, 21 percent more conservation corpsmen were born in towns of 2,500 people and under,[1] while this study found 40 percent of the students from towns of this size.

Most Job Corpsmen reported their place of birth to be in Wisconsin. However, 20 percent had regional identities in the South. Private students overwhelmingly were born in Wisconsin. All private students that were not born in Wisconsin reported, as their place of birth, a state which is continguous with Wisconsin.[2]

Variations existed in the Continuation School on the regional identity of the students. Although 81.3 percent of the measured continuation students were born in the Midwest, 17 percent of the continuation students were born in the South, and 1 percent traced their roots to the western United States. Marginal representation existed for eastern states, and some students, mainly Puerto Ricans, traced their origin to noncontinental backgrounds. However, in spite of these regional identity variations between schools, Kolmogrov-Smirov Chi Square transformations show that no excessively significant variation exists between schools on this gradient.

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[1] A and P Reports No. 2 (Washington: Office of Economic Opportunity, January 3, 1967), p. 7.

[2] These states are: Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, and Minnesota.

Place of Birth and Race: It is often maintained that a great portion of the youth unemployment problem stems from a South-to-North and rural-to-urban migration pattern. This pattern is usually closely associated with the migration patterns of nonwhites. This study found some differences between schools on these migration patterns.

Private students, as stated previously, were all white. In addition, they tended to be solely from the Midwest, and more specifically, from urban Midwest settings.

The sizable number of nonwhites in the Continuation School gives some credence to the South-to-North, rural-to-urban pattern. All southern-born continuation students were Negro. All of these students were born in rural towns of 2,500 inhabitants. In fact, more rural Negroes were born in the South than in any other section of the nation. Indians in the Continuation School were from the Midwest and were essentially rural in character.

White students in the Job Corps were twice as likely to be rural southerners than white students in the Continuation School. Rural males were more often whites than Negroes. This finding conforms to the general pattern of all Job Corps Centers, where "half of the rural males, but only a third of the urban males are white."[3] Job Corps Indians tended to be from even smaller towns than Indians in continuation studies, and thus were even more rural in character.

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[3] A and R Reports No. 2, p. 6.

From Birth to School Withdrawal

To determine the mobility patterns, the students were asked to respond to the following questions:

In what city did you go to high school the longest?
In what city or town did you live when you left high school?

It was found that mobility patterns differed according to the schools studied. The following differences were observed:

Job Corps: Forty-five percent of these students reported that the school they last attended was the same school they attended the longest. However, this school was not located in their town of birth. On previous questioning (Table 6), three out of five students were born in towns of 50,000 people and under. When they left high school, almost four out of five lived in towns of such size. For the most part, these students remained in the relatively rural areas for most of their lives.

Forty percent of all surveyed in the Job Corps reported that they had never moved at all. Furthermore, all corpsmen reported that by the time they entered high school, they were living in Wisconsin.

Continuation: Over one-half of the continuation students never changed residence. These were primarily those students who were born in SMSAs in Wisconsin (predominantly Milwaukee). One-third of these students showed one geographic move. This move took place between the time of birth and entrance into high school.

There was a gravitation of all continuation students towards Milwaukee as witnessed by the increase in average city size from the last residence question: In what city of town did you live when you left high school? Between birth and high school, mean city size for these students increased from approximately 85,000 to 250,000. Only 3 percent of this sample lived outside the Midwest while attending high school, as compared with 20 percent who were born in non-midwestern states. Once in high school, it appears that almost no additional major change in city identification took place.

Private: Fifty percent of students in private schools tended to maintain their place of residence until the time of school withdrawal. The remaining 50 percent were extremely mobile. It appears that the nonmobile students tended to be born in Milwaukee, whereas the mobile students were born in smaller towns and cities. Mean city size for the private students levels off during the high school years. This leveling seems to be a function of two forces. First, there was the movement of those living in SMSAs towards the smaller areas. Second, those who lived in smaller towns, almost equal in numbers to the SMSA slippage, moved to larger areas. These forces can be seen working together, insofar as all private students attended high school in Milwaukee.

Recent Mobility

An important difference in mobility patterns arises which is based on the recency of moves. To determine the recency of moves

as they are related to Wisconsin, an operating assumption was employed. It was believed that students tend to move with their families. Thus, by measuring the number of family moves over recent time periods, some understanding of the recency of mobility for the student is obtained.

Students were asked to record yes-or-no answers to the following questions:

Do your parents live in Wisconsin?
Did your parents live in Wisconsin last year?
Did your parents live in Wisconsin two years ago?

The results of these answers are recorded in Table 7.

Table 7. Percentage of Students with Parental Residence in Wisconsin

Length of Stay (in years)		School Name: Job Corps	Continuation	Private
Now living in Wisconsin	Yes	95.0	96.1	93.3
	No	5.0	3.9	7.7
Last year	Yes	95.0	92.6	92.6
	No	5.0	7.4	7.4
Two years ago	Yes	95.0	91.3	92.6
	No	5.0	8.7	7.4

The vast majority of students in each school has lived in Wisconsin for three years. A test of proportionality reveals that there is no difference between schools on any of the questions at the .05 level.

Descriptive Qualities: An Implication

These residential descriptions have a very relevant implication concerning the nature of the institutions studied. Although the evidence presented is far from definitive, and the time horizon admittedly short, it seems unwarranted to ignore the more enlightening aspects of these data.

While discernment of diversity is the central aim of this study, similarity between schools, when it exists, can be of equal importance. The finding that students in this study have lived in Wisconsin for at least three years is such an important common factor. Frequently, one hears this claim of educators in reference to school leavers: "If we could have received them earlier, the outcome could have been different." The information gathered in this study tends to refute the claims that high school dropouts are the products of inferior out-of-state schools, and that the responsibility for failing to achieve school retention can be shifted to other school systems.

Forty percent of the Job Corps students were born and raised in Wisconsin and are the products of Wisconsin rural school districts. Continuation students are substantially white pupils who have always lived in Wisconsin. A similar pattern exists for the private institutions. Thus, some indications exist that the problem is to some extent that of school retention as well as the ill-preparedness of students. This, however, should not be interpreted as an across-the-board criticism of all school retention programs in

all school districts. On the contrary, the relationships are too complex to be analyzed in such a generalized manner, and no retention program (outside of authoritarian and compulsory education) can guarantee complete success.

As for those students who entered the Wisconsin school system with the mark of educational quality from schools in other states, the picture is somewhat different. The interstate migration of Negroes from the rural South to Milwaukee is bound to present a particularly unique set of educational circumstances for the Continuation School as the recipient of many disadvantaged youths.

Negroes in the Job Corps camps are essentially urban in background. Undoubtedly, the confrontation of rural white with urban black is bound to produce some difficulties for the administration of the Job Corps system.[4]

Propensity and Willingness to Move

Much of the future mobility of these students will depend upon their willingness to move. One could also envision that future mobility will be a function of the propensity to move as displayed previously. To test this relationship, the students were asked to specify whether they would move to another city to acquire a better job after leaving vocational school. The object of this question

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[4]Often, the cultural shock associated with new surroundings and new and different faces has impeded the educational processes of the camps. While no hard evidence to this effect exists, this opinion was commonly shared by many former administrative workers in the Wisconsin Job Corps system who were interviewed during the course of this investigation.

was to associate, for the dropouts, the relationship between geographic mobility and economic advantage. Or, in other words, this question sought to get at the economic incentives of mobility.

The hypothesis was posed that there was some difference in score between schools on willingness to move. Data for testing this hypothesis are represented in Table 8. The hypothesis was rejected when chi square computations found these distributions to be nonsignificant at the .05 level.

Table 8. Percentage Distribution of Opinions Concerning Geographic Mobility in Search of Economic Rewards, by School

Opinion	School Name		
	Job Corps	Continuation	Private
TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Willingness to move	20.00	46.10	42.30
Unwilling to move	80.00	53.90	57.70

X^2 with d.f. 2 = 5.09 ($p < .10 > .06$)

When willingness to move was combined with propensity to move, the results showed that those students who were willing to attempt geographic mobility for a better job were also more likely to have the smallest number of moves in their residential histories. In the Job Corps, all of the corpsmen who expressed a desire to move had never moved previously; 30 percent of the total continuation sample

were willing to move but had never moved before; and private students, who wanted to move, overwhelmingly had never moved before.

Faced with these results, the alternative hypothesis was advanced that age intervened to influence willingness to move. Mean age, this hypothesis continued, varies between schools; therefore, willingness to move will vary according to age and school. The results of this investigation showed that as age increased from 16 to 21 years, the students were more willing to move. Since students in the private school were generally older, a greater proportion of these students expressed a desire to be mobile when compared to the students in the other schools.

The implication of this information for private schools may prove useful in the establishment of placement procedures for vocational school graduates. Concerted counseling activities with enlarged placement efforts can be combined with the views of the older, more mature student--one who is willing to attempt labor market entrance in geographic areas where entrance level jobs are more abundant. However, some question remains whether the Job Corps and the Continuation School can channel students into these geographic areas where their opportunities for employment can be optimized.

Summary

The major lines of discussion in this chapter can be drawn together in summary form. First, Job Corps students tend to be more rural in background than the other students. However, the

Wisconsin Corps was less rural in character than the rest of the nation's Conservation Center system. The Continuation School displayed the most varied types of regional identity at the time of birth. However, variations in regional identities at the time of birth were not statistically significant. Third, all students showed a gradual movement towards the larger metropolitan areas. The private school students were the most mobile of the students studied. Fourth, the future willingness to move is better explained in terms of the student's age rather than his history of mobility and propensity to move. Private students were more willing to move because they were generally older than the rest of the population studied. Finally, the implications drawn from descriptive information of residential patterns were found to be useful in explaining the relationship of the students to the public school system, and in our ability to partially predict and augment the future labor market routes for these students.

CHAPTER IV

THE EDUCATION OF HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS

The relationship of the dropout to his former school is extremely important. To understand this population adequately, we must acquire some idea as to the amount of formal education these students have completed and the rationale behind the premature termination of their education.

Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of the high school dropout is an additional descriptive quality of this population. A glance at Table 9 reveals that private school students have completed a significantly greater number of school grades than the Job Corps students. However, the difference in attainment between the Continuation School and the private sector is not significant at the 5 percent level.

Data on Job Corps students indicate that Wisconsin Conservation students are indicative of the national Conservation Center picture. The mean grade attained for all students (nationally) in rural camps is 9.11 years of schooling.[1] Wisconsin rural corpsmen attained on the overage 9.2 years of school.

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[1]This attainment pattern was derived from Conservation camp data that have been made comparable with data from this survey. See A and R Reports No. 2 (Washington: Office of Economic Opportunity, January 3, 1967), p. 5.

Table 9. Important Mean Scores and Differences Between Means in the Educational Attainment of Dropouts

Relevant Educational Attainment Variable	Mean Scores			Difference Between Means		
	Job Corps	Continuation	Private	Job Corps - Continuation	Job Corps - Private	Job Corps - Private
Age when left high school (years)	15.10	16.10	17.10	1.00*	2.00**	1.00*
Time since leaving (years)	.88	.53	2.29	.35**	1.41**	1.76**
Educational attainment (grades)	9.20	9.36	10.40	.16	1.20*	1.04
Number of high schools	.90	1.26	1.21	.36**	.31	.06

* Significant at the .05 level.

** Significant at the .01 level.

The evidence seems to indicate that all Wisconsin Job Corps students (those Wisconsin residents in Job Corps Camps all across the nation) have completed more formal schooling than our Conservation Center sample. Mean attainment for the former group is 9.6 years, compared to our survey sample mean of 9.2 years. This difference can be attributed to the higher age concentration of urban camp inputs in general.

This discussion of mean attainment reflects the underlying attainment patterns for the schools studied. Approximately 50 percent of all private students achieved the eleventh grade level. Students in the Job Corps and the Continuation School had one-fifth of this chance to reach eleventh grade level. Second, Job Corps students were more likely not to have entered high school than either of the two alternative educational groups. On the other hand, all private students completed at least the ninth grade.

When compared to continuation students, respondents in the Job Corps also seem to have attended fewer high schools during their public school experience. No difference exists between private and the other groups of vocational students.

Attainment and Other Demographic Factors

Some sociodemographic characteristics tend to interrelate in the allocating of students to schools. One such interrelation is between the variables of age and educational attainment. Another interaction effect stems from the complementariness of race and attainment.

Age and Attainment: The influence of the respondent's age as of the time of this survey is reflected in the educational attainment data. Educational attainment can progress relatively hand-in-hand with age while an individual is a student. Accordingly, it is necessary to correct for the age differentials that exist between the studied situations. This can easily be accomplished by determining the age of the respondent as of the time of school withdrawal. Table 9 lists the mean age of the respondents for this particular time. These findings reinforce the previous findings on the age of the dropout. Private students are oldest at the time of leaving, followed by the Continuation School, and then by the Job Corps. The differences in age of the respondents by school can be traced to these differences in withdrawal ages.

Referring again to Table 9, it can be seen that private students tend to be out of school the longest (2.29 years). Continuation students reflect the compulsory nature of their system by displaying the lowest mean.

A question arises as to whether the high school dropouts studied in this survey reflect the same pattern of age and attainment as other, nonvocational school dropouts that were not surveyed. While no formal control sample was surveyed, it is still possible to use national data as the basis for comparison. Table 10 lists the national cumulative percentage distribution for each school studied. By employing the Kolmogrov-Smirnov goodness-of-fit test to this data, we derive the following conclusions: Job Corps students

Table 10. Cumulative Percentage Withdrawal Rates for Nation and the Schools Studied, by Age[a]

	Cumulative Percentage Withdrawal Rates			
Age	National[b]	Job Corps	Continuation	Private
14	3.50(3.50)	00.00(00.00)	2.20(2.20)	00.00(00.00)
15	10.40(6.90)	00.00(00.00)	8.80(6.60)	00.00(00.00)
16	47.20(36.80)	47.00(47.00)	80.60(71.80)	17.90(17.90)
17	79.40(32.20)	88.20(41.20)	99.50(13.50)	57.90(40.00)
18	100.00(20.60)	100.00(11.80)	100.00(00.50)	100.00(42.10)
Level of Stastical Difference from the National Distribution		n.s.	.01	.01

[a]Actual percentage distribution given in parentheses.

[b]Taken and adjusted from: U.S. Department of Labor, Factbook on the School Dropout in the World of Work, p. 2.

n.s. Nonsignificant at the 5 percent level.

appear to follow the national pattern of withdrawal rates. Continuation students and private students differ from Job Corpsmen in this respect, and both vary significantly from the national norm. Again, it is possible to attribute the performance of the Continuation School students to the nature of compulsory education after the sixteenth birthday. However, the private school emerges as a unique type of educational situation for the high school dropout.

The total age-attainment picture that emerges is that private students are likely to be older, better educated, and out of school longer than either of the two alternatives. Continuation students' attainments are heavily influenced by the structured nature of school

attendance laws. They tend to leave at the age of 16 years, which corresponds to the ninth grade attainment level. Job Corpsmen have a similar attainment picture but are the youngest of all students studied at the time of withdrawal.

Attainment and Race: As noted before, Negroes were found only in the Continuation and Job Corps schools. Within the Continuation School, nonwhites were more than three times more likely not to have entered high school. Thus, Negroes on a whole in the Continuation School displayed a lower educational attainment than whites. Cross-sectional analysis of whites shows whites in the Job Corps less likely to have entered high school than continuation or private students. In private schools, whites were more likely to complete the twelfth grade.

The results of holding race constant yield conclusions which do not differ from previous findings on either race or attainment. The simple explanation for this lies in the general discussion concerning race: equal racial representation of all groups is not present in each type of school.

School Withdrawal: Why I Left

A common theme throughout the literature on the high school dropout is the concern for the factors which induce school withdrawal. Dropouts usually report single reasons for leaving school, but deciding forces may be a combination of factors. Often, the stated reason for leaving may be the immediate pressure, while other--long run--factors may also be responsible.

Within these limitations, the dropouts were presented with the opportunity to check the relevant causes of their school withdrawal. Five such causes were listed. They were:

1. I left because I wasn't learning anything useful in school.
2. I got kicked out.
3. The school work was too hard for me. I just couldn't do it.
4. I just didn't like school.
5. I wanted to stay in school, but I had to leave.[2]

The first question was aimed at determining whether the student was alienated from the classroom learning experience. Such students fail to see the relevancy of formal education to occupational advancement. Frequently, they have a particular occupation in mind--an occupation compatible with their present level of educational attainment. The responsibility for this view does not fall solely on the shoulders of the dropout; it must be shared by the school system which has failed to inculcate the association between occupational advancement and education.

It was hoped that the students who felt they were "kicked out" of school would be those who were formally asked to leave because of disciplinary problems. However, some overlapping was expected in the selection of this choice, since students could interpret this option to mean that they were forced to leave by informal pressures. Informal pressures may include, for example, the overt and covert feelings on the part of a teacher which consistently induce student failure. This self-fulfilling prophesy tends to operate on the subtlest of planes.

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[2]Questions taken from study of a job retraining program, by David Bradford, John French, Jr., and Gerald Gurin, Institute for Social Research, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The third choice sought to identify the academically inadequate dropouts--those students who found high school academics beyond their learning capabilities. This is not to say that below-average intelligence sanctions school withdrawal. On the contrary, many students with below-average IQs can complete high school if the school system is willing to make the necessary basic curriculum adjustments.

The fourth choice was aimed at identifying the totally alienated student. For such pupils, school is completely intolerable.

Finally, the catch-all cause of additional reasons for leaving was offered. This category includes those students who withdrew for a broad spectrum of other reasons ranging from personal illness to the need to contribute income to the family.

It is not believed that these choices are mutually exclusive. Nor is it maintained that the student could adequately rank these causes. Thus, students were instructed to select all the relevant reasons. The total pattern of selections forms a school withdrawal profile for each school. This macro profile may not be representative of any one student.

Table 11 records the percentage and rank order distributions for the students in each school who selected a particular reason for withdrawing. The results of these findings warrant the rejection, on statistical grounds, of the hypothesis that there is a