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**ABSTRACT**

The majority of women enrolled in noncollegiate postsecondary vocational schools in October, 1976, were twenty-five years of age and over and attended school part-time while working full-time. The enrollment of women of age eighteen and over in noncollegiate postsecondary schools in October, 1976, was almost equal to that of men. When enrollments are examined by age and labor force participation, differences between men and women become apparent. For eighteen- to twenty-one-year-olds, the number of women participating in vocational education greatly exceeded that of men, while the participation rate of women of age twenty-two to thirty-four was considerably below that of men. Women enrolled full-time were primarily in the younger age groups, while the part-time women students were concentrated in the older age groups. Comparing women to men students, sixty percent of the women versus eight-three percent of the men held jobs, seven percent of the women and men were unemployed and looking for work, and thirty-three percent of the women versus ten percent of the men were not in the labor force. Seventy-four percent of the employed women students and ninety percent of the employed men students were full-time workers. Most vocational students (fifty-one percent) had completed high school and thirty-nine percent had some college experience. (EM)

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# Women in Vocational Education

by.  
Evelyn R. Kay

The majority of women enrolled in noncollegiate postsecondary vocational schools in October 1976, were 25 years of age and over and attended school part time while working at a full-time job. These and other data were collected for the National Center for Education Statistics by the Bureau of the Census. This short report summarizes some of the highlights of this survey on women.

The enrollment of women age 18 and over in noncollegiate postsecondary schools <sup>1/</sup> in October 1976 was almost equal to that of men. Of the 3,066,000 students enrolled, 1,520,000 were women (table 1). Although the total numbers of men and women were almost the same, differences become apparent when enrollments by sex are examined by other characteristics, particularly age and labor force participation.

Young women had the highest participation rates in vocational education. For 18- to 21-year-olds, the number of women participating in vocational education per 1,000 population greatly exceeded that of men (43 compared to 33 for 18- to 19-year-olds and 42 to 31 for 20- to 21-year-olds). For women aged 22 to 34, however, the rate was considerably below that of men, possibly because of family responsibilities. For the age group 35 and over, women's participation rate was the same as men's. The following tabulation summarizes the distribution of male and female enrollments by age as well as participation rates:

Age group	Percent distribution			Participation rate per 1,000 population		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total . . . . .	100.0	100.0	100.0	-	-	-
18-19 years . . . . .	10.1	8.4	11.9	38	33	43
20-21 years . . . . .	9.3	7.6	11.1	37	31	42
22-24 years . . . . .	13.0	14.4	11.6	36	42	31
25-34 years . . . . .	33.5	37.8	29.1	33	38	27
35 years and over . . .	34.1	31.8	36.3	12	12	12

<sup>1/</sup> These schools include public and private trade and technical schools, business schools, nursing schools, and home-study schools.

White women, as well as white men, participated in vocational education in larger proportions than their representation in the population 18 years and over. Ninety-one percent of the women students and 92 percent of the men students were white compared with 88 percent and 89 percent, respectively, in the general population. Black students, on the other hand, constituted only 8 percent of the women and 7 percent of the men in vocational education, compared with 11 percent and 10 percent, respectively, in the overall population. Other students (Asian Americans and American Indians) participated in vocational education at the same rate as their representation in the population as a whole. Persons of Spanish origin, including both white and black students, comprised 3 percent of the women and 5 percent of the men. In contrast, their representation in the population 18 and over was 5 percent and 4 percent, respectively. The following tabulation compares the percent distribution of the racial/ethnic groups of vocational students with the population 18 years and over, by sex:

Racial/ethnic group	Total population 18 years and over		Vocational students	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total, all races . . . . .	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White . . . . .	88.8	87.8	91.7	90.5
Black . . . . .	9.6	10.6	6.7	7.9
Other . . . . .	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
Spanish origin				
(white and black combined)	4.4	4.7	5.2	3.4

Seventy percent of the women students attended school part time; the proportion of men enrolled part time was 75 percent. Women constituted 55 percent of the full-time and 48 percent of the part-time enrollment. The following tabulation shows the distribution of students by sex and enrollment status:

Enrollment status	Total	Men	Women
Total . . . . .	100.0	100.0	100.0
Full time . . . . .	19.6	17.5	21.8
Part time . . . . .	72.8	75.2	70.3
Unknown . . . . .	7.6	7.3	7.9
Total . . . . .	100.0	50.4	49.6
Full time . . . . .	100.0	45.1	54.9
Part time . . . . .	100.0	52.1	47.9

As would be expected, women enrolled full time were primarily in the younger age groups: 55 percent of the women enrolled full time and 43 percent of the men enrolled full time were between the ages of 18 and 21--the ages when young people are usually preparing for jobs. Only 15 percent of the women and 11 percent of the men enrolled part time were in these age groups. In contrast, part-time students were concentrated in the older age groups: 32 percent of the women and 40 percent of the men were between 25 and 34; 41 percent of the women and 36 percent of the men were 35 and over. The following tabulation summarizes these data:

Age group	Full time			Part time		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
Total . . . . .	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
18-19 years . . . . .	31.1	26.3	35.1	5.2	5.0	5.5
20-21 years . . . . .	13.0	16.3	19.3	7.7	6.1	9.6
22-24 years . . . . .	13.3	16.0	11.2	13.0	13.7	12.2
25-34 years . . . . .	24.8	30.4	20.2	35.8	39.5	31.7
35 years and over . . . . .	12.8	11.0	14.2	38.3	35.7	41.0

Sixty percent of the women students held jobs, 7 percent were unemployed and looking for work, and 33 percent were not in the labor force. Among the men, 83 percent held jobs, 7 percent were unemployed and looking for work, and 10 percent were not in the labor force (table 1). The unemployment rate for women in the labor force was 10.8 percent compared with 7.8 percent for men. Both men and women under 25 experienced higher unemployment rates (9.5 percent and 13.3 percent, respectively) than those 25 years and over (7.2 percent and 9.8 percent, respectively).

Seventy-four percent of the employed women students and 90 percent of the employed men students were full-time workers <sup>2/</sup> (table 2). Women students in each age group were less likely than men to hold full-time jobs. Only 68 percent of the women in the 18-to-24 year age group and 77 percent of the women 25 and over held full-time jobs, compared with 75 percent and 96 percent, respectively, of the men.

There appears to be no pattern in the full-time/part-time school/work relationship of employed students. For example, one would expect a full-time student not to have the time to work full time. However, 55 percent of all employed students went to school full time and were employed full time. Of the students 18 to 24 years of age, 49 percent of the men and 52 percent of the women were in this category. Of those 25 and over, 58 percent of the employed men and 55 percent of the employed women were full-time students with full-time jobs.

<sup>2/</sup> Full-time workers are those who worked 35 hours or more during the survey week. Part-time workers are those who worked 1 to 34 hours. No definition was provided for full-time students.

Men and women vocational students had completed higher levels of education than the general population 18 years and over. Most vocational students (51 percent) had completed high school and 39 percent had some college experience (table 3). Over 21 percent of the men and 14 percent of the women had completed at least 4 years of college, compared with 17 percent and 11 percent, respectively, in the population as a whole. However, there are sharp differences in the educational levels of men and women in vocational education when age is taken into consideration. Of students under 25, women were more likely than men to have higher educational levels; of students 25 and over, educational levels of men were higher than those of women. For example, nearly 24 percent of the men and 28 percent of the women 18 to 24 years of age enrolled in vocational schools had completed at least 1 year of college. In contrast, 50 percent of the men and 41 percent of the women 25 years and over had had some college experience.

# Tables

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Table 1.--Labor force status of vocational students, by sex and age:  
United States, October 1976

(In thousands)

Labor force status and age)	Men		Women	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total enrolled, all ages . . . . .	1,545	100	1,520	100
In labor force . . . . .	1,393	90	1,011	67
Employed . . . . .	1,284	83	901	60
Unemployed . . . . .	109	7	110	7
<i>Percent of labor force</i> . . . . .	7.8	--	10.8	--
Not in labor force . . . . .	153	10	509	33
 Total enrolled, 18-24 . . . . .	 470	 100	 525	 100
In labor force . . . . .	399	85	315	60
Employed . . . . .	362	77	273	52
Unemployed . . . . .	38	8	42	8
<i>Percent of labor force</i> . . . . .	9.5	--	13.3	--
Not in labor force . . . . .	70	15	211	40
 Total enrolled, 25 and over . . . . .	 1,076	 100	 995	 100
In labor force . . . . .	993	92	696	70
Employed . . . . .	922	86	628	63
Unemployed . . . . .	71	7	68	7
<i>Percent of labor force</i> . . . . .	7.2	--	9.8	--
Not in labor force . . . . .	83	8	298	30

Table 2.--Full-time and part-time employment and enrollment status of vocational students, by sex and age: United States, October 1976

(In thousands)

Employment and enrollment status	Total	Men	Women
Total employed, all ages . . . . .	2,185	1,284	901
Employed full time . . . . .	1,826	1,159	667
Percent of total . . . . .	84	90	74
Employed full time and enrolled full time . . . . .	1,197	712	485
Percent of total . . . . .	55	55	54
Total employed, 18-24 . . . . .	635	362	273
Employed full time . . . . .	457	272	185
Percent of total . . . . .	72	75	68
Employed full time and enrolled full time . . . . .	318	176	142
Percent of total . . . . .	50	49	52
Total employed, 25 and over. . . . .	1,550	922	628
Employed full time . . . . .	1,369	887	428
Percent of total . . . . .	88	96	77
Employed full time and enrolled full time . . . . .	879	536	343
Percent of total . . . . .	57	58	55

Table 3.—Comparison of years of school completed between population 18 years and over and vocational students, by age and sex: United States, October 1976

Years of school completed	Total population 18 years and over			Vocational students		
	Total	Men	Women	Total	Men	Women
	(In millions)			(In thousands)		
Total, all ages . . . . .	146.3	68.9	77.4	3,065	1,545	1,520
<i>Percent</i> . . . . .	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Non-high school graduate. . . . .	32.3	32.4	32.3	9.9	9.1	10.7
High school graduate. . . . .	37.7	33.8	41.2	50.9	48.9	52.8
College, 1-3 years. . . . .	16.2	17.0	15.5	21.6	20.8	22.4
College graduate. . . . .	13.8	16.8	11.0	17.6	21.2	14.1
 Total, 18-24 years. . . . .	 26.9	 13.0	 13.9	 995	 469	 526
<i>Percent</i> . . . . .	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Non-high school graduate. . . . .	19.3	20.8	18.0	8.3	8.5	8.3
High school graduate. . . . .	45.0	43.1	46.8	65.5	68.0	63.3
College, 1-3 years. . . . .	27.5	27.6	27.3	19.8	17.1	21.7
College graduate. . . . .	8.2	8.5	7.9	6.4	6.4	6.7
 Total, 25 years or over . . . . .	 119.4	 55.8	 63.6	 2,070	 1,075	 995
<i>Percent</i> . . . . .	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>
Non-high school graduate. . . . .	35.2	35.1	35.5	10.6	9.4	12.0
High school graduate. . . . .	36.1	31.7	39.9	43.9	40.6	47.3
College, 1-3 years. . . . .	13.6	14.4	12.8	22.6	22.4	22.8
College graduate. . . . .	15.1	18.8	11.8	22.9	27.6	17.9