DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 321 917 RC 017 616

AUTHOR Bull, Kay S.; And Others
TITLE ACRES At-Risk Task Force: Dropout Survey.
PUB DATE Mar 90
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Council for Rural Special Education (10th, Tucson, AZ, March 18-23 1990). Table 1 contains small, broken type.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Dropout Characteristics; Dropout Prevention; Dropout Research; *Dropouts; Elementary Secondary Education; High Risk Students; National Surveys; *Research Needs; Rural Areas; *Rural Schools; *Special Education; Student Attrition; *Teacher Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS American Council on Rural Special Education

ABSTRACT

This paper describes a study by the American Council on Rural Special Education (ACRES) to determine its membership's opinions on priorities and expertise regarding the dropout problem. ACRES members, primarily rural special-education teachers, parents, and collateral service workers, were surveyed about the dropout problem and what research they considered necessary for an effective intervention program. Four sets of variables affecting students' decisions to drop out of school are specified, based on a literature review. They are: family, school, peer groups, and intrapersonal influences. These four variables were used to generate a scale of dropout causes used in the study. A total of 305 ACRES members responded to the mail survey in fall 1989. Respondents rated causes (e.g., "frustrations") in terms of national importance and as to whether or not enough research had been done. Factor analysis and Chi-square analysis of the data provide no clear direction as to which needs should be addressed immediately Survey responses were further correlated with years of respondents' teaching experience, but no significant links were found. The authors advise readers not to accept any of the alleged causes of dropping and not to expand existing programs without first: (1) establishing sufficient research evidence that the proposed treatment will be effective; or (2) developing public awareness that the existing research is substantial. (TES)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED321917

ACRES At-Risk Task Force:

Dropout Survey

Kay S. Bull

Keith Salyer

Diane Montgomery

Oklahoma State University

Presented at the 10th annual conference of the American Council for Rural Special Education at Tucson, AZ, 1990.

0176 16

U S DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Kay Bull

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Introduction

This study began with a question generated by the ACRES At-Risk Task Force. This committee pondered the concern, " What are the priorities of our membership relative to the dropout problem and in what area do we know enough to make a difference?" The task force committee decided to find some prelimary answers to this problem and the research reported herein is the result of that initial process.

The study began with a thorough literature review to identify the significant variables to study. A survey questionnaire was developed and mailed to ACRES members throughout the United States. Opinions were sought regarding what at-risk contributory factors should be national priorities and which factors have a foundation of research in order to build effective intervention programs. The results indicate a difference of opinions among ACRES members and point to some avenues of research study and program goals.

Literature Review

To determine the causes of school dropout a literature search using the ERIC system was conducted. Studies and reviews from 1984 to 1988 were selected using CD-ROM ERIC with "at-risk/dropout" as key search descriptors. This generated a list of 853 papers or articles. Each article's abstract was reviewed and 461 articles were read to develop the representational list of questions included on the survey form.

Briefly, selected citations from the literature review revealed a multitude of reasons given for why students dropped out of school. A preliminary content analysis resulted in four groups of reasons. The reasons can be categorized as 1) school variables, 2) peer variables, 3) home/family variables and 4) intrapersonal variables.

School Variables

There are a number of reasons offered by various writers as to how schools may contribute to the dropout problem. The studies reviewed failed to reach consensus nor did they look at the same variables. Schools participating in the studies have different populations which react differently to school pressures. Some of the various school related variables are described below.

Comerford & Jacobson (1987) cite conflicts between students and the school or between students and individual teachers or administrators as a factor in dropping out. This seems to be particularly true if the conflict leads to suspension of the student. Conflict in school many times centers around academic performance. The lack of earned credits has been shown to be a factor in dropping out (Tidwell, 1985a).

Widmann & Hoisden (1988) also assert that students who have little hope of graduating because they have been retained one or more years or

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

beca they have failed too many classes are likely dropout candidates. This raises questions in the minds of several authors (McDill et al, 1986; Hamilton, 1986; Mizell, 1987; Catterall, 1986; Gold, 1985) as to the applicability of raising graduation standards in districts worried about dropouts. This is particularly related to the impact that the use of competency tests tied to higher standards may have on the dropout rate. In these and in other academically pressured situations the lack of a vocational or a non-college entry career option in high school seems to increasingly doom more students to failure thereby increasing the dropout rate (Reynolds, 1985; Bishop, 1988; Weber & Sechler, 1988). Students who are in special education programs are at-risk. Mildly handicapped students who see that they cannot compete academically, yet believe that they will be functional in the real world will probably see school as a nonviable alternative (Lichtenstein & Zantal-Wiener, 1988).

The schools have a compelling effect on the success rates of specific groups of students. Indeed, schools display an interest or disinterest in some groups of students for different reasons. For example, students who have been incarcerated in juvenile corrections institutions are usually not actively sought by schools nor are they always provided appropriate educational services while they are incarcerated. This is evident when only two percent finish high school (Haberman & Quinn, 1986). Students whose main interest in school is athletics are likely to dropout when they are no longer eligible for sports because of requirements for academic achievement standards or age limits (Ligan, 1988). These are disposable children from the schools point of view.

The school's tolerance for student diversity in background can have an influence on whether the student stays in school. School practices and policies in attendance, academics and behavior in relation to stereotypical perceptions of students can affect dropout rates (Wheelock, 1986). Dropping out among Blacks can be related to fear and self-doubt about their abilities. This is fostered by strong intellectual stereotypes about Black intellectual capacities (Hammond & Howard, 1986). Minority (Hispanic) students dropout because they do not have adequate role models, (Illinois State Task Force on Hispanic Student Dropouts [ISTFHSD], 1985). The lack of role models probably affects all segments of the population to some extent; however, it seems to have particular impact on disadvantaged minorities. Many Black and Hispanic students report that they left school because of personal and cultural dehumanization or academic humiliation (Smith, 1986) brought about through lack of recognition of cultural/ethnic diversity.

Peer Variables

A number of variables considering peer group relationships are addressed in the literature. These factors relate to things that peers may do, may model for the dropout, or inveigle others into doing, all of which may directly cause dropping out or may lead to conflicts which subsequently cause the student to drop out. Some of the peer related variables include individual differences that exclude group membership.

For example, Bull & Garrett (1989) suggest that many gifted students drop out because they feel too different from their peer group. In many cases, gifted learners have no peer group with similar interests and motivations. When these students become bored with education, there is nothing to bond them to the educational process. Many gifted dropouts, however, go on to college. This is supported by Irvine (1987).

Another way peers can influence students to leave school is by being out of school themselves, oftentimes with attractice alternatives like cars and money that students who are in school do not have. This seems to be particularly true when both the students and the peers are delinquents (Dunham & Alpert, 1987). These "system failure" peers show no affiliation to school and draw those still in the educational system away from it directly through inticement and indirectly through modeling.

Another factor that seems to be particularly related to urban schools is peer violence. Peer violence keeps many children away from schools and can cause them to drop out if they are severely threatened (Perales, 1988). This seems to be exaggerated if there are gang "turf", or territorial problems associated with the school.

Home/Family Variables

The home or family situation in which individuals are embedded affects their school persistence. Children whose families do not have strong backgrounds in education and who do not support the educational process are more likely to drop out (Coleman, 1988; Barr & Knowles, 1986). This is compounded when the community provides the same weak (or nonexistant) level of support for academic learning (Watt, et al., 1987). Those students who do not have active parental involvement in their education or who do not have parental contact, such as children placed in foster homes, are likely to drop out. This is particularly true for minority students (Schwaback, 1985). Generally, students who have poor family relationships are more at-risk than those who do not (O'Connor, 1985; Natriello, et al., 1985).

As families become more disassociated and less functional the dropout rate increases (RLEINI, 1987), all lead to increases in dropout behavior. Intrafamilial problems, sexual and physical abuse, parental disorders, such as alcoholism, cultural differences, etc. (Ediger, 1987) all lead to deemphasis of education and increases in dropout behavior.

Another family related variable deals with home or economic responsibilities (Tidwell, 1985). Students may be responsible for younger siblings or for part of a family business and not able to attend enough school to graduate. These students are likely dropouts. Many dropouts report a need to make money and to help out at home as a reason for leaving school (Hartford Public Schools, 1987). This seems to be particularly true when job retention is predicated on truancy, e.g., the students cuts class to meet job requirements or to make hours (Raffe, 1986).

Other family variables which seem to be related to school persistence (the antithesis of dropping out) include being a member of a migrant family (Morse, 1987) school attendance may be haphazard at best, and being a member of a minority group in your community puts students at-risk. This seems to be particularly true in rural area (Benally et al, 1987; Harrington, 1987). Secondly, there are problems related to children raising children. Many young high school age parents drop out of school to care for or support their own children if adequate financial support and daycare is not provided (Spence, 1986; Polit & Kahn, 1987).

Intrapersonal Variables

Many students who drop out of school report that school is boring and a waste of their time (Tidwell, 1985a; Barr & Knowles, 1986; Hartford Public Schools, 1987). Others who drop out report frustration with learning the academic content (Barr & Knowles, 1986) or low grades (Comerford & Jacobson, 1987; Natriello, et al., 1985). Many of these students are functionally illiterate in reading and mathematics (Bernick, 1986) leading to alienation from the school process (O'Connor, 1985). The problem with academics is compounded when the students perceive that they are viewed as members of a "lower class" by their teachers (O'Connor, 1985).

For young women pregnancy is one of the oft cited causes of dropping out of school (Stone, 1985; Hartford Public Schools, 1987; Ediger, 1987). Dropping out can come because of school policy, because of family pressure or because of embarassment. After a child is born school rules and the availability of support systems for child care influence student school persistence.

Another significant variable relates to habitual substance abuse whether alcohol or drugs. Mensch & Kandel (1988) report that a majority of drug users drop out even when controlling for other variables. This is supported by Ediger (1987), Smith (1986) Friedman, et al, (1985) & others.

Often, medical problems keep children out of school until too much is missed for the student to keep up. These health problems can be chronic, life threatening or related to pregnancy. If the problems are not resolved, they can lead to students dropping out (Levy, 1987).

School leaving behavior (truancy, runaway) on the part of the learner can lead to expulsion, to academic failure, and to the inability to earn credit because of too many absences. Raffe (1986) talks of truancy as an indicator of lack of school persistence. In the extreme, running away has the same effect.

Minority and probably other students react to low reading ability and to ranking below average in their classes by dropping out (Schultz, et al., 1986). Additionally, developmentally disabled students who become delinquent are increasingly at-risk (McMahon, 1986).

The preceeding variables identified from the literature review were

used to generate the scale that was used in this study. The technique used in the scale development is described in the following methodology section.

Methodology

Scale Development

Each item was created based on the literature review. The stem of the item,e.g., "frustration" was provided under the heading possible causes of dropping out, withdrawing, being removed or leaving early. When it was thought that the term might be unclear a parenthetical description was added. In the case of frustration the description read (for slow or unserved handicapped for whom education is too hard, instruction undifferentiated, teachers in flexible).

In addition to demographic information, participants responded to a total of 42 item stems, each presented with two sets of Likert-like questions (1 = strongly, 2 = agree, 3 = undecided, 4 = disagree, and 5 = strongly disagree). The first response, set A of the Likert-like responses, dealt with whether the cause of dropping out was one which should be a nation priority. The other response, set B asked if enough research had been done so that we could deal with the problem if enough money/resources were committed.

Subjects

The subjects for this study were all ACRES members. A mailing list was developed which contained 475 names and addresses. All were mailed a questionnaire in August of 1989. This elicited 148 returns. A mail follow-up was conducted in October of 1989 which elicited 153 additional returns for a total return of 305. Of these 269 were usable. Six questionnaires were undeliverable so the total sample was 469. This yielded a total return rate of 65%.

This group can be described as almost equally divided, males and females; composed of 37.5% special education teachers, 28.6% parents, 16.4% collateral service providers and the remainder regular teachers and administrators. The great majority hold at least an MS/MA degree, 83.5%. Of those who are affiliated with schools, 70% of the sample, almost all are with public rather than with private schools and all but 38 out of 176 of those are located in rural areas.

Procedures

Questionnaires for the study were sent to all ACRES members using a membership list of current members generated on the 1st of July, 1989. The questionnaires with a cover letter describing the project were mailed with an imprinted free return envelop to all members. A follow-up was conducted during October for those members who had not responded.

Data Analysis

Each individual's score on a given scale was the mean of the individual's non-missing responses to items in the scale. Significance tests and principle components analyses were done using the SYSTAT (Wilkinson, 1987) microcomputer package and the default options therein except where otherwise indicated.

Results

Factor Analysis A and B

The first set of responses to the items asked the respondents to agree or disagree with forty-two items which were possible causes of dropping out, withdrawing, being removed or leaving early. These items and their loadings are found in Table 1. The respondents were to indicate which of these we should work on as a national priority. The factor analysis was based on N=269 responses by ACRES members. A principal components analysis (Wilkinson, 1987) was conducted, followed by a varmax rotation. All interpretable factors with eigen values greater than one were retained; within factor items were retained when the item loadings were greater than .4. For the first set of analyses this lead to eleven factors labeled as follows: Factor 1, lack of cultural sensitivity; Factor 2, conflict with school; Factor 3, family problems; Factor 4, no support for education; Factor 5, low self esteem/emotional disturbance; Factor 6, wants to escape; Factor 7, no peer group; Factor8, has child (children); Factor 9, too far behind; Factor 10, inadequate non-academic education; Factor 11, drugs/crime. These factors explained 4.7, 6.5, 6.3, 4.9, 4.0, 4.9, 4.0, 4.9, 6.1, 5.8, 5.0, 4.4, 65.3 percent of the variance respectively, or a total of 59.2% of the variation.

The second factor analysis was conducted in the same fashion using the "B" responses which asked respondents to agree or disagree that "enough research has been done, related to this cause, so that we could deal with it effectively if enough resources were committed." These items and their loadings are found in Table 2. Again a principle components analysis with a varimax rotation was conducted with N=269 respondents. Four interpretable factors were developed and are labeled as follows: Factor 1, disassociated from school; Factor 2, frustration; Factor 3, not learning; and Factor 4, conflict. These factors explained 11.8, 9.3, 12.3 and 6.8 percent of the variance, for a total of 38.9% of the variation. Obviously from this low percentage of variation explained there is less agreement among this set of questions than there was on set "A".

The items, means and standard deviations of the items and the factors developed in the factor analysis for items in set A and B are found in Tables 1 and 2.

Correlation Years Teaching by Factors

Another possible relationship of interest was the correlation between years of teaching experience for the 229 teachers in the sample and scores on the various factors. The inference here was that older, more experienced teachers might respond differently to the various groupings of

causes or of areas in which to invest time and money. No significant relationships were found between the factors which should be natural priorities and the factors upon which enough research has been done indicating that years teaching does not change one's perception of priorities.

Chi-Square Analyses: Sets A & B

One-way chi-squares were computed for all items and factors in both set A and set B. For ease of presentation the Data were collapsed into 3 point scales combining the strongly agree & agree responses and the strongly disagree, disagree responses. The expected values then become 40%, 20%, 40% by category. Data for set A are reported in Table 3. Data for set B are reported in Table 4.

Set A data shows that there is 75% agreement with 11 items. These items are listed as causes of dropping out upon which we should work as a national priority. These items are listed below (in order of agreement).

1) Emotional problems (suicidal, depression, low self-esteem, psychosis of various kinds)
2) Dysfunctional/unstable family (causing stress of a variety of types)
3) No hope of graduating (failed too much already, educationally discouraged)
4) Frustration (for slow or unserved handicapped for whom education is too hard, instruction undifferentiated, teachers inflexible)
5) Victim of child abuse (physical, emotional, verbal, sexual)
6) Illiterate (cannot read at a minimal level)
7) Substance abuse
8) Boredom caused by undifferentiated instruction, teacher inflexibility, student giftedness, etc.
9) Parental problems (divorce, unemployment, separation)
10) Truancy (too many classes missed and hours of detention to face)
11) No parent support for education (active parental pressure against continuing).

There are seven items which show less than 35% agreement, from set A. These clearly are not priorities of this group. These items are listed below (from most support to least support).

1) Ineligible to participate in sports (where sports were a tie to keep them in school)
2) No peer group (especially gifted)
3) Too different from peer group (e.g., physically handicapped or extremely gifted)
4) Being in a foster home (and dropping out as a way to get out)
5) Discrimination (particularly by teachers against minority students)
6) Peer violence (perceived lack of safety in the schools)
7) Medical problems (which make school success difficult, unlikely or less meaningful, e.g., terminal illness).

Factors 2, 3, 5, and 11 also receive 75% agreement. These factors are labeled conflict in school, family problems, low self-esteem/emotional disturbance and drugs/crime.

Looking at set "B" it can be seen that no times attain 75% agreement. Many of the items and factors are significant when examined using the chi-square statistic but they are significant in that the undecided category is the largest (remember that the expected value of the collapsed item scale are 40, 20, 40).

Discussion

The data do not provide clear direction as to which needs should be immediately implemented. The section of the questionnaire dealing with the areas in which sufficient research had been conducted yielded uncertain responses both at the item and the factor level. This implies that we should not adopt any of these causes and implement exisiting programs across broad areas without doing one of two things (1) establishing that there is sufficient research evidence that the proposal treatment will actually be effective or (2) doing more public relations work so that the service providing public will recognize that the research evidence is substantial. The lack of clear direction does not carry over into the area of national priority items. There were eleven areas in which the sample found at least 75% agreement. This then forms, we believe, a research agenda for our organization in relation to the dropout problem. Those items upon which there was great agreement should be our priority and the research focus should be upon finding ways to deal with these problems in rural American schools. Research should, we believe, take two forms: (1) meta-analyses of existing research studies to determine if existing programs can consistantly deal with the problem. If this is found to be true then the research results should be implemented in all districts where dropping out is seen as a problem. If meta-analyses do not yield sufficient studies or effect sizes then (2) substantial studies should be undertaken related to promising programs which can be used to deal with the eleven problem areas.

The research agenda for ACRES, related to the dropout problem deals with the following school related questions: How do we deal adequately with students who have no hope of graduating the educationally discouraged? How do we deal with the frustrated student who fails to learn because of content difficulty, teacher inflexibility and lack of instructional differentiation? How do we deal with illiterate students? How should we deal with bored students who suffer undifferentiated instruction, teacher inflexibility, specifically those who are gifted? Finally, how should truancy be dealt with?

Non-school related questions which should be addressed as part of the research agenda include, how do we deal with emotional/self-esteem problems in children? How can we compensate for or intervene with dysfunctional families? What should we do for victims of child abuse? How should we deal with substance abuse as it affects education? How can

we deal with or protect the learner from parental problems which effect learning? Finally, how do we deal with parents who provide no support for education and who may actively inveigle against it?

These are the ACRES research agenda based on the responses of the membership. We invite you to conduct some of the research which is necessary to show what we should do to solve these problems.

Dropping out is only a temporary solution. Education is forever (Bull, 1990).

ferences

Barr, R.B. & Knowles, G.W. (1986). The San Diego city schools 1984-85 school learner and high school program participation attitudes study. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 274767.

Benally, E.R., et al. (1987). Issues in American Indian education. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 281909.

Bernick, M. (1986). Illiteracy and inner-city unemployment. Phi Delta Kappan, 67(5), 364-367.

Bishop, J. (1988). Vocational education for at-risk youth: How can it be made more effective? ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 987150.

Bull, K.S. & Garrett, M. (1989). At-risk in rural America: Strategies for education. Educational Considerations, 17(1), 44-47.

Catterall, J.S. (1986). Dropping out of school as a process: Implications for assessing the effects of competency tests required for graduation. Effects of testing reforms and standards. OERI. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 293879.

Coleman, J.S. (1988). Social capital in the development of human capital: The ambigious position of private schools. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 293943.

Comerford, D.J. & Jacobson, M.G. (1987). Suspension--"Capital punishment for misdemeanors": The use of suspension at four suburban junior high schools and viable alternatives that could work. AERA. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 287196.

Dunham, R.G. & Alpert, G.P. (1987). Keeping juvenile delinquents in schools: A prediction model. Adolescence, 22, 45-57.

Ediger, M. (1987). School dropouts, absenteeism and tardiness. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 279941.

Friedman, A.S., et al. (1985). Does drug and alcohol use lead to failure to graduate from high School?! Journal of Drug Education, 15(4), 353-364.

Gold, N.C. (1985). Competency testing for limited English language proficiency students. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 273151.

Haberman, M. & Quinn, L. (1986). The high school reentry myth: A follow-up study of juveniles released from two correctional high schools in Wisconsin. Journal of Correctional Education, 37(3), 114-117.

Hamilton, S.F. (1986). Raising standards and reducing dropout rates. Teachers College Record, 87(3), 410-429.

Hammond, R. & Howard, J.P. (1986). Doing what's expected of you: The roots and the rise of the dropout culture. Metropolitan Education, 2, 53-71.

Harrington, S. (1987). Children of the road. Instructor, 97(4), 36-39.

Hartford Public Schools. (1987). Hartford community plan for dropout reduction. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 296481.

Irvine, D.J. (1987). What research doesn't show about gifted dropouts. Educational Leadership, 44(6), 79-80.

ISTFHSD. (1985). A generation too precious to waste. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 268198.

Levy, S. (1987). Investing in the health of at-risk youth: School-based

health clinics in the south. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 290826.
Lichtenstein, S. & Zantal-Weiner, K. (1988) Special Education Dropouts. ERIC Digest #451. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 202834.
Ligan, G. (1988) No pass--no play: Impact on failures, dropouts and course enrollments. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 300422.
McDill, E.L., et al. (1986). A population at risk: Potential consequences of tougher school standards for student dropouts. American Journal of Education, 94(2), 135-181.
McMahan, W.G. (1986) Learning disabilities and criminal involvement: Prevention, advocacy and training. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 274131.
Mensch, B.S. & Kandel, D.B. (1988). Dropping out of high school and drug involvement. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 296041.
Mizell, M.H. (1987). The identification of school districts which need to take extraordinary initiatives to prevent the potential for increased dropouts following the administration of the 1988 "Exit Exam." ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 278932.
Morse, S.C. (ed). (1987). Focus dropouts. Summary report of an interstate forum on the migrant dropout. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 281688.
Natriello, G., et al. (1985). School reforms and potential dropouts. Educational Leadership, 43(1), 10-14.
O'Connor, P. (1985). Dropout prevention programs that work. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 275065.
Perales, C.A. (1988). Black & Hispanics children: Their future is ours. Journal of State Government, 61(2), 45-48.
Polit, D.K. & Kahn, J.R. (1987). Teenage pregnancy and the role of the schools. Urban Education, 22(2), 131-153.
Raffe, D. (1986). Unemployment and school motivation: The case of truancy. Education Review, 38(1), 11-19.
Reynolds, A. (1985). Vocational exploritory programs: Career Selections and at ·· des. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 272681.
RLEINI-Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement fo the Northeast and Islands. (1987). At-risk youth: Considerations for state-level policy makers, including a summary of recent state-level actions in this region. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 296451.
Schwaback, D. (1985). Here's why your board must throw a lifeline to foundering kids. American School Board Journals, 172(8), 25-33.
Schultz, E.W., et al. (1986). The association of student dropout rates with student attributes. Paper presented at AERA San Francisco. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 274071.
Smith, D.H. (1986). Testimony to the state of New York legislative hearing on dropouts. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 269489.
Spence, C.S. (1986). Giving young parents a future. Equity and Choice, 3(1), 16-24.
Stone, L.A. (1985). School counselor preparation curriculum: How much is enough. ACES paper. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 264511.

Tidwell, R. (1985a) Follow up of early school learners from the Los Angeles unified school district. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 267781.

Tidwell, R. (1985b) Follow-up of early school learners from the Los Angeles unified school district: Executive summary. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 283899.

Watt, N.F., et al. (1987) A psychological study of educational attainment among Hispanics. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 298198.

Weber, J.M. & Sechler, J.A. (1988). Vocational education and the retention of at-risk youth. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 297123.

Wheelock, A. (1986). Dropping out: What the research says. Equity and Choice, 3(1), 7-11.

Widmann, J.C. & Hoisden, T.M. (1988). A study of students who dropped out of the San Juan district. ERIC Document Reproduction Service, ED 298411.

Wilkinson, L. (1987) SYSTAT: The system for statistics. Evanston, IL: SYSTAT Inc.

Table 1

Set A: This Cause of Dropping Out is One Which We Should Work on as a National Priority Item

Possible causes for dropping out, withdrawing, being removed or leaving early. (Item)	Factor 1 R Load	Factor 2 R Load	Factor 3 R Load	Factor 4 R Load	Factor 5 R Load	Factor 6 R Load	Factor 7 R Load	Factor 8 R Load	Factor 9 R Load	Factor 10 R Load	Factor 11 R Load	Item $\bar{X}$	Item S_x
1. Boredom caused by undifferentiated instruction, teacher inflexibility, student giftedness, etc.						3 .468						4.012	1.024
2. Frustration (for slow or unserved handicapped for whom education is too hard, instruction undifferentiated, teachers inflexible).		5 .419										1.808	.919
3. Pregnancy (and no active support to stay in school).								1 .754				2.719	.980
4. Need to support spouse/child.								2 .702				2.698	1.016
5. Medical problems (which make school success difficult, unlikely or less meaningful, e.g., terminal illness).								3 .626				3.221	.922
6. Emotional problems (suicidal, depression, low self esteem, psychosis of various kinds).					1 .722							1.720	.760
7. Desire to earn money.												2.550	1.038
8. Desire to get away from home.												2.680	1.030
9. Conflict(s) with school administration.		2 .793										2.653	1.020
10. Conflict(s) with one or more teachers.		1 .849										2.504	1.020
11. No hope of graduating (failed too much already, educationally discouraged).		4 .460								3 .428		1.785	.830
12. No peer support for education (active peer pressure against continuing).				3 .636								2.257	.962
13. No parent support for education (active parental pressure against continuing).				1 .827								2.168	1.023
14. No community (cultural) support for education.				2 .709								2.588	1.133
15. Lack of non college bound education (no vocational technical or business track).										1 .483		2.447	1.228
16. Substance abuse.											2 .664	1.887	.850
17. Being in special classes (no perceived reward in education).												2.793	1.093
18. No peer group (especially gifted).							4 .477					2.929	.981
19. Too old for peer group (e.g., special education students or those retained 1 or more years).							3 .652 1 .780					2.802	.974
20. Too different from peer group (e.g., physically handicapped or extremely gifted).							2 .712					2.918	.946
21. Truancy (too many classes missed and hours of detention to face).	4 .465											2.149	.926
22. Migrant family (missed too much to catch up).									1 .752			2.129	.856
23. Illiterate (cannot read at a minimal level).									2 .605			2.008	.873
24. Dysfunctional/unstable family (causing stress of a variety of types).			1 .742									1.668	.709

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

25. Victim of child abuse (physical, emotional, verbal, sexual).			6 .405								3 .571	1.901	.809
26. Poverty (e.g., does not dress appropriately does not "fit in").											4 .452	2.366	.972
27. Involvement with crime.											1 .667	2.375	.872
28. No day care (for teens with children).											5 .402	3.633	.989
29. Lack of teacher role models (e.g., minorities).	1 .609											2.779	1.065
30. Peer violence (perceived lack of safety in school).												3.025	.972
31. Learning disabilities (not adequately dealt with by schools).										2 .528		2.280	1.126
32. Discrimination (particularly by teachers against minority students).	3 .517											3.033	1.020
33. Personal, cultural and linguistic dehumanization (no multicultural training for teachers)	2 .602								[illegible]			2.608	1.091
34. Failure to pass, or anticipation of failure on, minimum competency tests.					2 .646							2.531	.927
35. Lack of daily attendance support (no counselor, truant officer, or program to work in attendance).												2.432	1.071
36. Ineligible to participate in sports (where sports were a tie to keep them in school).						5 .400						3.008	1.066
37. Runaway.						1 .649						2.552	.917
38. Being in a foster home (and dropping out as a way to get out)						2 .643						2.817	.917
39. Parental problems (divorce, unemployment, separation)			2 .709									2.029	.878
40. Living on his/her own (not living with family or other responsible adults).			4 .535			4 .451						2.523	.937
41. Numerous home and family responsibilites (for a worke for more money, to care for younger siblings, etc).			3 .616									2.438	.924
42. Alienated from school.		3 .485	5 .422									2.008	.972
Factor $\bar{X}$	2.632	2.146	2.091	2.333	2.113	2.998	2.854	2.705	2.272	2.163	2.436		
Factor S_x	.696	.655	.592	.822	.673	.599	.729	.753	.704	.735	.451		

ERIC

Table 2

Set B: Enough research has been done, related to this cause, so that we could deal with it effectively if enough resources were committed.

Possible causes for dropping out, withdrawing, being removed or leaving early. (Item)	Factor 1 R*	Load	Factor 2 R	Load	Factor 3 R	Load	Factor 4 R	Load	Item $\bar{X}$	S_x
1. Boredom caused by undifferentiated instruction, teacher inflexibility, student giftedness, etc.			2	.735					2.667	1.233
2. Frustration (for slow or unserved handicapped for whom education is too hard, instruction undifferentiated, teachers inflexible).			1	.752					2.524	1.253
3. Pregnancy (and no active support to stay in school).									2.441	1.076
4. Need to support spouse/child.							5	.478	2.662	.968
5. Medical problems (which make school success difficult, unlikely or less meaningful, e.g., terminal illness).									2.797	.975
6. Emotional problems (suicidal, depression, low self-esteem, psychosis of various kinds).			4	.634					2.902	1.331
7. Desire to earn money.							1	.686	2.880	.988
8. Desire to get away from home.							4	.533	2.905	.937
9. Conflict(s) with school administration.							2	.677	2.883	.973
10. Conflict(s) with one or more teachers.							3	.687	2.886	1.028
11. No hope of graduating (failed too much already, educationally discouraged).			3	.645					2.843	1.201
12. No peer support for education (active peer pressure against continuing).									2.915	1.059
13. No parent support for education (active parental pressure against continuing).			5	.459					2.991	1.130
14. No community (cultural) support for education.	11	.426							2.987	1.055
15. Lack of non-college bound education (no vocational-technical or business track).									2.581	1.151

* Within factor rank

16.	Substance abuse.			6	.544	2.574	1.277
17.	Being in special classes (no perceived reward in education).					2.760	1.084
18.	No peer group (especially gifted).					2.830	.994
19.	Too old for peer group (e.g., special education students or those retained 1 or more years).	1	.583			2.901	.949
20.	Too different from peer group (e.g., physically handicapped or extremely gifted).	4	.583			2.901	.949
21.	Truancy (too many classes missed and hours of detention to face).			5	.594	2.845	1.129
22.	Migrant family (missed too much to catch up).			2	.643	2.871	1.126
23.	Illiterate (cannot read at a minimal level).			1	.763	2.620	1.231
24.	Dysfunctional/unstable family (causing stress of a variety of types).			4	.626	2.961	1.330
25.	Victim of child abuse (physical, emotional, verbal, sexual).			9	.469	2.923	1.331
26.	Poverty (e.g., does not dress appropriately--does not "fit in").					2.766	1.106
27.	Involvement with crime.			8	.498	2.771	1.044
28.	No day care (for teens with children).					2.750	1.119
29.	Lack of teacher role models (e.g., minorities).					2.855	1.013
30.	Peer violence (perceived lack of safety in school).					2.882	.936
31.	Learning disabilities (not adequately dealt with by schools).			3	.630	2.627	1.240
32.	Discrimination (particularly by teachers against minority students).	12	.421			2.809	.988
33.	Personal, cultural and linguistic dehumanization (no multicultural training for teachers).					2.919	1.112

34.	Failure to pass, or anticipation of failure on, minimum competency tests.					7	.519		2.875	1.026
35.	Lack of daily attendance support (no counselor, truant officer, or program to work in attendance).	9	.457			10	.453		2.748	1.100
36.	Ineligible to participate in sports (where sports were a tie to keep them in school).	2	.643						2.810	.999
37.	Runaway.	3	.596						2.910	.972
38.	Being in a foster home (and dropping out as a way to get out).	6	.563						2.927	.955
39.	Parental problems (divorce, unemployment, separation).	10	.429	6	.417	12	.416		2.930	1.149
40.	Living on his/her own (not living with family or other responsible adults).	7	.[illegible]						3.044	.930
41.	Numerous home and family responsibilites (for a worker, for more money, to care for younger siblings, etc.).	5	.573						2.943	1.027
42.	Alienated from school.	8	.530			11	.435		2.924	1.241
	Factor $\bar{X}$		2.874		2.824		2.807	2.820		
	Factor Sx		.715		.922		.862	.724		

Table 3
Chi-Square Analysis
Set A

Item % expected value	(40)	Cases (20)	(40)	N	Chi-Square	Sig
1**	196	16	32	244	165.34	.000
2**	210	15	20	245	213.67	.000
3	171	37	34	242	100.30	.000
4	111	68	56	235	27.82	.000
5*	57	79	104	240	36.53	.000
6**	225	10	11	246	271.74	.000
7	135	53	54	242	34.44	.000
8	124	55	62	241	21.14	.000
9	128	52	62	242	22.84	.000
10	147	40	55	242	45.54	.000
11**	216	16	15	247	232.69	.000
12	165	42	34	241	90.01	.000
13**	176	34	34	244	108.91	.000
14	132	49	64	245	23.59	.000
15	147	31	66	244	41.73	.000
16**	197	26	16	239	183.77	.000
17	100	67	75	242	12.16	.002
18* sig undecided	88	75	77	240	19.62	.000
19	106	67	69	242	16.01	.000
20* sig undecided	88	79	76	243	24.51	.000
21**	181	34	27	242	127.86	.000
22	165	54	18	237	115.12	.000
23**	199	25	21	245	176.35	.000
24**	224	13	7	244	274.06	.000
25**	201	29	12	242	194.23	.000
26	152	52	39	243	65.98	.000
27	150	60	30	240	78.75	.000
28	144	60	36	240	64.50	.000
29	101	74	65	240	24.35	.000
30* sig chg drction	74	86	82	242	36.84	.000
31	170	23	50	243	90.93	.000
32* chg dir uncertn	77	81	83	241	28.09	.000
33	127	64	54	245	32.93	.000
34	128	75	38	241	60.64	.000
35	155	40	48	243	60.80	.000
36*	89	70	83	242	12.24	.002
37	125	81	35	241	69.91	.000
38* uncertain	86	106	49	241	93.74	.000
39**	186	32	20	238	151.12	.000
40	124	75	38	237	59.10	.000
41	140	60	35	235	63.14	.000
42**	175	43	18	236	131.02	.000

* Items significant for uncertainty or wrong direction
** Items with 75% or greater agreement

Factor						
1	125	103	17	245	133.90	.000
2	182	55	8	245	155.39	.000
3	192	41	5	238	184.81	.000
4	147	76	25	248	92.59	.000
5	177	62	8	247	148.56	.000
6* uncertain	111	113	18	242	152.45	.000
7* uncertain	93	109	41	243	107.74	.000
8* uncertain	101	106	36	243	106.48	.000
9	164	70	13	247	126.13	.000
10	167	75	6	248	146.91	.000
11	183	55	6	244	161.48	.000

Table 4
Set B
Chi-Square Analysis

Item		Cases		N	Chi-Square	Sig
1	120	43	71	234	13.12	.001
2	136	29	68	233	33.12	.000
3	144	46	46	236	50.91	.000
4	103	82	46	231	52.26	.000
5* uncertain	93	81	58	232	38.85	.000
6	115	22	98	235	18.16	.000
7* uncertain	89	75	69	233	23.78	.000
8* uncertain	81	81	69	231	33.55	.000
9* uncertain	88	76	67	231	26.41	.000
10	94	65	72	231	12.18	.002
11	102	41	87	230	1.90	NS
12	92	64	79	235	8.59	.014
13	87	54	92	233	1.60	NS
14	82	65	83	230	9.82	.007
15	123	44	60	227	21.91	.000
16	131	42	62	235	25.99	.000
17	99	68	62	229	20.92	.000
18* uncertain	88	81	66	235	33.32	.000
19* uncertain	86	79	69	234	29.24	.000
20* uncertain	87	79	67	233	30.31	.000
21	105	49	78	232	4.11	NS
22	96	64	73	233	10.96	.004
23	125	42	67	234	18.59	.000
24* uncertain	101	30	101	232	7.25	.027
25	100	36	98	234	3.14	NS
26	104	65	66	235	16.30	.000
27	107	58	66	231	12.86	.002
28	108	59	69	236	11.74	.003
29	89	74	71	234	21.49	.000
30* uncertain	78	99	60	237	71.92	.000
31	132	34	70	236	24.98	.000
32* uncertain	86	91	58	235	55.66	.000
33* uncertain	89	76	70	235	24.29	.000
34* uncertain	90	75	67	232	24.89	.000
35	114	54	66	234	13.69	.001
36* uncertain	92	83	56	231	43.65	.000
37* uncertain	80	87	66	233	44.83	.000
38* uncertain	71	104	58	233	89.29	.000
39	95	47	87	229	.39	NS
40* uncertain	62	94	71	227	65.48	.000
41* uncertain	81	72	74	227	19.75	.000
42	87	54	82	223	2.62	NS

* Items significant for uncertainty or wrong direction
** Items with 75% agreement

Factor						
1* uncertain	62	134	39	235	204.12	.000
2* uncertain	104	74	60	238	28.47	.000
3* uncertain	93	93	50	236	65.35	.000
4* uncertain	75	116	46	237	128.54	.000