The Influence of Selected Factors on the Vocational Choices of Vocational-agricultural Students in Louisiana.

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OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS IN LOUISIANA

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
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in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Vocational Agricultural Education

by

Vanik S. Eaddy
B. S., Clemson University, 1959
M. S., Louisiana State University, 1964
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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this research, involving high school vocational agricultural students were the following:

1. To determine the status of educational and occupational aspirations and expectations.
2. To show the influence of selected factors on career choices.
3. To identify persons influencing vocational choices.
4. To define limitations deterring attainment of career aspirations.

The Descriptive Survey Method, with the Group Interview Technique was used in this study. Participants in the investigation were primarily males, but seven percent were females. Racial distinctions were not made; however, five schools included had a predominantly Negro enrollment.

The survey area was located in south-central Louisiana, and further limited within a radius of 60 miles from the Baton Rouge-New Orleans industrial complex. Data were obtained from 741 vocational agricultural students in 17 public secondary schools within five parishes. Surveys were taken during March and April, 1968, through cooperation with the respective school systems.

Statistical procedures were number and percent distribution, chi-square test of significance, and coefficient of contingency. Equal probability of response was assumed in each category within variables statistically related. The null hypothesis was applied to each test of significance, and was accepted or rejected at the 0.05 level of confidence. A correction factor was applied to obtained contingency values to adjust for fineness of grouping.
A high degree of association exists between the educational aspirations and expectations. The aspired educational levels were generally higher than expected choices.

Approximately one-half of the students expected to achieve greater than a high school education. Increased awareness of higher education was developed by students as they progressed through high school.

A moderate relationship exists between occupational aspirations and expectations. The aspired status was generally higher than expected prestige. Students tended to aspire and expect higher status occupations in greater magnitude as they progressed through high school. Many students lacked scholastic aptitude for attaining the educational requirements of their chosen occupations.

Thirteen and four-tenths percent and 15.1 percent of the participants were undecided about their educational aspirations and expectations. Occupational aspirations and expectations were not established by 20.6 percent and 41.4 percent of the students, respectively.

Occupational expectations are not statistically related to student awareness of the requirements of chosen careers. A majority of students were uninformed of conditions in the work world. Vocational choices are not significantly influenced by discussion of course choices and career plans with guidance counselors or teachers.

Fathers generally attained a higher occupational status, but achieved a lower educational level than mothers. Fathers were more influential in occupational choices, but mothers exerted a greater influence on student educational decisions. Parental educational status
was more closely associated with student vocational choice levels than occupational prestige of the parents.

The subjects considered most influential in student vocational choices were vocational agriculture and physical education. Other subjects influencing career choices in descending order of importance were mathematics, science, English, and history. Participation in extra-curricular activities is significantly related to educational choices and occupational aspirations, but not for occupational expectations.

Reference groups of persons influencing vocational choices were ranked as follows: parents; a heterogeneous grouping of friends, persons in chosen occupations, and relatives other than parents; school personnel; and clergymen. The relative ranking of reference groups remained constant, but variations occurred within each group, when comparing persons influencing educational and occupational choices.

Student occupational choices were based primarily upon personal interests, satisfactions, and rewards. A smaller percentage of students were influenced by work experiences, capabilities, or tangible assets. High school academic achievement records are significantly related to student vocational choice levels.

Attainment of vocational aspirations was primarily limited by lack of interest, ability, and financial support.

The primary sources of financial aid for continued education and occupational entry were parents and work.
CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Perhaps the most important decision in life is made while a student is in high school. The choice of a vocation, and a determination of the education needed to prepare for this selected occupation, will markedly influence the future of most persons. High school youth are faced with the problem of establishing occupational objectives and obtaining the education required for attainment of their goals.

Technological progress and economic expansion are contributory factors in the creation of a dynamic labor market requiring the services of a smaller number of workers per unit of output. The employees of tomorrow will probably be expected to know more about their jobs prior to entry, and they will be expected to continue to study in order to stay abreast of technological advancement. Youth must be willing to prepare themselves to compete for gainful employment in the job market to be assured of an acceptable level of living.

The Vocational Education Act of 1963, Public Law 88-210, implies that each student enrolled in vocational agriculture shall have an occupational objective. The Act further specifies that training conducted under its auspices will be directed toward the adequate preparation of each individual for his selected occupation. For the first time in the history of American
education, the law clearly establishes job preparation as a school function.

The realistic choice of a vocation is fundamental to efficiency in career planning. It is the responsibility of vocational education to provide the occupational training needed by each student to reach his highest productive potential. It is especially important that each student take advantage of the opportunities available to him. First by choosing wisely a desirable career and secondly receiving the necessary educational preparation to qualify for a satisfying and productive livelihood.

To make sound decisions it is important that each person avail himself of as much information about his potential choices as he can secure. A realistic vocational choice will more likely result when the student compares his aspirations with his capabilities in a rational manner, taking into consideration the facts which have a bearing upon eventual success in attaining his occupational objectives. It was the design of this research to provide the educational system and the students with more insight into the variables which influence vocational choices. A greater awareness of influential factors should allow the schools to provide adequate guidance services and improved educational offerings. Students should be led to perceive more realistically their capabilities in relationship to their vocational alternatives.

**Statement of the Problem**

This investigation was undertaken to determine the influence of selected factors on the choice of a vocation by students in vocational agriculture in Louisiana.
A knowledge of the variables affecting vocational choices could provide the basis for developing materials to assist youth in making realistic plans. Tentative choices which are established early in the formative life of an individual should allow him to make the most effective use of the educational system in preparing for the attainment of his occupational objectives. A greater awareness of the factors influencing those choices could assist the educational community to constructively contribute towards the crystallization of student vocational choices, and then provide the training needed to aid students in achieving their occupational objectives.

Definition of the Problem

This study was designed to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Determine the status of educational and occupational aspirations and expectations of students in vocational agriculture.

2. Establish the relationship of selected factors to the vocational choices of vocational agricultural students.

3. Identify persons who influence individuals in their vocational choices.

4. Define limitations deterring individuals from attaining their vocational aspirations.

This information could be used to project training needs and in providing occupational information to assist students in establishing realistic occupational objectives. Knowledge of the factors studied could provide the educational community with a greater understanding of the vocational choice process.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to provide information which may be used for the improvement of the vocational agricultural program in Louisiana.

The findings of this study could be used to provide material for the improvement of the program of vocational education in agriculture in the following ways:

1. Provide occupational information to the student at the most beneficial time for making his career choice.

2. Inform the student of vocational limitations and assist him to assess his capabilities rationally in order to understand the qualifications for occupations.

3. Recommend work experience and occupational training which will prepare the student for employment and help him progress toward his occupational objectives.

4. Inform the members of the school faculty and staff of their personal influences on the vocational choices of high school students.

5. Portray the effect of the socioeconomic background and home influences on the students' vocational choices. This knowledge should permit school personnel to develop more effective public relations programs and better relationships in working with students of various backgrounds.

Limitations

This study was limited to the analysis of educational and occupational aspirations and expectations. The sample consisted of 741 vocational
agricultural students enrolled in grades nine through twelve in 17 public high schools located in five Louisiana parishes. The portion of the State limited for study comprised an area located within a 60 mile driving radius of the Baton Rouge-New Orleans industrial complex. It was further limited to a study of the following factors influencing vocational choices:

1. Availability of occupational information.
2. Home environment.
4. Persons influencing students.
5. Personal value systems.
6. High school academic achievement.
7. Vocational limitations.

Hypotheses

The selection of a vocation is a complex decision-making process involving a compromise of a person's aspirations and the numerous factors which influence the ultimate expectations of life goals. Upon commitment to an occupational choice and deciding upon the level of employment expected, an individual automatically establishes the educational level he must achieve to attain his vocational objectives.

On the basis of the interpretation previously postulated, the following hypotheses were proposed for test:

1. Vocational choices of individuals are influenced by the availability of pertinent occupational information at the time occupational objectives are being established.
2. The home environment influences the vocational choices of
students in proportion to the educational, occupational, and socioeconomic status enjoyed by their parents.

3. The school environment influences vocational choices in relationship to the subjects studied, extent of participation in extra-curricular activities, and the encouragement of teachers for continued education.

4. Individuals in close contact with students influence vocational choices in the hierarchical order of parents, relatives, peer group, persons in occupations of interest to the student, and school personnel.

5. Vocational choices are based upon the personal value systems espoused by the students. Such values are manifested by the reasons for choosing certain occupations.

6. Realistic vocational choices are conditioned by the mental capabilities of the individuals concerned, in relation to the educational or occupational prerequisites of the jobs they choose.

7. Vocational limitations are influential in deterring students making vocational choices.

Source of Data

Data were collected through group interviews of a sample of 741 students. These students having been enrolled in one or more years of vocational agriculture were attending the Louisiana public high schools utilized as survey centers. The data were obtained during March and April, 1968. The sample was composed primarily of males. It was noted that seven percent of the participants were females who reported having
enrolled in vocational agricultural courses. This small number of female
respondents did not warrant separate treatment, consequently, they were
tabulated without regard to sex. There was no distinction made regarding
racial backgrounds of the students; however the sample included five high
schools having predominantly Negro enrollments.

The survey centers involved in this study were 17 public high
schools in five Louisiana parishes. These parishes were located within
a radius of 60 miles, or daily commuting distance of the Baton Rouge-New
Orleans industrial complex. The area sampled is geographically positioned
in the south-central portion of Louisiana.

The survey centers were selected to yield an unbiased and representative
index of the factors influencing the vocational choices of students within
the survey area. Participating schools were selected according to these
criteria: (1) the size of the student body; (2) location in urban, semi-
urban, or rural area; (3) socioeconomic status of the schools' patrons;
(4) ethnic background of the students; and (5) geographic distribution
representing the agricultural and economic conditions prevailing in the
survey area.

The sample of vocational agricultural students by grade levels and
school-parish distribution is presented in Appendix E. The geographical
location of survey centers is portrayed in Figure 1.

Method of Research and Collection of Data

The Descriptive Survey Study using the Group Interview Technique was
the method of research used in this investigation. Data were collected
through the use of a multiple choice inventory form designed to determine
the vocational interests of Louisiana high school youth. This instrument
Figure 1. Location of Schools Surveyed
was developed for use in a larger study conducted by the School of Vocational Education at Louisiana State University, of which this investigation was a part. A copy of the interview schedule is enclosed in Appendix A. The items in the questionnaire which were used in this study have been identified with an asterisk.

The inventory was administered by experienced survey teams in a one hour time period in each of the participating high schools. Permission to conduct this research was arranged through Louisiana State University and the respective parish school systems on a voluntary basis. Visits were made at the request of each school system for the purpose of collecting data during March and April, 1968.

During the conduct of the interviews, a member of each survey team introduced the research project to the students and gave instructions for recording replies on the answer sheets provided. Following a brief introduction, the students were allowed to proceed at will through the inventory form. Whenever necessary, individual attention was provided the students by members of the survey teams and the school personnel.

The students were instructed to record their answers to the multiple choice entries on the optical scanner sheets supplied. A copy of this answer sheet, I.B.M. 1230 Document Number 505, is included in Appendix B. A mimeographed sheet, 'Form for Written Answers', included in Appendix C, was provided for the recording of written answers concerning the occupations held by the parents and the occupational aspirations and expectations of the students.

The Occupational Level Classification Scale, found in Appendix D, was applied to the written answers recorded by the students. Each
entry was categorized into an hierarchical order representing the amount of educational preparation and the degree of skill required for performance of the occupation. This scale was designed to measure the socioeconomic status enjoyed as a result of the position involved. The occupational classification levels of the parental occupations and the occupational choices of the students were coded on the respective scanner sheets for electronic data processing.

Treatment of Data

Information on the completed optical scanner sheets was read by an I.B.M. 1231 optical page reader and transferred to magnetic tape. This record was then converted into card codings and punched into data cards for electronic computer programming. The optical scanning and card punching procedures were accomplished through the facilities of the Louisiana State University, Data Processing Service. Tabulations and statistical tests were performed by the Louisiana State University, Computer Research Center.

The processed data were organized into tabular form for interpretation and presentation. The statistical procedures involved were frequency and percentage distributions, coefficient of contingency, and the chi-square test of significance. The chi-square test was considered significant at the 0.05 level of confidence.

Data analyzing the educational and occupational choices of vocational agricultural students, by grade levels nine through twelve, were presented in Chapter III. The influences of selected factors upon the vocational choices of these students were also analyzed in this chapter. Conclusions, upon which to base recommendations, were drawn
from the findings of this study through treatment and analysis of the data. The summary, conclusions, and recommendations of this investigation were presented in Chapter IV.

**Definition of Terms**

1. Aspiration - An aspiration is the desire for attainment of an educational or occupational status or goal.

2. Expectation - An expectation refers to the anticipation of attaining a particular educational or occupational status, whether or not it is desired.

3. Level of employment - The level of employment refers to a status ranking of employee positions according to income received and degree of skill or knowledge required for job performance.

4. Occupational information - Occupational information is a collection of factual details concerning employment in a specific occupation, namely, availability of jobs, location of jobs, job descriptions, salary or wages offered, experience and educational requirements, fringe benefits, and working conditions of specific occupations.

5. Occupational objective - An occupational objective is a selected career choice involving a preference for a specific type of work and level of employment.

6. Vocational choice - A vocational choice is a decision made by an individual to obtain the basic education, vocational training, and experience required to attain his occupational objective. Vocational choices may be analyzed into aspirational and
expectational components.

7. Vocational limitations - Vocational limitations are considerations which deter individuals from entering specific occupations, namely, military service obligations, unfavorable working conditions, unattractive wages or salary, lack of job experience or educational background, migration requirements, inadequate financial backing, and labor union controls.

Statistical Procedures

1. Chi-square ($X^2$) - This is a useful method for relating experimentally obtained results to those theoretically expected on some hypothesis. The equation is:

$$X^2 = \sum \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

in which $f_o$ is the frequency of occurrence, and $f_e$ if the expected frequency of some hypothesis. The more closely the observed results approximate the expected, the smaller the chi-square value, and the closer is the agreement between the observed data and the hypothesis being tested.

2. Coefficient of contingency (C) - This procedure provides an approximate measure of correlation when each of the two variables under study has been classified into two or more categories. The formula is:

$$C = \sqrt{\frac{S - N}{S}}$$

in which $S$ is the sum of the quotients and $N$ is the size of the sample. The size of $C$ depends upon the extent to which the observed frequencies depart from their "chance" values.
Chi-square values may be converted to $C$ by this formula:

$$C = \sqrt{\frac{X^2}{N + X^2}}$$

where $X^2$ is the obtained chi-square value, and $N$ is the number of observations.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The literature concerning the vocational plans of youth was surveyed to develop an understanding of the educational and occupational aspirations and expectations of secondary school students. It was assumed that a review of related research would yield significant implications for the conduct of a similar study in Louisiana. The sources of materials found useful in this study were books, publications, periodicals, and unpublished research materials.

The studies found pertinent to this review were conducted in geographical locations throughout Canada and the United States. The Canadian data were considered applicable by virtue of generalizations derived from conclusions reached by Siemens (38:93-94). In the United States, where most of the related research was conducted, a rather extensive coverage of the northern states was reported. Only a limited amount of data were available concerning vocational choices of high school aged youth in Louisiana; hence, one of the purposes of this survey of literature was to become acquainted with findings elsewhere, which might prove useful in this setting.

The objectives which served as guidelines in this review of research related to vocational choices of youth were: (1) to develop an understanding of the implications of previous research; (2) to provide for a logical organization of this study; (3) to obtain ideas for the design of an
interview schedule; and (4) to establish criteria for validating the findings of this research.

The related literature reviewed for this study was organized into three major divisions for presentation: (1) Theories of Vocational Choice; (2) Educational and Occupational Aspirations and Expectations; and (3) Factors Influencing Vocational Choices. Each major area was further subdivided to establish an empirical understanding of the following relationships: (1) normal, versus abnormal vocational choice behavior, (2) the conceptual framework of aspirational and expectational levels, and (3) the influence that certain environmental factors had on vocational choices of high school students.

The choice of an occupation and the decision to obtain the education necessary for fulfilling one's occupational objectives, are unquestionably among the most important decisions in the life of an individual. In the affluent American society, status enjoyed is usually determined by the prestige of the occupation held, and the level of education attained by the individual. The educational level attained by a person does not automatically guarantee a status position, but it is recognized by many authorities as the "key" to a satisfactory level of living. The importance of vocational achievement in American culture was aptly described by Stubbins.

In our culture one of the most distinguishing features of the individual is his occupation. Vocational achievement is one of the main roads leading to the attainment of self-esteem and the respect of one's fellows. Because of its tremendous emotional significance to the individual, vocational satisfaction ranks very high in the hierarchy of the goods. (109:333)

The years ahead may be indeed promising to those who prepare themselves adequately. Michael made certain projections concerning
attitudes toward the work environment for the next generation.

As occupational training begins earlier and specialization becomes more frequently a prerequisite for secure, well-paying salaries, there will be increasing pressure on youth to make occupational choices in terms of objective talent or social needs rather than subjective preference. Nevertheless, for some years at least, a large proportion of youth will continue to choose occupations that do not require very intensive preparation. The result will be shortages in occupations requiring skills, commitment, and devoted preparation. (11:121)

It is evident that one may expect to change his type of job several times in a working career, if he is to successfully compete for satisfactory employment in the years to come. "The need for vocational education will continue to grow throughout the 1970's as our work force approaches 100,000,000 by 1980. By then, each man and woman in the work force will need retraining every five to seven years." (93:10) "It is clear that our Nation must now have a permanent, universal, continuing program of vocational education, readily available to all persons of all age groups and levels of ability, wherever they may live." (55:14)

Michael emphasized the need for continuous study and re-training for future professionals and workers.

Professionals will have to be very well trained in the fundamentals of their field as well as in related matters. They will need to aspire to high work standards and, while the basic professions will not become obsolete, keeping on top of a profession will require a lifetime of acquiring new knowledge. With appropriate training in fundamentals and with minds which have not through disuse lost their ability to learn, these people will look forward to one career or another which directly evolves from their earlier training. (11:123-124)

Clary and Beam indicated certain conditions prevalent in the changing nature of work, "Someone has said that within five years there will be in our space program alone 18,000 new jobs not even named today". (60:16) The major question for attention then becomes a matter of deciding who shall provide the training needed and what constitutes an adequate education. The
solution to this problem is quite complex and requires a detailed investigation for thorough understanding.

The public school system is the agency which has been charged with the responsibility of educating the citizenry for the work world. This matter was discussed in relation to the changing conditions of the world of work by Curtis.

The question, what constitutes an adequate education for youth, cannot be completely answered. We are indeed fortunate that this is true because we are thus forced by the changing social and economic environment into continuous review and assessment.

The automated industry of twentieth century Louisiana requires skilled personnel. Not so many years ago possession of a high school diploma was a passport to a happy occupational future, but today, among the unemployed are large numbers of high school graduates—well educated in many respects—but who are unable to compete for a place in the changing world of work. That the secondary school has a responsibility for occupational preparation of its students, there can be no doubt. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the school has an expanded responsibility. Yet youth must be motivated to take advantage of educational opportunities; an antecedent of attainment is aspiration. (117:i-ii)

The sociological setting in Louisiana was reviewed to establish certain population trends and to derive implications for manpower needs in the future. Some of these trends are significantly related to the vocational choice processes of youth. The phenomena of agricultural mechanization and the concomitant social changes in Louisiana since 1950, were reported by Bertrand.

Social changes taking place in rural areas of Louisiana, which are more or less associated with agricultural mechanization, include decreases in rural population; improvements in the equipment, faculty, and attendance of rural schools; a loosening of the ties on individual members of the rural family; a loss of many of the rural family's functions to other social institutions; a decline in the influence of the rural church; a decrease in mutual aid practices; an increase in leisure time; an increase in social participation; and improved town-country relations. (18:48)

The importance of Louisiana's human resources was treated by Jones,
who stated that, "Louisiana's labor force is one of its most important resources. This is particularly true because of changes in farming, agribusiness, and general advances in industrialization. Workers hold a key place in the State's economy and social life". (33:28)

Further evidence of social changes was presented by Bertrand:

- the 1960 Decennial Census has shown that the population of the State is adjusting to the urban-industrial revolution which has been taking place for some time. Along with its blessings and anticipated consequences, this revolution has brought unanticipated consequences and generated serious problems and challenges. The future of the State will depend on how quickly and effectively social adjustments to these conditions can be worked out. (19:28)

The parish in Louisiana, is an important social, economic, and political unit. Bertrand and Wright attempted to derive some implications of social change from the projected population trends of Louisiana parishes.

In general, a look to the future indicates that the parishes which will continue to lose population are rural, while those which show promise of continued growth are urban. Parishes near the large metropolitan centers can be expected to gain at the fastest rate. The projections also indicate that, in general, the parishes in the southern part of the state will continue to outgrow parishes in the northern part of the state. These trends have serious implications for both local and state officials as well as private citizens. The matters of adequate schools, roads, welfare programs, and support of religious, government, and economic institutions loom large. However, it may be even more important that urbanization trends in the state show significant changes in the value orientation of the state's people, including shifts in education and political philosophy and basic ideology. (21:17)

Burford, et al. summarized the population trends and migration of the working aged population in Louisiana.

It is likely that the trends of the past two decades will continue largely unchanged during the 1960-1970 period. ... There are many reasons for this outlook. Most of the reasons are economic in nature. People tend to migrate into areas of greatest economic opportunity. These are generally urban or other industrialized areas. Industry in turn tends to locate either near its source of raw materials, labor supply, etc., near its market concentrations (usually urban centers), or near cheap dependable transportation. (25:12-13)

An important element of Louisiana's population is composed of persons
of rural background who migrate to urban centers seeking employment and satisfactory living conditions. These rural youth are faced with occupational problems not common to urban dwellers, because they must compete for suitable careers in an unfamiliar environment. Urban-reared youth usually have better educational preparation and are accustomed to labor conditions existing in industrial complexes.

Mondart and Curtis have contended that most rural boys with farming experience have an advantage over their city neighbors when competing for agriculturally related occupations.

Fortunately, most rural boys have a built-in vocational advantage providing they choose among the great host of occupations available to them in agriculture. Their apprenticeship on the farm is the key to the edge they hold over others having similar career aspirations.

Actually, growing up on a farm gives a boy a head start towards an occupation. It provides him with an occupational background the city boy can't acquire -- an understanding of farm and rural life. For, farm experience is definitely preferred to hold thousands of different jobs that have connections with farming. Moreover, knowledge and skill in agricultural subjects acquired above the apprenticeship level have real market value in the work world. (37:1)

An extensive study was undertaken to discover nonfarm agricultural jobs in Louisiana, to identify the agricultural competencies required, and to classify them by occupations or clusters for use as a foundation upon which to formulate programs in vocational agriculture.

The total sample... contained 2,430 nonfarm agricultural concerns having 51,719 workers, with 20,025 required to have knowledge and skill in agricultural subjects. These workers were distributed over a total of 1,699 different job titles, each involving specific knowledge and skills in agricultural subjects. (37:8)

Evidence assembled in the study reported by Mondart and Curtis (37:59), indicated conclusively that many nonfarm agricultural employment opportunities exist for individuals trained in agriculture. "The untrained and the unskilled worker cannot hope to compete successfully in this manpower market."
The educational system has the responsibility of preparing rural youth for gainful employment in the agribusiness complex through education and training. It is the responsibility of each student to select the occupational category in which he is interested and to obtain the education and training required insofar as his capacities will permit.

I. VOCATIONAL CHOICE THEORIES

Louisiana's youth will be confronted in the years ahead by a continuously changing work environment. The future of this State and of its youth, is dependent upon the utilization of the available human resources. Efficient utilization of manpower is accomplished through the location of individuals in occupations which allow maximum expression of the talents of those employed therein. In a democratic society, this allocation of talent is left to the choosing of each individual involved.

The importance of timely and realistic vocational choices has been established by many authorities as beneficial to the individual concerned and to the society in which he resides. The difficulty of making a realistic vocational choice in dynamic, modern society becomes even more complex to youth who face this very serious and important process without the essential occupational information needed for reaching logical conclusions. Moreover, it has been shown that the public educational system has not developed the capability of training youth for their chosen occupations. It should come as no surprise, that many youth have not established an occupational choice upon completion of high school and others have selected occupations for which they lack aptitude.

The term "vocational choice" is an inclusive description of the processes involving the selection of an occupation and the concomitant plans
to pursue the necessary education for attainment of this vocational objective. Kuvlesky and Bealer attempted to clarify the concept of occupational choice. They refuted the common usage in which occupational choice is equated to the total development process involved in occupational attainment. In their article, occupational choice was defined in the following manner:

... to mean only the psychological preferences or desires that the individual has regarding work statuses. It is thus generally equatable to the term 'aspiration' and it should be clear that this phenomenon is but a part of the total process of occupational attainment.

From a social psychological perspective, a minimal conceptual distinction is thus suggested between the individual preferences for work statuses and that huge, undifferentiated residual, consisting of all those factors in the person's situation which condition attainment but are not subsumable as preferences. Among others, we would place here such diverse things as the composition of the labor force, the nature and degree of technological development in the economy, the level of economic production and activity, the restrictive covenants of labor unions, seniority and tenure clauses inherited physical disabilities, age, sex, and so on... This simple model... does not indicate to what degree preferences determine job attainment. (84:265-267)

Super and Overstreet suggested that vocational choices occur as developmental processes over a span of time in the life of an individual.

Vocational choice is seen as a process, extending over a period of time. It is a sequence of lesser decisions as to the level toward which to strive, some of them decisions as to field in which to work, which brings about a progressive reduction of the number of alternatives open to the chooser. The vocational developmental tasks can be classified according to life stages, each life stage confronting the individual with some new developmental tasks peculiar to that stage. (16:141)

A. OCCUPATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL CHOICE PROCESSES

Educators, psychologists, and sociologists have attempted to discern the processes involved in the determination of an occupation. Some authorities, namely, Forer (5:361), Caplow (3:214-229), and Miller and Form (12)
concluded the choice of an occupation to be impulsive, accidental, or conditioned by fate. Other researchers, namely, Ginzberg et al. (6), Super (110:185-190), and Beilin (115) have reasoned that the occupational choice process is developmental and logical in nature and extends over a period of time. Both approaches were reviewed for an understanding of each respective viewpoint.

Ginzberg et al. tended to discount the "accident theory" in favor of a logical developmental process. They concluded that occupational choice processes take place over a minimum of six or seven years and more typically, over ten years.

We found that the process of occupational decision making could be analyzed in terms of three periods--fantasy, tentative, and realistic choices. These can be differentiated by the way in which the individual 'translates' his impulses and needs into an occupational choice. (6:91)

Ginzberg (71:492) and associates established the fantasy period to occur in most children before the age of 11 years. The tentative choice period occurs between 17 years of age and young adulthood. The realistic period may extend to the age of 25 years at which time an individual arrives at a final conclusion through the process of trial and error.

Occupational choice behavior was clearly defined by Ginzberg who reported certain findings of research performed by himself and his associates in the development of an approach to a general theory of occupational choice.

The child in the fantasy period believes that he can become whatever he wants to become. He makes an arbitrary translation of his impulses and needs into an occupational choice. During the tentative period, his translation is almost exclusively in terms of such subjective factors as his interests, capacities, and values. Adolescents consider their choices tentative because they sense that they have not effectively incorporated the reality factors into their considerations. They are able to do this during
the realistic period when they seek to work out a compromise between their interests, capacities, and values, and the opportunities and limitations of the environment. (71:492-493)

Ginzberg further analyzed the periods of occupational choice behavior to determine the stages existing in each period of development.

We discerned four stages within the tentative period and three stages within the period of realistic choices. The first stage in the tentative period was called the interest stage because tentative choices made at this time are based almost exclusively on interests. Next the adolescent takes into consideration his capacities, and later his values-- the next two stages--, looking forward to college or a job. The realistic period begins with the exploration stage, during which the individual seeks for the last time to acquaint himself with his alternatives. This is followed by the crystallization stage during which he delimits it. (71:493)

Ginzberg explained the general theory of occupational choice, developed by himself and associates, by explaining the manner in which occupational choices are finalized. It was emphasized that occupational choices are to some extent unalterable once made, and that a degree of compromise is necessary for realistic decision making.

The second element of our theory, the irreversibility of the choice process, grows out of the reality pressures which introduce major obstacles to alterations in plans . . .

Our third contention, that every occupational choice is of necessity a compromise, reflects the fact that the individual tries to choose a career in which he can make as much as possible of his interests and capacities in a manner that will satisfy as many of his values and goals as possible. But in making an appropriate choice, he must weigh his opportunities and the limitations of the environment, and assess the extent to which they will contribute to or detract from his securing a maximum degree of satisfaction in work and life. (71:493)

An exception to the irrevocable nature of the occupational choice was suggested by Hoppock in his "composite theory". He theorized that, "Occupational choice is always subject to change when we believe that a change will better meet our needs". (10:112) The basic premise upon which Hoppock based his composite theory was individual needs. He related that, "Occupations are chosen to meet needs. The occupation that we choose is
the one that we believe will best meet the needs that most concern us". (10:111-112) A similar approach was used by Small (103:95-96), Brill (2), and Segal (138).

Theories of occupational choices based on personal value systems were investigated by Rosenberg et al. (13:10-24) and Holland (79), respectively. Holland summarized his theory in these words, "People search for environments and vocations that will permit them to exercise their skills and abilities, to express their attitudes and values, to take on agreeable problems and roles, and to avoid disagreeable ones". (8) Payne studied the occupational choice processes of Georgia boys and concluded, "... that the educational expectation was typically formed first, followed by the occupational choice, with the decision concerning future place of residence being dependent upon the first two". (90:117)

According to the thesis of a paper prepared by Dole, the decisions involving educational and occupational positions should be treated separately. He contended that:

Occupational preference is likely by itself to be a poor basis for educational decision making. Educational planning, as a collaborative effort between guidance specialists, teachers, parents, and students, should take into account the inconsistency and immaturity of students. It should be more clearly identified as a development... As a counter to the very real pressures in our society for early occupational specificity (college choice), new guidance procedures seem strongly indicated which emphasize development in youngsters of readiness for sensible planning. (63:30-35)

Personal values, interests, and status aspirations were reported as determinants of educational choice by Dole.

The four most constant items across educational levels... more value of satisfaction, interest in ideas, and influence of experience, and of friends. Concordance between educational levels in the rank orders of the checklists, was moderately high. Values, influences,
and interests tended to be fairly closely and meaningfully related
to educational positions. (64:564-571)

Schwarzweller (99:246-256) conducted research with rural youth to
determine the relationship of value orientations in educational and
occupational choices. He investigated: (1) the relationship between
value orientations and the education and occupation choice-making
process; and (2) the structural antecedents of these value orientations.
Choice making was classified into two levels by Schwarzweller, namely,
aspirations and plans.

The findings support the general hypothesis that in education
and occupation decision process there is a relationship between
an individual's value orientations and the choice that an indi­
vidual makes from among the alternatives available. The findings
further suggest that the influence of values on choice decreases
as freedom of opportunity is restricted by the bonds of social
structure. (64:246)

Implications for further research involving values in the
educational and occupational choice processes were outlined by
Schwarzweller.

Educators and the public, alike, are expressing deep concern
with the problems of guiding youth in career planning. The
occupational choice process is an important frontier of social
change. On the one hand value orientations learned in the
socialization complex are factors in cultural continuity. On
the other hand value orientations learned in the socialization
complex are factors in structural change. The part played by
values in the balance between continuity and change seems
indicated as an area for... research. (64:246)

B. AGE AT WHICH VOCATIONAL CHOICES OCCUR

The age at which vocational choices occur is significantly
important to educators from the standpoint of providing occupational
information and vocational guidance at a time to permit the development
of realistic aspirations and expectations. Vocational choice processes
have been shown to be a continuously revised series of decisions throughout
an extended period of time. In reality this choice process begins at birth, reaches a peak of activity during adolescence, tapers off as one enters retirement, and ends only with complete disability or death.

A model was developed by Super (16:40-41) which provides a conceptual framework for understanding the behavior patterns which are characteristic of the vocational life stages.

Vocational Life Stages Proposed by Super

1. Growth Stage. (Birth - 14 years of age)

A self-concept is developed in this stage through identification with individuals constituting the reference group. The growth stage is characterized by three substages:

a. Fantasy (Age 4 - 10). Role-playing and fantasy reflect basic and perceived needs.

b. Interest (Age 11 - 12). Aspirations are formed from interests.

c. Capacity (Age 13 - 14). The individual begins to consider his abilities in relationship to job requirements and further training.

2. Exploration Stage. (Age 15 - 24 years)

Vocational exploration, examination of self, role, tryouts, and realistic appraisal are attempted through limited occupational experiences in the growth stage. This stage is terminated after finding a suitable occupation. Substages of the exploration stage are:

a. Tentative (Age 15 - 19). Tentative choices are made and evaluated for realism at this time.

b. Transition (Age 18 - 21). Reality considerations are weighed
more heavily as the youth enters professional training or the labor market.

c. Trial (Age 22 - 24). During this period, one or more beginning jobs are tried to determine suitability.

3. Establishment Stage. (Age 25 - 44)
The productive years are characterized by efforts to become established in a seemingly appropriate field. There may be limited shifting in the early periods of the establishment stage. Substages of this stage are:

a. Trial (Age 25 - 30). Limited shifting to allow for adjustment may occur within a kind of work or between unrelated jobs.

b. Stabilization (Age 31 - 44). Stability occurs with realization of a satisfactory adjustment to a kind of work. The tendency in the stabilization substage is to make a secure place in the world of work and to contribute to society in a constructive manner. These years are the creative years for most persons.

4. Maintenance Stage. (Age 45 - 64)
The concern at this stage is to hold on to the ground gained previously and to continue along an established career pattern.

5. Decline Stage. (Age 65 and older)
The age of 65 has generally been considered the time of retirement from active work and frequently this period is marked by a reduction in mental and physical alertness. The decline stage varies considerably among individuals depending upon health conditions. The substages of this life stage are:

a. Deceleration (Age 65 - 70 years). At this period of time, the
pace of work slackens with reduced capacities resulting in shifting of duties. Many persons develop interesting and sometimes profitable avocations or they enter part-time jobs to replace their full-time occupations.

b. Retirement (Age 71 and older). The mental and physical conditions of the aged influences the extent of active participation which is possible in retirement. There are great variations from person to person, but complete cessation of work comes in due course. For some, retirement may be pleasant, others may experience illness, and finally for all with the coming of death.

The majority of data available tends to support the model proposed by Super. Behavior found dysfunctional to the concept previously outlined was reviewed elsewhere in this study. It must be understood that considerable variation exists in the normal developmental behavior, consequently, behavior which does not follow the model proposed may not necessarily be abnormal for individuals having different characteristics from those described.

Research has concentrated primarily on the school-aged youth, because the development of vocational maturity is of major significance to an understanding of the vocational choice-making processes of the adolescent. Vocational maturity was studied by Lee who stated that, "Broadly defined it refers to the degree to which a person is willing and able to select a vocation which will be realistic, satisfying, and relatively permanent". (126) This definition was similar to the conclusions of Super and Overstreet (16:141-142) and LoCascio (128).

The literature has generally suggested that eighth or ninth grade students are not developmentally prepared to select a specific
occupation. It was concluded that they should be capable of making a tentative choice which would serve as a guideline in determining further education and training needs to become prepared for a cluster of occupations. Supporting this conclusion were LoCascio (128), Flores (119:40-41), Pinney (92:286-288), Super and Overstreet (16:149), and Kaplan (81:132).

It was concluded by most research reviewed that occupational information could be of significant value to youth undergoing vocational choices. If this information is to be of any value, it should be provided at an age when impressions are being established and decisions are being finalized. It was concluded by Super and Overstreet (16), Duncan (66:36), Kaplan (81:132), Cox et al. (62:30-31), Hill (123) and Lerman (127) that an introduction to the world of work should not come later than the ninth grade level and perhaps occupational information should be initiated in elementary and junior high school settings.

A unique study of the vocational preferences of deaf adolescents was conducted by Lerman. He implied that vocational information should be presented at an early age in the lives of students.

The results indicated that many aspects of vocational choice have already been determined at ages earlier than were previously suspected. Thus, the procedure of making information available to students only after they have reached their teens may have to be revised, since young deaf adolescents apparently have already established many of the guidelines they will use at later ages; perhaps vocational information should be disseminated at much younger ages when it could have more impact. (127)

C. UNREALISTIC CHOICES OR FAILURE TO CHOOSE VOCATIONS

Each year, thousands of youth depart their high schools for continued education or to find their respective places in the world of work. Some are successful, but others fail to attain a satisfactory
adjustment. When a satisfactory adjustment is made the individual concerned and society at large benefits. A failure to do so reflects unfavorably on the maladjusted person and his developmental environment. The agencies in society chiefly responsible for directing vocational choice behavior are the family group and the educational system. The failure of otherwise socially and psychologically well adjusted persons to choose vocations realistically may be traced to an unfavorable environmental condition in one or both of these institutions. One of the elements involved in realism of vocational choice is the matter of vocational maturity, an aspect studied by LoCascio (128) and further confirmed by Super and Overstreet.

Vocational maturity is the maturity of an individual's vocationally related behavior in his actual life stage (whether or not it is the life stage expected for him) as shown by his behavior in dealing with vocational developmental tasks as compared with the behavior of others dealing with the same developmental tasks. Vocational adjustment is judged by the extent to which vocational behavior results in the accomplishment of a developmental task with long-term satisfaction to the individual in meeting socialized objectives. (16:141-142)

Hoppock contended that irrational occupational choice behavior may be traced to "... one of three causes: inadequate information about themselves, inadequate information about occupations, or inability to think clearly. Inability to face reality is one kind of inability to think clearly". (10:112-113)

Haller et al. reviewed the factors influencing the realism of occupational choices. Several factors were examined to determine when a vocational choice is realistic or unrealistic. It was determined that vocational attainment and job satisfaction are dependent upon realistic occupational choice, but it is not easy to determine when a person's choice is realistic.
Briefly, an occupational choice is unrealistic when one of the following is true: (1) the occupation he chooses is changing—either becoming obsolete or changing its duties or rewards so that it will sooner or later be quite different from what he expects it to be; (2) his abilities or facilities are inadequate for the occupation he chooses; (3) his abilities or facilities greatly exceed the requirements of the occupation he chooses; (4) he is unwilling to get the training which is required for the occupation he chooses; (5) his occupational choice or training it requires is incompatible with other life decisions he has made. (31:17)

Ginzberg reported deviations from the normal patterns of occupational choice and the timing of crystallization.

In contrast to the normal variability in choice pattern and in the timing of crystallization, are deviations in the choice patterns or timing. We believe that the pattern is defective when, for example, a 17 year-old deals with his choice solely in terms of his interests without reference to his capacities or his values as would the typical 11-year old. . . . The second type of deviation is found when an individual is unable to crystallize his choice. . . . It is typified by the individual who is unable to make a choice, either because of a pathological passivity or because he is so pleasure-oriented that he cannot make the necessary compromises. (71:493)

A study of the older rural youth in Louisiana by Bertrand revealed several interesting findings concerning realistic occupational choices. He concluded that such individuals need vocational counseling, but this service is unavailable to a large number of the persons concerned.

The responses of older rural youth give many indications that they are at a time when guidance and counseling is sorely needed. In this connection a significant proportion of them have no definite plans for the future. Also, many of them have given serious thought to leaving their present occupation or location. Furthermore, a large number have not found a suitable person to whom they can go for personal guidance. With respect to the latter point, the majority would prefer counseling on a group basis but many persons would need individual attention. (20:51)

Inability to state an early occupational choice was not necessarily considered abnormal by Beilin.

While anywhere from twenty five to thirty five percent of youths apparently are unable to state an occupational choice, this is not necessarily dysfunctional for future occupational adjustment. Indeed, freezing of choice at an early age or even during the first two years of college may preclude an appropriate occupational choice in terms
of the individual's needs and the demands of the society. (48:53-57)

A similar viewpoint was expressed by Stephenson, "... to be 'realistic' in the sense of conformity with the actual occupational structure is to be 'unrealistic' in terms of the value system held out to American youth". (106:483) Stephenson reached the following conclusions based upon his research on the realism of vocational choice:

(1) A large percentage of every pre-work age group has made no occupational choice whatsoever; (2) For those who do make an occupational choice, there is a strong tendency to select from a narrow range of occupational titles; (3) These occupational choices are largely in the upper range of the occupational hierarchy, with a high percentage in the professions; (4) The distribution of occupational choices has very little correspondence either to the national or local distribution of job opportunities or to the father's occupation. (106:482)

Stephenson further explained these conclusions through certain aspects of sociological influences.

He indicated that... differential opportunity and socialization may play important roles in lack of occupational orientation rather than (or at least in addition to) inadequacy of vocational knowledge or guidance. For example, available evidence indicates it is the lower class youth who is least able to state a choice. (106:482)

The theories of vocational choice and associated deviations were presented for consideration as they relate to the vocational choice behavior of youth. An understanding of the vocational choice process may be confusing when conflicting theories are found to exist. However, this may suggest the possibility of the validity of many, if not all of them. "One theory may explain the behavior of some persons, but we may need another theory to explain the behavior of others." (10:111)

II. EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS
A. A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

A thorough analysis of educational and occupational choice processes requires an understanding of the concept of aspirations and expectations.
Kuvlesky and Bealer directed their efforts toward the clarification of this concept.

To avoid terminological confusion, it is important clearly to distinguish aspirations from the related, but qualitatively different idea of expectations. An aspiration refers to a person's orientation toward a goal. An expectation refers to the individual's indication of his anticipated attainment. Expectations should not be equated with aspirations, for the object involved with the former need not be a goal. Occupational aspiration will be used here to refer to a person's desire for ultimate occupational status attainment. (85:291)

Rehberg used the term "career orientation" and defined it "... as a form of goal oriented behavior consisting of an educational and occupational component, each component having an idealistic (aspirational) and a realistic (expectational) dimension". (133) There was agreement between Rehberg (133) and Kuvlesky and Bealer (85) concerning the concept of aspirations. The manner in which this concept could be useful in educational and occupational research was revealed by Kuvlesky and Bealer.

A weak positive relationship existed between aspiration and attainment, and the magnitude of the relationship varied markedly by level of aspiration and type of job attainment. It was concluded that adolescent aspirations are not good predictors of long-run attainment, but they do play a directional role. (85:290)

Of particular importance, Kohout and Rothney (82:10-21) found evidence to indicate that rates of congruence between aspiration and subsequent occupational placement vary by the nature of aspiration indicated — respondents desiring professions and farming more often attained their goals than respondents desiring other types of jobs. These findings appeared to be in direct contradiction to those of Kuvlesky and Bealer (85:300) who reported that aspirants to unskilled jobs, particularly blue collar ones, had by far the highest rate of congruence.

Schmidt and Rothney (97:142-146), in a longitudinal study tested the consistency of vocational choice during high school sophomore, junior,
and senior years. They found that only 35 percent of high school students were consistent in their vocational preferences over the three years of high school. Only two-thirds of this group actually entered their chosen occupations within six months after graduation. Trimble, in a similar study reported that, "Individuals were not able to determine subjectively whether or not their interests had significantly changed over the years". (142) A contradictory conclusion to those previously mentioned was reached by Kline (125) who found that vocational patterns of students showed consistency and stability through the high school years.

LoCascio studied vocational preference implementation and reported some surprising results.

Only 12 or 13 percent of the . . . high school graduates implementing their first preferences suggests that there is little commitment to preference at that time. . . . Only 44 percent had entered, by age 25, an occupation for which they expressed prior preference. It is suggested that young men are confronted with implementation of vocational preference before they have dealt with the prior task of specialization of vocational preference. (128)

It should be understood that one rarely exceeds his ambitions, and for this reason it is important that each individual aspire to the extent of his capacity. Success is thus dependent upon the ability of an individual to establish for himself realistic objectives and then to proceed toward his goal as directly as his facilities will permit. Goal attainment, is thus dependent upon a realistic appraisal of individual capabilities and limitations, and it is further limited by the availability of adequate educational and occupational preparation leading to ultimate occupational achievement.

B. EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONAL AND EXPECTATIONAL LEVELS

The educational and occupational aspirational levels frequently
establish the upper limits of attainment for the great majority of youth
as may be observed from analysis of the literature on the level of aspiration
and subsequent attainment. This viewpoint was confirmed by Haller et al.

The level of occupation to which a person aspires can be measured. Some youths who are interested in their future aspire to occupations which society evaluates highly. We say such persons have high levels of occupational aspiration. Others aspire to occupations society evaluates less highly, or have low levels of occupational aspiration. Research has shown that, on the whole, the level of occupation a person finally enters is related to his earlier aspiration level. High aspirers tend to enter the higher jobs and low aspirers to enter the lower jobs. (31:6)

The tendency of youth to aspire toward the higher status occupations, which require greater educational preparation for attainment is well documented by research. Haller reported that, "... levels of occupational achievement are correlated with levels of educational and occupational aspiration". (74:355) "Low level of occupational aspiration could be due to a low level of educational aspiration." (74:361) Rosen studied the achievement syndrome and reported certain psychological dimensions of social stratification.

Aspiration levels determine the areas in which excellence and effort take place. An individual may have great internal drive and be willing to plan and work hard. However, if these efforts are not directed into paths that lead to mobility, the individual is not likely to rise very much in social status. Aspirations must be directed toward high vocational positions along with the desire to obtain the education required for that occupation. (96:203-211)

Vertical social and occupational mobility is an inherent possibility in the American democratic concept. Educational and occupational achievement are closely related to upward social mobility. Education attainment is the "key" to rapid advancement up the occupational hierarchy. There exists a relationship of a college degree to white collar occupations which provides the prestige so highly esteemed in society. This relationship was implicated by Schwarzweller (98:152-167) and Eckland.
Employment in a nonmanual occupation is almost guaranteed by the attainment of a college diploma, quite independently of either academic ability or class background, thus assuring the upward mobility of graduates from manual origins and the stability of graduates from nonmanual origins. (67:744)

Heath surveyed the literature on occupational status and contributed certain generalizations.

The literature revealed that occupational attainment was a function of several variables not the least of them being educational and occupational aspirations, and educational attainment. Theory and research also linked these last three factors to the cumulative effects of scholastic achievement. Thus, indirectly, scholastic achievement could be tied to post high school training and to eventual occupational status. Those respondents who did not experience additional schooling after high school were largely destined for low status, mostly unskilled occupations. (121)

Family social status has been found to be positively correlated with aspirational and expectational levels by numerous investigators. Taves provided some helpful guidance on the interpretation of the data on aspirations, "... it should be remembered that aspirations to upward mobility are characteristic of United States society in general and that stated aspirations of high school students are often higher than they may sincerely believe they will achieve". (44:18) However, Rosen (135) and Sain (137) found occupational preferences and expectations to be largely the same.

In his study of high and low income groups of high school graduates, Taves (44:2-3), reported that a third of the graduates in both groups had aspired to a professional vocation, while nearly half aspired to professional, managerial, or administrative positions. The proportion aspired to by the graduates was five times as great as such positions actually held by the fathers of these graduates. Stephenson (106:482-494) also reported that occupational choice distribution in
his research corresponded poorly to either the national or local distribution of job opportunities, or to the occupations held by their fathers. Similar data were reported by Burchinal (24), Payne (90), Bertrand and Smith (22), Edelfson and Crowe (28), and Jordan et al. (34).

In a study reported by Curtis (117:26), students enrolled in a predominantly white high school aspired to educational and occupational levels that were about the same as that achieved by their parents. It was found in a companion study (118:24), involving a predominantly Negro high school, that participating students aspired to occupational and educational goals that were much higher than that achieved by their parents. Wide discrepancies were found by Jordan et al. between the occupational plans of the students surveyed and the projected United States needs for 1970 in certain occupational categories. "Nearly 42 percent of the students chose professional, technical, and kindred occupations, while the projected need for 1970 for these occupations is only about 14 percent of the work force." (34:33)

Drabick investigated student aspirations in certain Negro high schools and reported findings at variance with those previously reviewed.

The occupational aspirations of many of the students were quite low. Only half of them desired occupations above the prestige level of 60 on the North-Hatt Scale. . . It is perhaps significant that this score tends to separate the managerial from the entrepreneurial occupations. Further, relatively few students expressed even a 'desire' for occupations in the highest prestige ranges.

Students decreased their aspirations when requested to name the occupations they actually expected to occupy. More than two-thirds of the vocational agricultural students anticipated employment in occupations below the prestige rank of 70. . . In other words, most expected that their employment would enjoy no more prestige, say, than that of a tenant farmer or a garage mechanic. (65:258)

Educational aspirations of the students responding to Drabick's
survey were analyzed, and the results were found to be considerably more optimistic than the data on occupational aspirational levels. The majority of the students indicated they would like to attend college.

A third of the sample indicated that they had plans to attend college immediately following high school graduation and a fourth were able to name the college in which they would be enrolled. . . . These latter figures were uncommonly high and represent continued educational plans for considerably more of these students than was true of a comparable sample of white students. (65:258)

The findings of Conners revealed that:

When measured in terms of social prestige, the jobs the Negroes aspire to, and actually expect to have, do not differ significantly from the jobs which white boys desire and expect. . . . Job expectations of Negroes were found to be less realistic than of Whites. (116)

Students enrolled in vocational agriculture were compared to those in other study programs by Drabick who reported, "The aspirations of vocational agriculture students were lower than those seniors enrolled in other curricula. They neither desired nor anticipated occupations of as high prestige. . . ." as other students. (65:268) Shill reported similar findings:

. . . respondents without vocational agriculture training tended to have higher educational aspirations and expectations than those with such training. However, seniors with vocational agriculture training tended to have educational aspirations that were more closely aligned to their expectations than those without such training. (140:xi)

It was found that seniors . . . who participated in vocational agriculture training tended to select agriculture-related occupations more often than those who had not participated in such training. (140:xii)

The differences observed in aspirational and expectational levels of vocational agricultural students and those not having had such training,
may be the result of unidentified factors associated with family status and values. Vocational agricultural enrollment at the high school level in the Southern states is predominantly composed of rural boys of farm family origin. Rural youth have been found to aspire towards and expect lower levels than students of urban backgrounds. Earlier studies conducted by Haller and Sewell (77:407-411), Burchinal (54:107-121), Middleton and Grigg (88:347-354), Slocum (42), Beals (114), and Siemens and Driedger (40:37) all reported lower educational and occupational aspirations among farm boys than among non-farm boys.

It was found by Haller (75:137) and Burchinal (54:107-121) that planning to farm exerted a depressing effect on the educational and occupational aspirational levels of rural male students.

Haller reported that his research, "... shows that planning to enter farming acts as a deterrent toward planning to enter college, in that fewer farm boys who plan to farm plan to go to college. Farm boys who plan to go to college also have higher intelligence test scores than those who do not, and those who plan to farm have lower scores than others. Contrary to expectations, however, the adverse influence of planning to farm on planning to go to college is strongest among the most intelligent farm boys. The blocking of college training by plans to farm that are actually carried out, may offer a partial explanation for the low levels of urban occupational achievement of farm-reared persons, and no doubt is personally and socially dysfunctional. (75:137)

Through additional research on the occupational achievement of rural people, Haller concluded that:

The depressing effect of farm plans on levels of occupational aspirations cannot be attributed to plans regarding college. ... nor simply due to the farm youth's recognition of the role of advanced education in high level occupational achievement. (74:362)

A statewide study of Washington conducted by Slocum did not confirm the findings previously reported regarding aspirational levels of rural youth.
On the contrary, more farm than non-farm boys aspired and expected to go to college and to obtain a college degree. Farm boys planning to farm did not have lower educational aspirations and expectations than other farm boys. . . . Changes in reference group values appear to provide a partial explanation for the unexpected findings. Possible reasons for changes in educational values of farm parents are suggested. (102:269)

Elias studied farm youths' appraisal of their adjustments as compared with other youth in the state of Washington. Two of the findings of his investigation are pertinent:

1. Three out of four youth planned on continuing their education after high school graduation, if possible. This included approximately 82 percent of the boys. . . of the upper group, and 63 percent of the lower group.

2. Of those young people who did not plan on continuing their education, approximately one-third to one-half had a vocation in mind that did not require further education. Approximately one-fourth mentioned having spent enough time in school. (29:41)

Community of orientation has been associated with the educational and occupational aspirational levels of youth. Grigg and Middleton (73:307-308) reported a positive association between size of community of orientation and occupational aspirations for the ninth grade male students surveyed in Florida. A Mississippi study revealed that, "Seniors in large schools tended to have higher educational aspirations and lower expectations than those in small schools". (140:xi) A Canadian study by Boyle showed that, "Residents of cities more frequently planned to attend college than did residents of smaller communities, but except for cities, distinctions of community size showed no relation to college plans". (52:291-292)

Previous research findings have indicated that significant differences between social classes may exist for the educational and occupational aspirations and expectations of youth. Youmans concluded
that, "Youth from families of higher social status made better use of existing opportunities than did youth from families of lower social status. The home, school and the community tended to reinforce this system of social privilege". (112:27-28)

Socioeconomic status was found significantly associated with educational and occupational aspirational and expectational levels by Sewell et al. (100:67), Sewell et al. (101:359-365), Haller et al. (31:6), Haller and Sewell (78:52-55), Lowe (130:xiv-xvi), Jeffrey (32:22-23), Edelfson and Crowe (28:22-23), Bishop et al. (23:10-26), Goetz (72:338-349), Jordan et al. (34:31-34), and Siemens (38:61). Holloway and Berreman (80:56-60) concurred with these findings on occupational aspirations, but they found that educational aspirations did not vary directly with class status.

Heckhausen concluded that the level of aspiration is a result of a conflict among the following needs:

(a) to choose a high level of difficulty in order to achieve maximum success; (b) to choose a low level of difficulty in order to meet with as little failure as possible; and (c) to choose a moderate level of difficulty whose mastery still appears possible and whose outcome is most likely to predict exactly. (7:91)

III. FACTORS INFLUENCING VOCATIONAL CHOICES

Knowledge of the extent to which certain factors influence vocational choices of students is needed to make an honest appraisal of the vocational choice process of youth. Numerous studies have been conducted and the findings indicate that certain environmental factors consistently show a positive relationship to the vocational choices of young people. Looney selected seven areas which were assumed likely to
contribute to the making of vocational decisions. "These areas are as follows: (1) home and family experience; (2) community experience; (3) school experience, other than recognized vocational guidance; (4) experiences recognized as vocational guidance; (5) work experience; (6) eligibility for military service; and (7) other forces." (129:2)

Positive relationships were established with all variables except eligibility for military service which appeared to be virtually non-existent. (129:88)

Haller et al. identified five factors influencing occupational choices. These include:

1. the youth's occupational decisions and concerns, including interest in the future, level of occupational aspirations, and particular occupational choices.

2. changes in occupations themselves, including obsolescence, new duties for old occupations, a general rise in the skills required for most occupations, closer dependence of occupations on formal education, and the increasing supply of trained people.

3. the immediate situation of the youth including his physical facilities, namely, the accessibility and quality of schools and his financial resources, and also the expectations of others like parents, teachers, counselors and the dominant culture which influence his own self-conceptions and sometimes affect his actual job chances.

4. other life decisions including education, marriage, and preferred residence.

5. the youth's personality including his measured intelligence, his conception of his ability, his occupational self-conceptions and his ability, his occupational self-conceptions and his conceptions of behavior appropriate to his sex. (31:4-5)

The interaction of these five factors creates a complex process of choosing an occupation. This extremely important and difficult task must be accomplished by most young persons as they proceed through the high school years. According to Haller et al. (31:5) the five factors
mentioned are in a delicate but moving balance. A change in one variable ultimately causes a shift in the other factors, some small and some large, which in turn causes the student to re-evaluate his occupational choices. Strong (108:336) reached similar conclusions.

Factors influencing educational choices were studied by Slocum (102:276). Four primary factors were selected for investigation, namely, economic influence, family educational values, and school influences. A significantly positive relationship to educational aspirations of the students surveyed existed for all categories except that no significant difference could be found between farm and nonfarm students on any indicator of interest in school.

It was suggested by Siemens and Jackson that there are four major factors which influence a student in the fulfillment of the youth's educational and occupational plans. These factors are: "... (1) the student's innate ability, (2) the financing of an extended period of training, (3) the motivation of the student, and (4) the social acceptance of such training on the part of the student's elders and peers". (39:42) The major findings of a study conducted by Curtis (117:28) generally indicated that family related factors exceeded the importance of the school related factors in their influences upon educational and occupational choices of high school students.

The immensity of properly treating all the factors known to influence educational and occupational choices of youth exceeds the limitations of this study. It was decided to concentrate upon the factors which could be controlled or at least influenced by the public secondary school system of Louisiana. Attention was focused on each of the factors selected for analysis through a review of the pertinently
related literature.

A. AVAILABILITY OF OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

Prudent decisions are normally based upon an individual's knowledge of his vocational interest, abilities, use of the various sources of occupational information, number of sources of occupational information, and social class status. The findings of Phillips (132) tended to support this assumption. Similar conclusions were reached by Kaufman et al.

When choices that do not follow from previous decisions are made, the individual must accept the cost involved. In the case of the vocational graduate, one of the inevitable costs of such a change is the loss of the investment, both personal and social, made in obtaining skills that are not used. (35:12-5)

The public school agency charged with the provision of occupational information to high school students is the vocational guidance service which is an integral part of the Louisiana high school administrative structure. Guidance counselors are the individuals who are chiefly responsible for providing vocational guidance services in high schools where such programs exist. Classroom teachers may also supply occupational information to students. Super defined the vocational guidance process at the high school level in the following manner:

Vocational guidance is the process of helping a person to develop and accept an integrated and adequate picture of himself and his role in the world of work to test this concept against reality, with satisfaction to himself and benefit to society. (111:81)

The availability of adequate occupational information to the student undergoing the vocational development process has been established as a very important and crucial factor mediating a satisfactory adjustment. Kaufman et al. concluded that such
information was not readily available to the majority of students.

Most young people of high school age have very limited occupational knowledge. Such information as they have is more often based on popular myths and stereotypes rather than on actual facts. In the absence of information, occupational decisions are either postponed until after high school or made because of identification with a particular social class. If a decision is made, it is typically changed after the individual leaves school. (35:13-6)

It appeared from the responses of male students who participated in a study conducted by Curtis (117:20) that a high degree of self confidence existed in the perception of students concerning their knowledge of expected occupations. Forty percent of the students reported they had good knowledge because they had studied about it, and 39 percent of the respondents indicated they had general knowledge but did not know much about the duties of the occupation they expected to enter.

Numerous studies revealed that additional occupational information was desired by students, even among those who had indicated a choice. These findings were supported by Pinney (92:287), Speer and Jasker (105:15-17), Auten (46:178), Kaufman et al. (35:13-6), Curtis (117:26-27), Edelfson and Crowe (28:22-23), and Super and Overstreet (16:141-142). A study of occupations was found helpful in crystallizing and stabilizing vocational choices by Hill (123), Recktenwald (95:223), Venn (113:17), Cox et al. (62:30-31), Caplan et al. (56:129-135), Chansky (58:41), Baker (47:37-38), and Haller et al. (31:7). These authors recommended that a thorough program in occupational information be presented to students throughout their schooling period, from elementary school through employment in a satisfactory occupation.

The problem of unrealistic vocational choices is not new as seen from the conclusions of Meyers who wrote that, "Graduates of 1946 were facing the employment outlook no more realistically than those of 1940. . ."
He concluded that, "Students either are not receiving adequate information as to the employment outlook or they refuse to face facts". (87:333)

Perhaps both of his conclusions are relevant, but it has been consistently reported that vocational counseling was inadequate, especially for students who were not engaged in college preparatory curricula.

Researchers who confirmed the general lack of knowledge of the world of work by high school students were: Pinney (92:287), Kaufman et al. (35:12-6), Curtis (117:26), Auten (46:178), Speer and Jasker (105:16), Edelfson and Crowe (28:22-23), Looney (129:88), Taves et al. (44:2-3), and Jordan et al. (34:4-18).

An extensive Pennsylvania study conducted by Kaufman et al. (35:4-18) revealed some significant findings which indicated the failure of the educational system in general and the vocational guidance programs in particular to provide sufficient occupational information to the non-college oriented student. It was consistently found that most of the guidance personnel were college-oriented in their role perception. It was reported that guidance personnel depended upon the student to take the initiative in obtaining information needed to make a vocational choice. Vocational counselors were consulted least of all by vocational students regarding course choices or occupational plans.

Among the vocational graduates about one-half recalled discussing their job plans. Among the academic graduates about three-fourths reported discussing their course choices and about one-third reported discussing job plans. Neither of these sets of figures is reassuring, but the direction of the differences should cause the most concern. . . . The primary reason for the inadequate counseling was the unrealistic student-counselor ratio. On the average in the senior high schools this ran about 440 students to one counselor. . . . The handicap of this ratio is coupled with the fact that typically counselors spend most of their time with college-bound students. . . . By any criterion, guidance, as
currently carried on, was one of the major weaknesses found in this study of vocational education. (35:12-6)

Curtis (117:11) found that male students predominantly indicated that the availability of counseling service was excellent and that occupational information in their school was good. However, it was noted that course choices were discussed with guidance counselors by only 45 percent and with teachers by 30 percent of the students, respectively. Occupational plans were discussed with counselors by 30 percent of the students and with teachers by only 19 percent of the students, respectively. It was observed that respondents having been counseled by teachers or counselors increased from approximately 10 to 15 percent among tenth-grade males to 25 to 30 percent for twelfth grade male students. Only among twelfth-grade male students were there more than 50 percent of the respondents who had ever been counseled on course choices or occupational plans by a guidance counselor or a teacher. It was reported by Slocum that, "Significantly higher proportions of farm than nonfarm boys reported having discussed their educational and occupational plans with teachers and counselors". (41:37-38)

The sources utilized by students in obtaining occupational information were studied by Looney (129:87-88), Speer and Jasker (105:15-17) and Curtis (117). These sources included family members, school personnel, persons in the occupation of interest, friends, courses of study, reading materials, news media, and work experiences. It was concluded by Looney (129:88) and Auten (46:176) that properly organized, practical work experiences contained one of the most frequently mentioned motives contributing to vocational choices. Thus, the value of on-the-job
experience and first-hand knowledge cannot be denied as having a significant and important place in an occupational information program. The values of occupational experience was emphasized by Baer and Roeber. "Occupational experience can be defined as experiences with the world of work and education that provokes reaction. Occupational information can be a part of such dynamic experiences." (1:12)

B. INDIVIDUAL INFLUENCES

An individual is usually influenced most by those with whom he is closely associated. As a rule then it appears that those persons in the home reference group are chiefly responsible for the vocational influence upon students. Results of a study by Peters "... seemed to substantiate the general belief that the home is the greatest single agency for the determination of a vocation for the young people of our country". (91:430)

It was determined by the majority of sources reviewed that reference groups influencing vocational choices of students were generally the family group, peer group, persons engaged in occupations of interest to the student, and school personnel. Researchers who reported these findings were: Sain (137), Marr (131), Bertrand and Smith (22), Bishop et al. (23:7-10), Elias (29:41), Taves et al. (44:3), Edelfson and Crowe (28:22-23), Haller et al. (31:9-11), Curtis (117:12-13), Slocum (42), Anderson et al. (45:8-10), Peters (91:430), and Garrison (70:251). It was generally concluded by the sources mentioned that in the family reference group, the mother was more frequently influential in educational choices, whereas the father was more often indicated as responsible for influencing the occupational
plans of boys. Parental influences were found more important for students in junior high school than in senior high school (68:99-101) Other family members and relatives contributed some significant influence. Within the peer group, the greatest influences on educational choices were friends. For occupational plans, friends and a person in the occupation of interest were considered approximately equal in the extent of their influence. "A very important factor in the vocational choices of boys seems to be the influence of successful persons actually engaged in that type of work." (68:99-101) Haller and Butterworth (76:291) concluded that peer interactions influence occupational and educational aspirations of adolescent boys.

Persons comprising the high school faculty and staff were generally the least influential of any reference group on the vocational choices of students. School personnel found to be most influential were guidance counselors and academic teachers, respectively, who were found to influence educational choices to a greater extent than occupational decisions.

Cobb and Cardozier (61:32) reported that students' belief in themselves had the greatest influence on choice of curriculum. Curricular choices are probably related to eventual occupational and educational choices, and as a consequence, it would appear that those persons influencing curricular choices might also exert an impression upon the vocational choices of youth. Persons influencing the curricular choices of vocational students were ranked in the following order by Cobb and Cardozier (61:30-32): the student himself, teachers, mother, father, classmates and friends, guidance counselor, sibs, upper classmates, and the principal. Teacher influencing curricular choices by
subjects were the home economics and vocational agriculture teachers for girls and boys, respectively, followed by English teachers.

The tendency of youth to rely upon the family reference group for vocational counsel was explained by Anderson et al. as the functionally normal pattern.

Youth tend to follow the educational and occupational guidelines formulated for them by their parents. . . . Inaction on the part of parents forces the child to seek assistance from lower-order reference groups. In effect, this is demanding that such reference groups carry out responsibilities which are appropriate to parental roles. (45:8-9)

C. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

The school has long been considered in the American tradition to exert a favorable influence upon the educational and occupational values held by youth. This supposition may be considered accurate to the extent that future occupational success is related to educational achievement. Previously established was the determination that the American educational system and its personnel are predominantly college oriented and that primary emphasis in the high schools is toward the professions or other occupations requiring an academic education for attainment. The conditions described have tended to produce a negative reaction to the influence of the school environment on vocational plans of youth, especially among the lower achieving students and those from the lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Researchers were not entirely in agreement on the extent of the school influence on career choices. Among those who found that the school does not play a major role in influencing high school students in choosing a career were Endicott (68:99-101), Pinney (92:287), Sain
(137), Curtis (117:28), and Kaufman et al. (35:12-6). It appeared from a study of the findings of these authors that school influence on occupational choices tended to be less important than its influence on educational choices.

There was found some evidence in favor of the influence of the school upon vocational choices, but this influence seemed to be associated to a greater extent with the encouragement for obtaining additional education following high school (117:11). Looney concluded that, "The experiences offered by the curriculum of the high school appeared to be the most important single element affecting the vocational choice of college freshmen". (129:88) Kaplan studied the relationship of interest to age and vocational choice. His findings seemed to identify the role of the school in vocational choice making.

It is significant that the vocational interests which developed through school influences showed the highest survival values. Apparently, our schools play a larger role in the determination of vocational interests than any other agency in our society. They enable students to appraise more accurately their own capabilities, and they frequently stimulate the development of interests which culminate in vocational choice. (81:132)

It was found by Boyle that the population composition of a high school had an important effect on the aspirations of its students. He reported a stronger influence among larger cities than for smaller communities. It was concluded that, "... partial explanation for this effect is the differential success of high schools in developing the scholastic abilities of their students". (53:639) Smith and Bertrand provided a plausible explanation:

The curriculum outlined for rural high schools in Louisiana is in keeping with high standards of education. However, no special program is available for students in smaller rural
schools and these students are handicapped because of limited curricula offerings in vocational and other subjects not prescribed as mandatory. (43:4)

Vocational training was found to exert a stabilizing influence upon the vocational planning of students enrolled in such programs, according to Shill:

... respondents without vocational agriculture training tended to have higher educational aspirations and expectations than those with such training. However, seniors with vocational agriculture training tended to have educational aspirations that were more closely aligned to their expectations than those without such training. Seniors in large schools tended to have higher educational aspirations and lower expectations than those in small schools (140:xi)

It was found that seniors... who participated in vocational agriculture training tended to select agriculture-related occupations more often than those who had not participated in such training. (140:xii)

D. HOME ENVIRONMENT

The home has long been considered the fundamental institution in society whose function has been to rear up youth and imbue them with a system of values considered acceptable to the culture involved. This thesis was confirmed by Peters whose results"... seemed to substantiate the general belief that the home is the greatest single agency for the determination of a vocation for the young people of our country". (91:430) Ginzberg aptly summarized the role of the family as follows:

... the family continues to exercise an important influence on the occupational choices of the younger generation. For it is as a member of a family that he is encouraged to follow one path and discouraged from following another, even if only indirectly through his absorption of familial attitudes and values. (6:18)

The influence of the family on the value systems perceived by the
child, who is a product of this environment, cannot be disputed where the home is a truly functional institution. The extent to which individuals are influenced by the home environment may then be related to the degree the home succeeds in internalizing its value system by youthful family members. Research has shown that the home influence varies in proportion to certain family related variables. Siemens found that educational and occupational aspirational levels of boys related significantly to the following family factors: "... size of community of orientation, socio-economic status, father's occupational status, father's and mother's educational achievement and strength of father's and mother's encouragement for post-high school education". (38:i) It was further stated that, "Ethnic background of family and normal versus broken home situation failed to relate significantly at any point". (38:ii) Bishop et al. reported that, "... the family level-of-living variable was found the most significant in determining the amount of education planned and the kind of career desired. ... In summary, apparently the higher level of living, the longer a boy or girl expected to stay in school and the longer the parents expected them to study". (23:37-38) Supporting these findings were Jeffrey (32:22-23), Goetz (72:349), Miller and Form (12), Jordan et al. (34:32), Hollingshead (9), Haller et al. (31:6), Krauss (83:867), Looney (129:86), Curtis (117:28), Bertrand and Smith (22), and Sewell et al. (100:72-73).

A divergence of findings concerning the influence of place of residence was noted by Bishop et al., from the results reported
by Siemens (38), and other researchers. "Place of residence, which for many years pointed out major difference between rural and urban youth, is in many cases no longer an important factor in educational and vocational desires of youth." (23:38)

Research among lower socioeconomic status families in recent years has tended to indicate that the home has decreased its effectiveness to instill higher order value systems within its youth. Some lower-class characteristics which may be seen as adversely affecting the child's socialization to the middle-class values and norms espoused by the school, have been advanced by Miller:

1. The community, and not the home, is the basic social unit. Social relationships are principally informal, age-graded one-sex groupings which are more important than the family unit itself.

2. Family structure is centered around a female-based household. The father comprises an unstable, undependable, or entirely absent member of the family unit. The serial monogamy pattern of marriage (a succession of temporary mates) is common. In 35 to 40 percent of lower-class families the parental role is assumed predominantly by the female. (36:43)

Siemens commented that, "The evidence then suggests the social class differences in child-rearing practices and home environment are such as to favor the prospects for achievement and 'success' of higher-class children and to hinder such prospects for lower-class children". (38:43)

It was reported by Auten (46:177) that the home influences play only a small and insignificant part in the vocational choices of youth. Other studies which tended to support his findings were Johnson (124:xii), Cowhig et al. (26:34), Warner and Abegglen (17), and Beilin (115).

E. PHYSICAL AND MENTAL CAPABILITY

Success in a chosen endeavor is dependent upon many variables,
one of which is a compatible matching of abilities and skills to the task undertaken. Super proposed a "theory of vocational development" in a series of propositions which tend to explain the relationship of physical and mental capabilities to vocational choice making.

1. People differ in their abilities, interests, and personalities.

2. They are qualified by virtue of these characteristics, each for a number of occupations.

3. Each of these occupations requires a characteristic pattern of abilities, interests, and personality traits, with tolerance wide enough, however, to allow both some variety of occupations for each individual and some variety of individuals in each occupation. (110:189)

Haller et al. made some observations concerning the relationship of individual personality and ability factors to occupational choice behavior.

In relation to occupational choice, probably the two most important personality factors are intelligence and the belief one has about himself and his opportunities.

Measured intelligence. Intelligence test scores are related to academic performance and to the amount of schooling attained. High scorers are much more likely to do well in school than low scorers. Test scores are used to decide who may enter college. They are also related to level of occupational achievement: those entering the higher occupations score higher on intelligence tests. Clearly, the measures of intelligence occupy an important place in the system of forces influencing the choice of an occupation.

Self-conceptions. The beliefs one has about himself influence what he does, and as stated are largely molded by others. Self-conceptions important here are those concerning (1) ability, (2) occupation, and (3) behaviors appropriate to one's sex. (31:12)

Curtis (117:20) found that high school students generally assessed their ability to perform this expected occupation as "good". It was reported by Auten that possession of abilities and special skills had little effect on vocational choices:

Senior students did not, in general, tend to select vocations related to assumed abilities and special skills which they
believed they possessed and in which they had practiced through contests, clubs, or other after school activities. Most senior students chose vocations in keeping with expected educational plans. (46:177)

Bertrand (51:230) implied that higher early grades tended to correlate with higher educational and occupational aspirations in subsequent student performance. A positive relationship between intelligence levels and aspirational levels was also reported by Forcere and Siemens:

In summary, then, the most reliable indicator and potential predictor of youth aspiration levels, insofar as can be judged from these data, would be Grade Nine examination scores. And, more than predictors, grades may well prove intermediary variables affecting aspiration levels, whether grades conform to student ability or not.

Examination grades are the most important measures the student has available of his academic competence. When, whether from lack of ability, lack of motivation, or whatever, the student achieves poor grades he may become stigmatized, continued poor examination grades and low aspirations are merely in conformance with the student's self-image. (30:25)

Caro and Pihlblad reported that, "Academic aptitude was considered as an important factor mediating social class difference in occupational orientations". (57:473) Supporting these authors were Heath (121), Moser (89:460-461), Tétreau (141), Hill (123), Clark and Gist (59:683), and Kaplan (81:131).

Eckland stated his conclusions concerning intelligence and achievement in the following manner:

A graduate's achievement is not altered by either class origin or academic ability, except to the extent that ability affects his choice of fields and the extent and nature of his postgraduate education. (67:744)

Curtis (117:27) reported from his data that some students in the
survey probably held unrealistic plans in terms of their academic ability. These findings were substantiated by Bender et al., who found that, "Boys with low levels of aptitude tended to have aspirations above their capability level, but boys with high aptitude levels had aspirations below their capability level". (50:278) A study by Severansky revealed, "... that introverts tended to aspire to occupations above their intellectual level while extroverts tended to aspire to occupations below their intellectual level. (139)

F. PERSONAL VALUE SYSTEMS

Personal value systems are the major determining factors in vocational choices according to Raylesburg.

Most occupations are sufficiently complex to lend themselves to many preceptions, and hence different individuals may perceive the same occupation differently. . . Occupations perceived as in harmony with values will be considered of interest while those perceived as not will be viewed with disinterest. . . . Evidence would seem to indicate that most occupations have room for people with diverse personality patterns provided they can select an aspect of the occupation in harmony with their value structure abilities. (94:198)

Perceived interests and needs are conditioned by espoused values, hence, "Occupations are chosen to meet needs. . . . Needs may be intellectually perceived or they may be only vaguely felt as attractions. . .". (10:111) Hess (122) reported that there were significant relationships discovered between work values and vocational interests. Schaffer (14:1) found that job satisfaction varied directly with the extent to which the needs of an individual can be satisfied in an occupation. Reporting agreement with the
relationship of occupational interests, needs, and work values were Small (103:29), Roe (134), Marr (131), Forer (5:361), Rude (136), Rosenberg (13), Hollingshead (9), Schwarzweller (99:246), Garbin (120:183), Johnson (124:128), Jordan et al. (34:32), and Straus (107:408).

Research was conducted by Curtis (117:18) to determine which values tend to exert the greatest influence on vocational choices of youth. It was found that interest in the work, salary or wages, and personal satisfaction, respectively, ranked considerably higher in importance than other reasons given by high school students as influencing their vocational choices. Similar findings were reported by Johnson (124:128). Lehman and Witty (86:287) found that the occupational choices were influenced by expectation of a large monetary reward, followed by obtaining social approval, and least of all, the lure of an easy life. Financial rewards and incentives were found most influential in job acceptance by Taves (44:3), Clark (4), and Bell (49:61).

G. VOCATIONAL LIMITATIONS

Vocational limitations have been defined as considerations which deter individuals from entering specific occupations, namely, military service obligations, unfavorable working conditions, unattractive wages or salary, lack of job experience or educational background, migration requirements, inadequate financial backing, and labor union controls. Individuals making vocational choices must consider and overcome such barriers to entry into certain
occupations if they are to become successful in attaining the job positions desired.

Approximately 30 to 50 percent of the male seniors surveyed by Shill (140:260) indicated the primary reason they would not enter their aspired occupations was lack of necessary abilities or skills. Inability to continue education beyond the high school level was also reported as a significant limitation. Physical defects were reported in approximately five to ten percent of the cases.

Lack of necessary abilities or skills was the primary reason for failure to enter the aspired occupation as indicated by 22 percent of the boys involved in a study by Curtis (117:18). Length of preparation or training time was indicated by 10 percent of the respondents. Continuing education was considered impossible by eight percent and physical handicaps were indicated by four percent of the students. It was interesting to note that 43 percent of the students involved in Curtis' study believed that vocational limitations would not deter them from entering their desired occupation.

Curtis (117:22) requested students to indicate the primary reason why they might not attain their desired educational goal. The percentages of students responding to each item provided a measure of the importance of each reason given. Ranked in order of their importance, with their respective percentages of response, were: lack of ability, 24 percent; loss of interest, 14 percent; lack of finances, 13 percent; responsibility, eight percent; and lack of encouragement, four percent. It was observed that 36 percent of the
respondents were uncertain of any reason which might deter them from attaining their desired educational goal.

Financial aid for higher education or for becoming established in an occupation could be a major obstacle for students of lower socioeconomic levels. Parents were listed by students as the primary source of financial aid for additional education and job entry in a study by Curtis (117:18-22). Jeffrey (32:23) reported that boys from all level-of-living groups tended to expect more financial aid from their parents than the parents indicated they could provide. "More financial help with schooling appeared to be available to boys than the amount of help available to get started in an occupation." (32:23)

Boys from all three levels of living were likely to overestimate the amount of financial assistance, again indicating the need for more discussions of financial matters between teenagers and parents.

Boys from small families were more likely than boys from large families to expect parents to provide most of the money they would need for getting started in an occupation. More boys and mothers from large families expected little help to be provided. No statistically significant difference caused by family size appeared in father's answers. (23:25-26)

Summary

It appeared from a review of related literature that the environmental conditions surrounding students are influential in vocational decisions of youth. Research has indicated that students are poorly informed of the world of work and they lack the necessary skills and abilities to successfully compete for status positions in
the occupational hierarchy. Numerous researchers have concluded that the public educational system is the agency most capable of providing the education and training so seriously needed by youth if they are to successfully compete in the world of work.

Recommendations have been proposed for the initiation of vocational education for all individuals with a goal of "a marketable skill for each youth and adult". (93:10). Congressman Pucinski underlined the pressing needs of vocational education in the following way:

We need to prepare young people for the fulfilment of participating in a meaningful way in the world of work. We need to keep a trillion dollar economy operating. (93:10)
CHAPTER III

TREATMENT AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

The objectives of this investigation were the following:

1. To determine the status of educational and occupational aspirations and expectations of vocational agricultural students.

2. To establish the relationship of selected factors to the career choices of high school youth.

3. To identify persons who influence student vocational choices.

4. To define limitations deterring individuals from attaining their vocational aspirations.

The Descriptive Survey Method, with the Group Interview Technique, was used in this study. Data were obtained through the mass administration of a multiple choice interview schedule to a selected sample of 741 vocational agricultural students, during March and April, 1968. See Appendixes A, B, and C for the interview schedule and answer sheets. Students in grades nine through twelve attending the 17 public secondary schools surveyed, were permitted to participate in this investigation as a result of a cooperative arrangement between five Louisiana parish school systems and the School of Vocational Education, Louisiana State University. The school-parish distribution of the sample, by grade levels, is
presented in Appendix E. The geographical location of schools surveyed is portrayed in Figure 1.

Statistical procedures utilized for analyzing the data were number and percent distribution, the chi-square test of significance, and the coefficient of contingency. A correction factor was applied to the contingency coefficients, for adjusting the fineness of grouping. This correction factor also served to adjust the obtained values to the maximum relationship possible for respective table sizes.

In each of the variables, statistically treated for significance of relationship, equal probability for response to each category was assumed. The null hypothesis was applied to each test of significance, and was accepted or rejected as the 0.05 level of confidence. Rejection of the null hypothesis indicated that the differences between expected and observed frequencies resulted from true variation between the variables, rather than by chance alone. The coefficient of contingency was utilized to obtain an estimate of the degree of relationship between the variables being analyzed. The chi-square and contingency coefficient values obtained from statistical treatments of the relationship between selected variables are presented in Appendixes F, G, H, and I.

Contingency coefficient values less than 0.20 were considered indicative of "low" relationships. The chi-square values corresponding to contingency values less than 0.20 were generally not statistically significant at the 0.05 level of confidence. Contingency coefficients of 0.21 through 0.40 were considered "moderate," and those greater than 0.40 were interpreted as indicating a "high" degree of relationship.

Two major subdivisions were utilized for presenting the findings of this research, namely, vocational choice status, and the relationship
of selected factors to vocational choice levels. Serving as independent variables were educational aspirations, educational expectations, occupational aspirations, and occupational expectations. The factors influencing vocational choices were treated as dependent variables. These factors were the following: (1) availability of occupational information; (2) home environment; (3) school environment; (4) persons influencing the vocational choices of youth; (5) personal value systems; (6) high school academic achievement records; and (7) vocational limitations.

I. VOCATIONAL CHOICE STATUS

To understand the vocational choices of youth, it is essential to account for the differences between the educational and occupational status to which individuals aspire and actually expect to enter. Analysis of these differences may provide deeper insight into the vocational developmental process. The following section of this chapter was devoted to achieving an objective of this research, namely, to determine the status of the educational and occupational aspirations and expectations of students in vocational agriculture. An additional goal of this study was to determine the extent to which high school youth have crystallized their vocational choices, and whether or not they have gained realistic plans as a result.

A. EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS

Four educational categories were used to measure the levels of aspirations and expectations. The levels were these: (1) college degree or higher; (2) some college, vocational or business school; (3) high school; (4) and less than high school. The students were requested to
indicate their aspired educational level, assuming no limitations preventing attainment. Table I reveals that 22.0 percent of the students had aspirations for attaining college degrees or higher educational status. Some college, vocational or business school was the aspired level of education of 28.7 percent of the respondents. It was noted that 32.0 percent of the students aspired only to the high school level, and 3.9 percent of the participants desired to drop out of school. There was a noticeable trend toward aspirations for the attainment of some college, vocational or business school training, which increased progressively in magnitude from the ninth through the twelfth grades.

The educational expectations of the participants were measured in the same manner as the educational aspirations. The students were requested to indicate their probable educational level of attainment, after considering their limitations. Table II contains the data concerning educational expectations. Educational expectations were lower than aspirations in all categories except for the level of some college, vocational or business school. There was a close relationship between aspired and expected educational choices. As the students progressively neared the completion of high school, they expected to curtail their educational preparation to high school or vocational training categories at a greater magnitude than was reported for aspirations.

The chi-square test of independence was calculated to dispose of the null hypothesis of equal probability between aspired and expected
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educational Aspirations</th>
<th>Ninth</th>
<th>Tenth</th>
<th>Eleventh</th>
<th>Twelfth</th>
<th>Total Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Num-ber</td>
<td>Per-cent</td>
<td>Num-ber</td>
<td>Per-cent</td>
<td>Num-ber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree or Higher</td>
<td>47 20.7</td>
<td>37 20.3</td>
<td>31 18.8</td>
<td>48 28.7</td>
<td>163 22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, Vocational or Business School</td>
<td>43 18.9</td>
<td>47 25.8</td>
<td>57 34.6</td>
<td>66 39.5</td>
<td>213 28.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete High School</td>
<td>75 33.0</td>
<td>56 30.8</td>
<td>63 38.2</td>
<td>44 26.3</td>
<td>238 32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop out of High School</td>
<td>13 5.7</td>
<td>7 3.8</td>
<td>4 2.4</td>
<td>5 3.0</td>
<td>29 3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>9 4.0</td>
<td>10 5.5</td>
<td>8 4.8</td>
<td>2 1.2</td>
<td>29 3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>40 17.7</td>
<td>26 13.8</td>
<td>2 1.3</td>
<td>2 1.3</td>
<td>71 9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Expectations</td>
<td>Ninth</td>
<td>Tenth</td>
<td>Eleventh</td>
<td>Twelfth</td>
<td>Total Response</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Degree or Higher</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, Vocational or Business School</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete High School</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop Out of High School</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
educational levels. The hypothesis, educational aspirational levels are independent of educational expectational levels, was rejected. A contingency coefficient of 0.70 was obtained, which implies the existence of a high degree of association between educational aspirations and expectations.

**Pertinent Findings**

Approximately one-half of the students aspired and expected to attain an educational status beyond high school. A high degree of association was obtained between the aspired and expected educational levels. Educational expectations were lower than aspirations in all categories except for the level of some college, vocational or business school. Students tended to develop a greater awareness of the importance of continued education as they progressed through high school.

**B. OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS**

Occupational aspirations have been identified as important elements mediating upward mobility of job status. Aspirations are the imagined and desired achievements, which may lack the reality considerations of expectations. An understanding of the nature of aspirations is in order for useful interpretation. The aspired level may not be expected, and may not even be attainable for the individual concerned. Aspirations have the property of causing persons to desire far greater achievement; consequently, they may help to raise the actual level attained.

Occupational aspirations of the students were classified according to six prestige levels in Table III. These categories were designed to measure the degree of skill and educational preparation required, and the
## TABLE III

OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS BY GRADE LEVELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Aspirations</th>
<th>Ninth</th>
<th>Tenth</th>
<th>Eleventh</th>
<th>Twelfth</th>
<th>Total Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Num-</td>
<td>Per-</td>
<td>Num-</td>
<td>Num-</td>
<td>Num-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ber</td>
<td>cent</td>
<td>ber</td>
<td>ber</td>
<td>ber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Farm Executive, Owner or Manager</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical, Sales, or Technical</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semiskilled or Unskilled</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Choice Made</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
socioeconomic status enjoyed as a result of occupational positions. The Occupational Level Classification Scale utilized is presented in Appendix D. The six occupational responses to each were these: professional, 29.3 percent; business or farm owners, executives, or managers, 4.8 percent; clerical, sales, or technical, 7.3 percent; skilled, 28.6 percent; semiskilled-unskilled, 5.2 percent; and miscellaneous, 4.2 percent. There was an erratic, but measurable, trend to aspire toward higher level occupations as students progressed through the high school grades.

The occupational expectations of the participants were also classified into the six prestige levels, and presented in Table IV. The expected occupational levels were generally lower than those aspired to levels. The category chiefly responsible for the major difference was professional occupations. These data indicate a significant reduction of 16.2 percent in the professional level between occupational aspirations and expectations.

The chi-square test of independence was applied to dispose of the null hypothesis; occupational aspirations are independent of occupational expectations. The chi-square value was significant; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. A coefficient of contingency value of 0.35 suggested the existence of a moderate relationship between occupational aspirations and expectations.

Pertinent Findings

A total of 57.9 percent of the students aspired to the professional and skilled occupations, and these responses were equally divided between the two categories. The professional and skilled occupations were
### TABLE IV

**OCCUPATIONAL EXPECTATIONS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS BY GRADE LEVELS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Expectations</th>
<th>Ninth Number</th>
<th>Ninth Percent</th>
<th>Tenth Number</th>
<th>Tenth Percent</th>
<th>Eleventh Number</th>
<th>Eleventh Percent</th>
<th>Twelfth Number</th>
<th>Twelfth Percent</th>
<th>Total Response Number</th>
<th>Total Response Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Farm Executive, Owner, or Manager</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical, Sales, or Technical</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semiskilled or Unskilled</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Choice Made</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
expected by 37.5 percent of the students. The professional category accounted for only 13.1 percent of the occupational expectations, and the skilled level contained 24.4 percent of the response.

A moderate statistical relationship was obtained between occupational aspirations and expectations. There was an erratic, but measurable, trend to aspire and expect the higher status occupations as students progressed through the high school grades.

C. REALISM OF VOCATIONAL CHOICES AND FAILURE TO CHOOSE

The inability to establish a realistic vocational choice may be partially responsible for the loss of potential talent to society. The crystallization of vocational choices at an early age is unquestionably beneficial to efficiency in career planning. An awareness of the extent of dysfunctional career choices is essential to planning in vocational education.

Data in Table V reveal student perceptions of the education required for their chosen occupations. Vocational training or a college degree was considered necessary for entry into the expected occupations of 53.8 percent of the students. Only 50.1 percent expected to achieve this amount of education, which indicated that 3.7 percent of the students were expecting to enter their occupations educationally unprepared.

Many persons having high occupational expectations lacked the scholastic aptitude for attaining the education required for their chosen occupations. Only 23.8 percent of the students had achieved greater than a "C" average over the high school years.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Perception</th>
<th>Ninth Number</th>
<th>Ninth Per cent</th>
<th>Tenth Number</th>
<th>Tenth Per cent</th>
<th>Eleventh Number</th>
<th>Eleventh Per cent</th>
<th>Twelfth Number</th>
<th>Twelfth Per cent</th>
<th>Total Response Number</th>
<th>Total Response Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>College Degree or Higher</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, Vocational or Business School</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Than High School</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain or No Choice Made</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It was hypothesized that educational expectations are independent of student perceptions of educational prerequisites for their expected occupations. The chi-square test of independence revealed a significant relationship; hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. A high degree of relationship between educational expectations and perception of educational prerequisites for expected occupations was evident as a result of a contingency coefficient of 0.69 obtained from statistical treatment of these data.

The relationship between occupational expectations, and student perceptions of the amount of education required for entering chosen occupations, was significantly different. This value permitted the rejection of the null hypothesis; occupational expectations are independent of perceived educational prerequisites for expected occupations. A moderate relationship was evidenced between these two variables as a result of the contingency coefficient value of 0.31.

The null hypothesis, educational aspirations are independent of occupational aspirations and expectations, was rejected. The chi-square values were found significant in both treatments. The coefficient of contingency values reveal the existence of moderate relationships.

Chi-square tests were performed to dispose of the null hypothesis; educational expectations are independent of occupational aspirations and expectations. Significant chi-square values were obtained, which permitted the rejection of the null hypothesis. Moderate relationships were implied by a comparison of the contingency coefficients obtained from relating educational expectations to occupational aspirations and expectations.
Educational aspirations had not been established by 13.4 percent of the students. Educational expectations were not decided by 15.1 percent of the participants. Occupational aspirations were not decided by 20.6 percent, and expectations were not crystallized by 41.4 percent of the respondents.

Pertinent Findings

A moderate to high relationship existed between educational choices and the educational prerequisites of the occupations chosen by the students.

Occupations chosen by 3.7 percent of the respondents required a higher educational level than they expected to achieve.

Many persons lacked the scholastic aptitude for attaining the educational background required for their chosen occupations. Only 23.8 percent of the students had achieved greater than a "C" average over the high school years.

Data indicate that a large number of students have not crystallized their vocational choices. Educational aspirations and expectations were undecided by 13.4 percent and 15.1 percent of the students, respectively. Occupational aspirations and expectations were not crystallized by 20.6 percent and 41.4 percent of the students, respectively.

II. THE RELATIONSHIP OF SELECTED FACTORS TO VOCATIONAL CHOICES

Data presented in the following section of this chapter pertained to these objectives: (1) to establish the relationship of selected factors to the vocational choices of youth; (2) to define the limitations
deterring individuals from attaining their vocational aspirations. Each of the factors analyzed in this section were treated as dependent variables when related to vocational choice levels. The educational and occupational aspirations and expectations served as independent variables in statistical interpretations.

A. AVAILABILITY OF OCCUPATIONAL INFORMATION

It was assumed that the availability of occupational information would influence students to crystallize vocational choices earlier in the high school years. Knowledge of occupations should help students to assess their capabilities more accurately to establish realistic choices. A series of statistical treatments were made to determine the degree of relationship between student vocational choices and the availability of occupational information.

Guidance counselors and teachers are some of the resource persons in the public schools from whom students may obtain occupational information. The percent students who reported discussion of course choices and occupational plans with counselors and teachers is graphically illustrated in Figure 2. Data were combined because of the lack of divergence between grade levels.

Course choices are occupationally related for students who begin to plan for their future through selection of high school curricular offerings leading to the attainment of their vocational objectives. Course choices were discussed with counselors and teachers by 48.7 percent and 44.1 percent of the respondents, respectively. Over one-half of the students had not been counseled in their course selections.
Figure 2. Percent Students Reporting Discussion of High School Course Choices and Occupational Plans With Guidance Counselors and Teachers.
It was hypothesized that **significant differences do not exist** between the educational expectations of students who discuss their course choices with counselors and those who have not been counseled. The obtained chi-square value was not significant; therefore, this hypothesis was accepted as valid. The contingency coefficient of 0.07 substantiated a very low degree of association between these two variables.

Under the null hypothesis, it was assumed that significant differences do not exist between the educational expectations of students who have discussed course choices with teachers and those who have not had such conferences. There was a significant chi-square value obtained for rejection of this hypothesis. The coefficient of contingency indicated the existence of a low, but statistically significant relationship between expected educational levels of students who were counseled on course choices by teachers and those who were not advised. These data indicate that teachers influence educational choices to a greater degree than guidance counselors.

Conferences concerning occupational plans with guidance counselors and teachers in many cases may be considered a direct appeal by the student for occupational information. In many school settings, the student is required to initiate a request for counsel on occupational plans. This policy, in association with the academic orientation of most high schools, and the relatively low counselor to student ratio, places certain limitations upon non-college bound individuals to obtain counsel on occupational plans. Data in Figure 2 tend to support this observation. Only 35.9 percent of the respondents had ever discussed occupational plans with counselors,
and 35.1 percent of the students indicated they had been advised on these matters by teachers.

The null hypothesis was accepted; significant differences do not exist between the occupational expectations of students who have discussed occupational plans with guidance counselors and teachers and those who have not been counseled. The chi-square values failed to reach the level of significance in each of the relationships tested. Data indicate that guidance counselors and teachers exert only a small and insignificant influence on the occupational choices of high school youth.

It was hypothesized that students having greater knowledge of occupations would expect higher prestige occupational levels. The dependent variable was established by requesting the students to indicate the extent of their knowledge of their expected occupation. Data in Figure 3 were combined because of the lack of trends in differences between grade levels.

It was reported by 35.4 percent of the respondents that they possessed good knowledge of their expected occupations, because of organized study. General knowledge, without details of the duties involved in the expected occupation, was reported by 27.8 percent of the participants. Poor knowledge, with plans to learn of the expected occupation through advanced schooling or on the job training, was reported by 23.2 percent of the students.

The null hypothesis was formulated to test the assumption that no significant differences exist between occupational expectations and the extent of knowledge of expected occupations. Statistically
Figure 3. Percent Students Reporting Extent of Knowledge of Expected Occupations. (N=741)
significant differences were not obtained when occupational expectations were related to the extent of knowledge of expected occupations. Occupational expectations were not associated with an awareness of the requirements of the occupations selected by students.

Pertinent Findings

Educational and occupational expectations were influenced to a limited extent by discussion of course choices and career plans with guidance counselors or teachers. A majority of the students were uninformed of the duties, responsibilities, qualifications, and rewards of the world of work. Data revealed a weakness in the ability of high school youth to use occupational information in vocational choices. Occupational expectations were not statistically related to student awareness of the requirements of their chosen careers.

B. HOME ENVIRONMENT

The home environment has been shown to exert a very profound influence on the vocational choices of high school students. The lack of parental encouragement and financial support may impose severe limitations on the choices of disadvantaged youth. The amount of support provided to students by their parents is unquestionably dependent upon socioeconomic background and educational status. It was assumed that the vocational choice levels of students were directly related to the educational and occupational status of the parents.

Figure 4 provides a measure of the extent of parental encouragement for continued education. Continued education was highly valued by the parents. It was reported by 70.7 percent of the respondents that their
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT OF PARENTAL ENCOURAGEMENT</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>70</th>
<th>80</th>
<th>90</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Encouraging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(70.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(21.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Encouragement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Apply</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3.5%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Percent Students Reporting Extent of Parental Encouragement for Continued Education (N=741)
parents were very encouraging. Some encouragement for continued education was received by 21.7 percent of the participants. Only 1.9 percent of the students reported that their parents offered no encouragement for continued education.

The education levels held by the parents of the students, presented in Figure 5 were based upon the percent response in each category. The majority of parents had attained less than a high school education, as reported by 57.4 percent of the fathers and 54.1 percent of the mothers in this category. A high school diploma was held by 21.3 percent of the fathers and 30.2 percent of the mothers. An educational status beyond the high school was attained by 12.5 percent of the fathers and 10.2 percent of the mothers.

Data indicate that the mothers of students in this study had obtained a higher level of education than their fathers. Only in the categories of college degree and vocational school did fathers exceed the educational level held by mothers. These facts assist in explaining why mothers exert a more profound influence than fathers on the educational choices of the students.

The parental educational levels were statistically related to the educational choices of the students to test the null hypothesis; no association exists between the educational choice levels of the students and the educational status of the parents. When the educational aspirations and expectations of the students were related to the parental educational levels, the chi-square values for each of these relationships were found significant. These values permitted rejection of the null hypothesis. The contingency values indicate that a closer association exists between
Figure 5. Parental Educational Levels Classified by Percent Student Response. (N=741)

Key: ---- Father
     _ Mother
educational aspirations and parental educational levels than is true for educational expectations of the students. A closer relationship exists between maternal than paternal educational status when compared to educational choices of the students.

It was assumed that parental occupational prestige influences the career choices of students. Parental occupational status was selected as an appropriate index to the socioeconomic backgrounds of participants. Socioeconomic status is associated with family income and level of living. Parental occupational prestige was used with educational status to determine the influence of the home environment on the career choices of youth.

Parental occupational levels were tabulated in Figure 6 to establish the distribution of parents in the hierarchy of work. The majority of fathers were reported in the skilled and semiskilled-unskilled categories, with 31.2 percent and 27.4 percent classified, respectively. Business or farm owners, executives, or managers were reported positions for 6.2 percent of the fathers. Professional positions were held by 3.1 percent of the fathers.

The occupational prestige of fathers exceeded mothers for all categories except miscellaneous and professional. The miscellaneous group contained 4.0 percent of the fathers and 64.0 percent of the mothers. The large proportion of mothers in this category resulted from classifying homemaking as a miscellaneous occupation. Professional occupations were held by 3.8 percent of the mothers. These data confirm the status of the father as a primary wage earner for the family. This relationship explains the tendency of fathers to exert a more profound
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>(3.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(3.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive, Owner,</td>
<td>(16.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or Manager of a</td>
<td>(2.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business or Farm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical, Sales, or</td>
<td>(6.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>(5.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled</td>
<td>(31.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semiskilled or</td>
<td>(27.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled</td>
<td>(9.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>(4.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(64.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown to Student</td>
<td>(0.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(0.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>(10.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(10.0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Parental Occupational Levels Classified by Percent Student Response. (N=741)
influence than mothers on the occupational choices of high school youth.

It was hypothesized that **educational choices of the student are independent of paternal occupational status**. Paternal occupational status was related to student educational choice levels by the chi-square test of independence. Significant values were obtained for each of these relationships. The null hypothesis was rejected.

It was hypothesized that **educational choices of the student are independent of maternal occupational levels**. The chi-square values, obtained from the relationships of educational aspirations and expectations to maternal occupational status, did not reach the established level of significance. This hypothesis was accepted.

A further measure of the home environmental influences was determined through the relationship of student occupational choices to parental educational levels. This association was tested by the null hypothesis; **student occupational choices are independent of paternal educational levels**. For each of the four relationships, the chi-square values obtained were less than significant. These data support the acceptance of the null hypothesis as stated.

It was hypothesized that **the occupational aspirations of students are independent of the occupational status enjoyed by their parents**. The chi-square relationships of occupational aspirations to the paternal occupational status failed to achieve significance. When occupational aspirations were related to maternal occupational status, the obtained value was significant. These findings permitted acceptance of the
portion of the null hypothesis concerning the relationship of occupational aspirations to paternal occupational status. The segment of the null hypothesis was rejected regarding the association of occupational aspirations with maternal occupational prestige.

A null hypothesis was proposed that occupational expectations are independent of paternal occupational status. This hypothesis was accepted as valid based upon the failure of the chi-square to reach the established level of significance. Corresponding contingency coefficients implied the existence of a low, but statistically insignificant relationship between occupational expectations of students and the occupational status enjoyed by their parents.

**Pertinent Findings**

An analysis of the home environment was made to determine the extent of influence exerted by this background on the vocational choices of students. The majority of parents were reported to have provided encouragement for students to continue educational preparation beyond high school.

Mothers had achieved a higher level of education than fathers in all categories except vocational school and college degrees. Fathers generally ranked higher than mothers when classified according to occupational status. Mothers exceeded fathers only in professional occupations by 0.7 percent, yet by a great margin in the miscellaneous category. The extreme difference between mothers and fathers classified as miscellaneous workers reflected homemaking, which was placed in this category.
Low to moderate relationships exist between educational choices of students and the educational status of their parents. Mothers were more influential in educational decisions and fathers exerted a greater influence on occupational choices. These findings were statistically significant. The paternal occupational status was more closely associated with educational choices than the maternal occupational attainment. Aspired occupational status was not significantly related to paternal job prestige; however, a relationship existed between student career choices and maternal occupational level.

C. SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

It was assumed that the school environment influences student vocational choices. The curriculum of studies in which a student participates should be regarded as the primary contribution of a school to the vocational development of its pupils. A positive relationship should exist between the courses studied and student career choices. A measure of this relationship was accomplished through comparing the subjects which students reported influencing their vocational choices.

Data in Figure 7 reveal a ranking of the subjects influencing vocational choices. This rank order was based on the percent of affirmative student responses concerning subjects influencing their educational and occupational choices. Only those subjects to which the participants had equal exposure were selected for comparison. Vocational agriculture and physical education were ranked equally influential by 65.2 percent affirmative response for each of these
Figure 7. Subjects Influencing Vocational Choices Ranked by Percent Affirmative Student Response.
subjects. Mathematics, 62.5 percent; science, 60.6 percent; English, 53.0 percent; and history, 40.5 percent followed in ranking order. A higher value was placed upon the applied courses having functional relationships to occupational performance.

The individuals chiefly responsible for the creation of learning situations in school are the teachers. The personal relationships established between teachers and pupils may be of significant value in encouraging students to acquire additional education. The student evaluation of teacher encouragement for continued education is presented in Figure 8. The extent of teacher encouragement for continued education based on student appraisal was the following: strongly encouraging, 42.4 percent; encouraging, 25.4 percent; and discouraging, 3.1 percent of the participants.

Teacher encouragement for continued education was ample. It may be paradoxical that a greater percentage of students were encouraged to continue their education than was justified by their academic capability. Educational levels to which the respondents were encouraged by their teachers were not determined.

Extra-curricular activities are school-sponsored extensions of the instruction program. Such activities are usually conducted outside the organized classroom environment. When properly conducted, these activities assist in citizenship and leadership training. Participation in extra-curricular activities permit students to apply some of the theories learned in class, to develop creative talents, and to undergo personality adjustment.
Figure 8. Percent Students Reporting the Degree of Teacher Encouragement for Continued Education. (N=741)
Data in Table VI indicate that an increasingly greater number of extra-curricular activities are participated in by the students as they progress through high school. It was noted that 12.4 percent of the students did not participate at all, and that 21.9 percent of the respondents reported membership in four or more extra-curricular activities. The most frequently responded category was participation in two extra-curricular activities, which was reported by 23.4 percent of the students.

It was assumed that a relationship exists between vocational choice levels and the extent of participation in extra-curricular activities. The probability of an association was tested through the null hypothesis; vocational choices of students are independent of the extent of participation in extra-curricular activities.

When educational choices were related to the extent of participation in extra-curricular activities, the obtained chi-square values were significant. The null hypothesis was rejected regarding the relationship of educational choices to the extent of the participation in extra-curricular activities.

A significant chi-square value was obtained from the relationship of occupational aspirations to the extent of participation in extra-curricular activities, thus permitting rejection of this part of the null hypothesis. The association of occupational expectations with the extent of participation in extra-curricular activities failed to yield a significant chi-square value; hence, this portion of the null hypothesis was accepted as valid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Participation</th>
<th>Ninth</th>
<th>Tenth</th>
<th>Eleventh</th>
<th>Twelfth</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Num-</td>
<td>Per-</td>
<td>Num-</td>
<td>Per-</td>
<td>Num-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four or More</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pertinent Findings

The ranking of subjects considered most influential in vocational choices was the following: vocational agriculture and physical education, equally important; mathematics; science; English; and history.

The majority of students reported that teachers encouraged them to acquire education beyond high school.

A low to moderate relationship exists between the extent of participation in extra-curricular activities and vocational choice levels, with the exception that a statistically significant association was not observed concerning occupational expectations.

D. PERSONS INFLUENCING VOCATIONAL CHOICES

It was assumed that persons more closely associated with youth would significantly influence their vocational choices. This assumption was designed to satisfy one of the major objectives of this research, namely, to determine who influences the career decisions of high school students. A rank order was developed, based upon the percent of affirmative responses of the students concerning the persons who had influenced their educational and occupational choices.

The rank order of persons whom students reported influencing their educational choices is presented in Figure 9. The hierarchy of educationally influential persons with the respective percent affirmative response is the following: mothers, 63.4 percent; fathers, 60.6 percent; friends, 47.6 percent; relatives other than parents, 44.3 percent; persons in the chosen occupations, 38.1 percent; sibs, 37.9 percent; vocational
### Figure 9. Persons Influencing Educational Choices Ranked by Percent Affirmative Student Response.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFLUENTIAL PERSONS</th>
<th>0</th>
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<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>70</th>
<th>80</th>
<th>90</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(63.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>(60.6%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friend</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(47.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Relative</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(44.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person in the Chosen</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Occupation (38.1%)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Brother or Sister</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(37.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Agriculture Teacher</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(36.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandparent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>(33.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guidance Counselor</td>
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<td>(32.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(26.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(25.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(18.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clergyman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(13.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
agricultural teachers, 36.3 percent; grandparents, 33.1 percent; guidance
counselors, 32.5 percent; principals, 26.0 percent; coaches, 25.0 percent;
academic teachers, 18.6 percent; and clergymen; 13.5 percent.

A measure of the persons influencing the occupational choices of
students was accomplished in the same manner as for educational decisions.
The rank order of persons influencing the occupational choices of youth
was presented in Figure 10. The hierarchy of occupational influential
persons with their respective affirmative response was the following:
fathers, 50.6 percent; mothers, 46.0 percent; persons in chosen
occupations, 44.3 percent; friends, 43.7 percent; relatives other than
parents, 37.5 percent; vocational agricultural teachers; 33.9 per cent;
sibs, 31.8 percent; grandparents, 23.2 percent; guidance counselors,
22.3 percent; principals, 18.8 percent; coaches, 17.0 percent; academic
teachers, 16.6 percent; and clergymen, 9.7 percent.

Pertinent Findings

Educational choices were influenced to a greater extent by mothers
than by fathers; however, the opposite was true for occupational decisions.
This observation was found statistically significant, based on the data
in Appendixes F, G, H, and I.

The reference groups of persons influencing the vocational choices
of students were these: parents; a heterogeneous grouping of friends,
relatives other than parents, and persons in chosen occupations; school
personnel; and clergymen. The relative ranking of reference groups
remained constant, but there were variations within each group when the
persons influencing educational and occupational choices were compared.
## PERCENT AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSE

| INFLUENTIAL PERSONS                  | 0  | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
|-------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|     |
| Father                              |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (50.6%) |
| Mother                              |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (46.0%) |
| Person in the Chosen Occupation     |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (44.3%) |
| Friend                              |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (43.7%) |
| Other Relative                      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (37.5%) |
| Vocational Agriculture Teacher      |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (33.9%) |
| Brother or Sister                   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (31.8%) |
| Grandparent                         |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (23.2%) |
| Guidance Counselor                  |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (22.3%) |
| Principal                           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (18.8%) |
| Coach                               |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (17.0%) |
| Academic Teacher                    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (16.6%) |
| Clergyman                           |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    | (9.7%) |

Figure 10. Persons Influencing Occupational Choices Ranked by Percent Affirmative Student Response.
E. PERSONAL VALUE SYSTEMS

Vocational choices are a reflection of personal values. The selection of occupations is conditioned by a desire to satisfy personal needs. It was assumed that personal values espoused by the students would be manifested in the reasons for choosing occupations.

Data in Figure 11 indicate that high school students choose occupations in a self-centered manner. Based upon the affirmative student responses, the first five reasons for occupational choices were these: interest in the work, 83.0 percent; personal satisfactions, 73.0 percent; salary or wages, 68.0 percent; working conditions, 66.8 percent; and availability of employment, 58.4 percent, respectively. Approximately one-half of the students gave the following reasons for choosing occupations: work experiences, contributions to society, special talents or abilities, social prestige, favorable length of training time, and the availability of financial support. The reasons given by approximately one-third of the students were favorable cost of occupational training, insistence of parents or relatives, and fringe benefits. The geographical location of the chosen occupation was reported by 25.1 percent affirmative responses and the inheritance of a farm or business was ranked last by 20.1 percent of the students.

Pertinent Findings

Occupational choices of students were based primarily upon personal interests, satisfactions, and rewards. A smaller percentage of students were influenced by work experiences, talents and abilities, and tangible assets. Considered least influential on occupational choices were migration requirements and the inheritance of a farm or business.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REASONS FOR OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>70</th>
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<td>Availability of Employment</td>
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<td>(44.1%)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(44.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of Occupational Training</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>(37.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insistence of Parents or Relatives</td>
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<td>(33.6%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fringe Benefits</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>(33.1%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographical Location</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>(25.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inheritance of Farm or Business</td>
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<td>(20.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 11. Reasons For Making Occupational Choices Ranked by Percent Affirmative Student Response.
F. HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

Perhaps the best index of future educational and occupational attainment is the high school academic record. This variable indirectly measures scholastic achievement potential. Such a record is not an accurate measure of intelligence, nor of future success, but it may be accepted as a crude prediction of attainment in occupations requiring scholastic aptitude.

The percent of students reporting academic grade averages over the years enrolled in high school is presented in Figure 12. The grade averages by percent of students responding were: "A", 3.2 percent; "B", 20.6 percent; "C", 61.1 percent; and "D", 12.2 percent, respectively.

The null hypothesis was utilized to test the assumption, vocational choices are independent of high school academic achievement. The chi-square test of independence revealed significant values for each of the four relationships. A comparison of the contingency coefficients reveals the existence of a moderate degree of relationship between the vocational choice levels of students and their high school academic achievement records. The null hypothesis was rejected; therefore, an association exists between the students' vocational choices and their grade averages over the years enrolled in high school.

Pertinent Findings

Only 23.8 percent of the students had achieved greater than a "C" average over the years enrolled in high school. The vocational choices of students are significantly related to their high school academic records. The existence of a moderate relationship indicates
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>70</th>
<th>80</th>
<th>90</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(3.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(20.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(61.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(12.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(2.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12. Percent Students Reporting High School Academic Achievement Records.
that students having higher academic achievement records usually chose the more prestigious vocations.

G. VOCATIONAL LIMITATIONS

A significant difference exists between the aspired and expected vocational choice levels. One of the objectives of this research was to determine the limitations deterring persons from attaining their aspirational levels. For convenience of analysis, educational limitations were treated separately from occupational restrictions.

Data in Figure 13 reveal the percent response concerning the primary limitation deterring attainment of aspired educational levels. The alternatives for inability to obtain desired education, ranked by percent student response were these: change of interest, 26.3 percent; lack of ability, 22.4 percent; lack of finances, 18.6 percent; marriage plans, 11.2 percent; and lack of encouragement, 9.9 percent.

It was assumed that lack of financial aid for continued education might impose a severe restriction on educational plans. Data concerning the primary sources of financial aid for continued education, ranked by percent student response, were presented in Figure 14. The sources of financial aid were these: parents, 38.0 percent; work, 29.4 percent; scholarships, 8.1 percent; and lending agencies, 4.0 percent. The primary source of financial aid for education was unknown by 9.4 percent of the students. Financial support was not considered a serious obstacle to the attainment of educational plans by most students.

The primary reasons for failure to enter aspired occupations were ranked by percent student response in Figure 15. The occupational
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATIONAL LIMITATIONS</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>30</th>
<th>40</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>70</th>
<th>80</th>
<th>90</th>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change of Interest</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(26.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Ability</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(22.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Finance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(18.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage Plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(11.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Encouragement</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(9.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(11.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 13. Primary Reasons for Failure to Attain Aspired Educational Level Ranked by Percent Student Response. (N=741)
### Figure 14. Primary Source of Financial Aid for Continued Education Ranked by Percent Student Response. (N=741)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Finance</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>38.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarships</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lending Agencies</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCCUPATIONAL LIMITATION</td>
<td>PERCENT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change of Interest</td>
<td>(37.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Ability or Skill</td>
<td>(17.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Finance</td>
<td>(15.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to Obtain Required Education</td>
<td>(14.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage Plans</td>
<td>(6.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>(9.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 15. Primary Reasons for Failure to Enter Aspired Occupations Ranked by Percent Student Response. (N-741)
limitations were these: change of interest, 37.0 percent; lack of ability or skill, 17.0 percent; lack of finances, 15.9 percent; inability to obtain the education required, 14.7 percent; and marriage plans, 6.3 percent.

Serious limitations may be encountered in becoming established in certain occupations because of financial considerations. Data concerning the primary sources of financial aid for occupational entry were presented in Figure 16. The primary sources of financial aid for occupational entry, ranked by percent student response were these: parents, 43.2 percent; work at another job, 21.5 percent; lending agencies, 13.9 percent; and relatives other than parents, 8.0 percent. Finances for occupational entry was not required by 8.8 percent of the respondents. Financial support for entry into chosen occupations was not a serious obstacle to most students.

**Pertinent Findings**

Attainment of educational and occupational aspirations were primarily limited by the same reasons, namely, change of interest, lack of ability or skill, and lack of financial support.

The primary sources of finances for continued education and occupational entry were parents and work to obtain the necessary financial backing. Approximately one-tenth of the students were uncertain of financial support for education. Financial aid was not required for occupational entry by 8.8 percent of the students. Financial backing for educational preparation and occupational entry was not regarded as a serious deterrent to vocational attainment by the majority of the students.
### Figure 16. Primary Source of Financial Aid for Occupational Entry Ranked by Percent Response. (N=741)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOURCE OF FINANCE</th>
<th>PERCENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>(43.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working at Another Job</td>
<td>(21.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lending Agencies</td>
<td>(13.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>(8.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Help Needed</td>
<td>(8.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>(4.6%)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The objectives of this investigation were the following:

1. To determine the status of educational and occupational aspirations and expectations of vocational agricultural students.

2. To show the influence of selected factors on the career choices of vocational agricultural students.

3. To identify persons who influence vocational choices of vocational agricultural students.

4. To define limitations deterring vocational agricultural students from attaining their career aspirations.

The Descriptive Survey Method, with the Group Interview Technique, was used in this study. Data were obtained through the mass administration of a multiple choice, interview schedule, to a sample of 741 vocational agricultural students, during March and April, 1968.

The sample contained both male and female high school students, with seven percent being females who reported enrolling in at least one year of vocational agriculture. Racial distinctions were not made; however, five of the schools included in the study had a predominantly Negro enrollment.

Students, in grades nine through twelve attending the 17 public high schools surveyed, were permitted to participate in this investigation as a result of a cooperative arrangement between five Louisiana parish
school systems and the School of Vocational Education, Louisiana State University. The survey area was geographically located in south-central Louisiana, and limited to a 60 mile road distance of the Baton Rouge-New Orleans industrial complex.

Statistical procedures utilized for analyzing the data were number and percent distribution, the chi-square test of independence, and the coefficient of contingency. Equal probability of response was assumed in each category of the variables statistically related. The null hypothesis was applied to each test of significance, and was accepted or rejected at the 0.05 level of confidence. Obtained contingency values were adjusted for fineness of grouping.

Vocational Choice Status

Two objectives were treated in this section. One of these was to determine the status of educational and occupational aspirations and expectations of vocational agricultural students. An additional purpose was to ascertain the extent to which high school youth have crystallized their vocational choices, and whether or not they have gained realistic plans as results.

Educational status was treated in the following levels: (1) college degree or higher; (2) some college, vocational or business school; (3) high school; and (4) less than high school. Occupational prestige was classified according to six prestige levels. The occupational categories were these: professional; business and farm owners, executives, or managers; clerical, sales, or technical; skilled; semiskilled-unskilled; and miscellaneous. This scale was designed to measure the educational
preparation and degree of skill required for the performance of occupations. This occupational hierarchy was considered an estimate of the socioeconomic background enjoyed as a result of occupational status.

Summarized are certain facts which were useful in determining the vocational choice status of vocational agricultural students:

1. Approximately one-half of the students aspired and expected to attain an educational status beyond high school.
2. A high degree of association existed between the aspired and expected educational levels.
3. Educational expectations were lower than aspirations for all educational categories except for the level of some college, vocational or business school training.
4. Students tended to plan for higher educational status as they progressed through high school.
5. Professional and skilled occupations were aspired by an equal number of students. Combined, these two categories equalled 57.9 percent of the respondents. These two categories were expected by a total of 37.5 percent of the students. The professions accounted for 13.1 percent and skilled occupations 24.4 percent of the responses.
6. A moderate statistical relationship existed between occupational aspirations and expectations.
7. There was an erratic, but measurable trend to aspire and expect the higher status occupations as students progressed through high school.
8. Students choosing higher level occupations generally planned to obtain the required educational background.

9. A moderate to high relationship existed between educational choices and the educational prerequisites of the occupations chosen by students.

10. Three and nine-tenths percent of the students chose occupations requiring a higher educational level than they expected to achieve.

11. Many students lacked scholastic aptitude for attaining the educational background for their chosen occupations. Only 23.8 percent of the students achieved greater than a "C" average over the high school years.

12. Thirteen and four-tenths percent and, 15.1 percent of the participants were undecided about their educational aspirations and expectations, respectively.

13. Occupational aspirations and expectations had not been resolved by 20.6 percent and 41.4 percent of the respondents, respectively.

The Relationship of Selected Factors to Vocational Choices

1. Educational and occupational expectations were influenced only to a limited extent by conferences concerning course choices and occupational plans with guidance counselors or teachers.

2. A majority of the students were uninformed of the duties, responsibilities, qualifications, and rewards of the world of work.
3. There was a weakness in the ability of high school youth to use occupational information in vocational choices.

4. Occupational expectations were not statistically related to student awareness of the educational requirements of their chosen careers.

5. A majority of the parents provided encouragement to students for continued education.

6. Mothers had achieved a higher level of education than fathers in all categories except vocational school and college degrees.

7. Fathers ranked higher than mothers in occupational prestige except for professional and miscellaneous occupations.

8. Low to moderate relationships existed between educational choices of students and the educational status of their parents.

9. Student occupational choices were generally not significantly related to parental occupational status.

10. Mothers were more influential in educational decisions, but fathers exerted a greater influence on occupational choices of students.

11. The subjects considered most influential in career choices were vocational agriculture and physical education. Other subjects influencing career choices in descending order of importance are mathematics, science, English, and history.

12. A majority of the students reported their teachers had encouraged them to acquire education beyond high school.
13. A low to moderate relationship generally exists between student vocational choices and the extent of participation in extra-curricular activities. The exception was the lack of a statistically significant association between occupational expectations and the extent of participation in extra-curricular activities.

14. The reference groups of persons influencing student vocational choices were these: parents; a heterogeneous grouping of friends, relatives other than parents, and persons in chosen occupations; school personnel; and clergymen.

15. The ranking of school personnel influencing career choices of students was vocational agricultural teachers, guidance counselors, principals, coaches, and academic teachers.

16. Occupational choices of students were based primarily on personal interests, satisfactions, and rewards. A smaller percent were influenced by experience, abilities, and tangible assets. Considered least important in career decisions were migration requirements and inheritance of property.

17. The vocational choice levels of students were significantly related to academic achievement averages over the years enrolled in high school.

18. Attainment of vocational aspirations were primarily limited by change of interest, lack of ability or skill, and lack of financial support.
19. The primary sources of financial aid for continued education and occupational entry were parents and work.

20. Financial aid for continued education and occupational entry were not regarded as serious obstacles for the majority of students.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were formulated regarding the vocational choices of vocational agricultural students:

1. Students are aware of the benefits of acquiring an education beyond high school.

   Approximately one-half of the students aspired and expected to attain an educational status beyond high school. A high degree of association existed between the aspired and expected educational choices of students. There was a trend to choose the higher educational levels as the students progressed through high school.

2. Educational requirements of the higher prestige occupations cause many students to expect the lower status careers.

   Professional and skilled occupations were aspired by a total of 57.9 percent of the students. These two categories were expected by a total of 37.5 percent of the students.

3. Many persons having high occupational expectations lack the scholastic aptitude for attaining the education required for their chosen occupations.

   A total of 50.7 percent of the respondents chose occupations requiring educational preparation beyond high school. Only 23.8 percent of the students had achieved greater than a "C" average over the high school years.

4. Students are better prepared to make educational than occupational choices.
Educational aspirations and expectations were undecided by 13.4 percent and 15.1 percent of the students, respectively. Occupational aspirations and expectations were not crystallized by 20.6 percent and 41.4 percent of the participants, respectively.

5. Occupational information, as provided in the school setting, has very limited influence on the vocational choices of students.

Student vocational expectations were not significantly influenced by conferences concerning course choices or career plans with guidance counselors or teachers.

Occupational expectations were not statistically related to student awareness of the educational requisites of their chosen occupations.

A majority of students were unfamiliar with the duties, responsibilities, qualifications, and rewards of the world of work. Many students selected occupations they could not spell or describe correctly, indicating a lack of familiarity with occupational literature.

6. Counseling services provided by most schools are directed toward advanced educational planning, rather than occupational preparedness.

Course choices were discussed with guidance counselors and teachers by 48.7 percent and 44.1 percent of the students, respectively. Occupational plans were discussed with guidance counselors and teachers by 35.9 percent and 35.1 percent of the respondents. Almost 80 percent of the students reported that teachers had encouraged them to acquire education beyond high school.

7. Educational status of the parents is the most significant aspect of the home environment influencing the vocational choices of youth.

Generally, mothers had achieved a higher educational status than fathers; however, fathers had attained more prestigious occupational levels.

Mothers were more influential in educational decisions and fathers exerted a greater influence on occupational choices.
Parental educational status was more closely associated with vocational choices of the students than parental occupational prestige.

8. Students place a higher value upon applied high school courses having a functional relationship to occupational performance.

The ranking of subjects considered most influential in vocational choices were vocational agriculture and physical education. Other subjects influencing career choices in descending order of importance were mathematics, science, English, and history.

9. Student participation in extra-curricular activities is more closely associated with occupational aspirations than expectations.

A statistically significant association was obtained when participation in extra-curricular activities was related to occupational aspirations. The relationship of participation in extra-curricular activities to occupational expectations failed to reach significance.

10. Persons closely associated with youth are most influential in their vocational decisions.

The reference groups of persons influencing the career choices of students were these: parents; a heterogeneous grouping of friends, relatives other than parents, and persons in chosen occupations; school personnel; and clergymen. The relative ranking of reference groups remained constant, but variations existed within these categories when persons influencing educational and occupational choices were compared.

11. Personal values of the students are manifested in their reasons for choosing occupations.

Occupational choices of students were primarily based upon personal interests, satisfactions, and rewards. A smaller percent of respondents were influenced by work experiences, talents and abilities, and tangible assets. Migration requirements and inheritance of property were least influential on career choices.
12. The high school academic achievement record throughout high school is an index to the status of aspired and expected educational choices of students.

A statistically significant association existed between student academic achievement and vocational choice levels.

13. Attainment of educational and occupational aspirations are primarily limited by the same reasons.

The most important reasons indicated by students deterring attainment of vocational aspirations were change of interest, lack of ability or skill, and lack of financial support.

14. Financial aid for continued education and occupational entry is not a serious deterrent to the attainment of career objectives for a majority of students.

Parents and work at a job were regarded as the primary sources of financial support in reaching career objectives by a majority of students. More than half of the parents were employed in skilled and higher level occupations, indicating that adequate financial support could be obtained. Continued education was highly valued, as evidenced by 92.4 percent of the students who were encouraged by their parents to acquire additional schooling beyond high school.

Recommendations

Based on evidence in this study, the following suggestions were made for the improvement of vocational education in Louisiana public schools:

1. A functional vocational education program, established in the public school system could be very beneficial in preparing persons of all ages and abilities for job entry and advancement. Among the students surveyed were approximately one-fourth who planned to attain a college degree. The existing public secondary school curriculum has generally neglected to provide
adequate education for the remaining three-fourths of the students who need occupational training to prepare for worthwhile careers.

2. A study of occupations could be included as a part of the school curriculum. This orientation would make a worthy contribution to student career choices if begun in the elementary grades and continued through placement in a satisfactory occupation. A majority of the students in this study was uniformed of the prerequisites, duties, responsibilities, and rewards of the occupations they chose. Moreover, two-fifths of the students had not established tentative occupational choices.

The National Vocational Education Act of 1963, Public Law 88-210, specifically states that each student enrolled in a Federally funded vocational program shall have an occupational objective. The public school systems participating in these programs are therefore charged with providing the education and training needed by students for achieving their occupational goals.

3. The public school system could provide a valuable service through initiation of occupational informational programs for parents. Parents are the most influential persons in the career choices of youth. Accurate and timely vocational information is needed by parents so they may counsel youth more effectively. Conferences regarding student career
decisions would be more effective if they involved parents, teachers, guidance counselors and principals.

4. Professionally trained vocational guidance personnel need to be provided the schools in sufficient numbers to permit frequent conferences with students concerning career plans. Only one-third of the students had been counseled on occupational plans by guidance counselors or teachers. Furthermore, the occupational choices of students who had received counsel were not significantly different from those who had not had such conferences. School personnel could be more effective in career counseling if they were better informed of the conditions in the world of work.

5. A greater student awareness of agricultural careers may be developed through emphasis on training for nonfarm agricultural occupations. Only a limited and insignificant number of the vocational agricultural students in this research chose careers in agriculture. Recent research in Louisiana has indicated that numerous rewarding careers in agriculture are available for qualified persons.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS


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44. Taves, Marvin J. *Mobility Among High School Graduates*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station and University of Minnesota Institute of Agriculture, Sociology of Rural Life Series, #4281, Number 3, 1959.
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54. Burchinal, Lee G. "Differences in Educational and Occupational Aspirations of Farm, Small Town, and City Boys," Rural Sociology, 26 (1961), 107-121.


EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THESE CHOICES

(Inventory)

Baton Rouge, Louisiana
March 1968
DO NOT WRITE ON THE QUESTION BOOKLET. RECORD YOUR ANSWERS ON THE ANSWER SHEET.

1.* Grade:

(1) 9th  
(2) 10th  
(3) 11th  
(4) 12th  

2.* Sex:

(1) Male  
(2) Female  

3. Age:

(1) 14 years or less  
(2) 15 years  
(3) 16 years  
(4) 17 years  
(5) 18 years and over  

4. Curriculum:

(1) College Prepatory  
(2) General  
(3) Vocational  

5 - 10 Indicate years enrolled in vocational courses:

5.* Vocational Agriculture

(1) 1 year  
(2) 2 years  
(3) 3 years  
(4) 4 years  
(5) never enrolled  

6. Vocational Home Economics

(1) 1 year  
(2) 2 years  
(3) 3 years  
(4) 4 years  
(5) never enrolled  

7. Office Occupations

(1) 1 year  
(2) 2 years  
(3) 3 years  
(4) 4 years  
(5) never enrolled
8. Distributive Education
(1) 1 year
(2) 2 years
(3) 3 years
(4) 4 years
(5) never enrolled

9. Industrial Arts
(1) 1 year
(2) 2 years
(3) 3 years
(4) 4 years
(5) never enrolled

10. Trade and Industrial
(1) 1 year
(2) 2 years
(3) 3 years
(4) 4 years
(5) never enrolled

I. SELF RELATED FACTORS

11. I live with:
(1) My own parents
(2) A parent and a step-parent
(3) One parent only
(4) My grandparents
(5) Other relatives or guardians

12. As to working while I am in high school:
(1) I do not work away from home
(2) I sometimes work away from home
(3) I work regularly at a job away from home

13. About summer employment for which I am paid, I work:
(1) Full-time every summer
(2) Part-time every summer
(3) Some summers part-time
(4) Some summers full-time
(5) Have never been employed during summers

14. Nearly all of my friends now:
(1) Have graduated from high school
(2) Are presently attending high school
(3) Have quit school

15. At the present time my best friend is: (Indicate only one)
(1) Attending high school
(2) Quit high school
(3) Graduated from high school
(4) Attending a business school, vocational school or college
(5) Serving in the armed services

II. FAMILY RELATED FACTORS

16. My parents are: (Indicate only one)
(1) Both living
(2) Both deceased
(3) Father deceased
(4) Mother deceased
(5) Separated or divorced

A.* RECORD THE ANSWERS FOR THIS QUESTION ON THE FORM ATTACHED TO THE
ANSWER SHEET:
Occupation of parents: (If retired or deceased, indicate the
occupation held prior to that time.) (Specify the Kind of work
done and not where employed.)

17. My Mother:
(1) Is a full-time homemaker
(2) Has a full-time job outside the home
(3) Has a part-time job outside the home
(4) Does not apply

18. Number of children in the family: (Include yourself and married
children.)
(1) One or two
(2) Three or four
(3) Five or six
(4) Seven or eight
(5) Nine or more

19. My Father's annual income:
(1) Under $3,000
(2) $3,000 - $4,999
(3) $5,000 - $6,999
(4) $7,000 - $9,000
(5) Over $9,000

20. My Mother's annual income:
(1) Under $3,000
(2) $3,000 - $4,999
(3) $4,000 - $6,999
(4) $7,000 - $9,000
(5) Over $9,000

21. I consider my parents status in the community to be:
(1) Very important people
(2) Just average people
(3) Not at all important
22.* My Father's education consisted of:
(1) Less than high school
(2) Completed high school
(3) Vocational school, business school, or some college
(4) College degree (B.S., M.S., PhD., or Professional Degree)
(5) Uncertain or does not apply

23.* My Mother's education consisted of:
(1) Less than high school
(2) Completed high school
(3) Vocational school, business school, or some college
(4) College degree (B.S., M.S., PhD, or Professional Degree)
(5) Uncertain or does not apply

24. My Father's opinion of his educational level:
(1) Excellent
(2) Good
(3) Satisfactory
(4) Poor
(5) Does not apply

25. My Mother's opinion of her educational level:
(1) Excellent
(2) Good
(3) Satisfactory
(4) Poor
(5) Does not apply

26.* My parents' encouragement concerning continuing my education:
(1) Very encouraging
(2) Encouraging
(3) No encouragement
(4) Does not apply

27. My Father considers his occupation to be:
(1) Excellent
(2) Good
(3) Satisfactory
(4) Poor
(5) Does not apply

28. My Mother considers my Father's occupation to be:
(1) Excellent
(2) Good
(3) Satisfactory
(4) Poor
(5) Does not apply
29. I consider my Father's occupation to be:
   (1) Excellent
   (2) Good
   (3) Satisfactory
   (4) Poor
   (5) Does not apply

III. SCHOOL RELATED FACTORS

30. Number of elementary schools I have attended: (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

31. Number of junior high schools I have attended: (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

32. Number of high schools I have attended: (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)

33. My parents' participation in school sponsored activities is:
   (1) Excellent
   (2) Good
   (3) Satisfactory
   (4) Poor
   (5) Does not apply

34.* My high school academic achievement average over the years attended is:
   (1) D (1 point)
   (2) C (2 point)
   (3) B (3 point)
   (4) A (4 point)

35. As compared to most students in my high school, my leadership
    ability is:
    (1) Greater than average
    (2) Average
    (3) Less than average
    (4) Uncertain

36.* Concerning continuing education; my teachers have been: (Indicate
    only one)
    (1) Strongly encouraging
    (2) Encouraging
    (3) Fairly encouraging
    (4) Never said much about it
    (5) Discouraging

37. The degree of the availability of occupational information in my
    school is:
    (1) Excellent
    (2) Good
    (3) Satisfactory
    (4) Poor

38. The degree of the availability of counseling service in my school
    for me is:
141

(1) Excellent
(2) Good
(3) Satisfactory
(4) Poor

39.* The number of extra-curricular activities in which I have actively participated as a member are: (Note that 5 indicates no participation in extra-curricular activities:)
(1) One
(2) Two
(3) Three
(4) Four or more
(5) None

40-54.* The subjects that have influenced my educational and occupational choices are: (Indicate those which apply by recording (1) for yes or (2) for no.)

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55. In general, I:
(1) like school
(2) dislike school

56.* I discuss my course choices with a guidance counselor:
(1) Yes
(2) No

57.* I discuss my course choices with my teachers:
(1) Yes
(2) No

58.* I discuss my occupational plans with a guidance counselor:
(1) Yes
(2) No
59.* I discuss my occupational plans with my teachers:
   (1) Yes
   (2) No

60. The attitude of people in my community toward education is:
   (1) Excellent
   (2) Good
   (3) Satisfactory
   (4) Poor
   (5) I am uncertain

IV. OCCUPATIONAL

B.* RECORD YOUR ANSWER FOR THIS QUESTION ON THE FORM ATTACHED TO THE
   ANSWER SHEET:
   If I were free to choose, my desired occupational choice would be:
   (See form attached to answer sheet.)

61. The estimated annual income needed by my family for a comfortable
   living is:
   (1) Under $3,000
   (2) $3,000 - $4,999
   (3) $5,000 - $6,999
   (4) $7,000 - $9,000
   (5) Over $9,000

62-77.* My reasons for making this occupational choice are: (Indicate
   those which apply by recording (1) for Yes or (2) for No.)

   Yes  No

   62.  (1) (2) Interest in this work
   63.  (1) (2) Working conditions
   64.  (1) (2) Social Standing of occupation
   65.  (1) (2) Availability of employment
   66.  (1) (2) Inheritance of a farm or business
   67.  (1) (2) Work experience in this occupation
   68.  (1) (2) Financial backing is available for this occupation
   69.  (1) (2) Personal satisfaction I can receive
   70.  (1) (2) Contributions to society
   71.  (1) (2) Salary or wages
   72.  (1) (2) Geographical location
   73.  (1) (2) Special talents or abilities
   74.  (1) (2) Length of time for training
   75.  (1) (2) Cost required to prepare for the occupation
   76.  (1) (2) Fringe benefits
   77.  (1) (2) Insistance of parents or relatives

78.* If I require financial aid with my desired occupational choice the
      primary source will be: (Indicate only one)

      (1) Parents
      (2) Relatives
      (3) Leading agencies
      (4) Working at another job
      (5) No help needed
79.* The primary reason why I may not enter my desired occupation is:
(Indicate only one)
(1) Physical handicaps, or lack of abilities or skills
(2) Continuing education impossible
(3) Lack of finances
(4) Marriage
(5) Change of interest

C.* RECORD YOUR ANSWER FOR THIS QUESTION ON THE FORM ATTACHED TO THE
ANSWER SHEET:
If I am unable to enter my desired occupation listed in question
B, then I will probably enter this occupation. (See form attached
to answer sheet)

80. I think my ability as related to the occupation I will probably
enter is:
(1) Excellent
(2) Good
(3) Satisfactory
(4) Poor
(5) Uncertain or no choice made

81.* Regarding my knowledge of the occupation which I will probably enter,
I have: (Indicate only one)
(1) Good knowledge because I have studied it
(2) General knowledge but don't know much about the duties of it
(3) Don't know much about it yet but will find out when I go to school
(4) Don't know much about it yet but will learn from experience on
the job
(5) Don't know because I have not yet made a choice

82. I made my occupational choice while in: (Indicate only one)
(1) Eighth grade or below
(2) Ninth grade
(3) Tenth Grade
(4) Eleventh grade
(5) Twelfth grade

83.* The education which I will need for entering my chosen occupation is:
(Indicate only one)
(1) Less than high school
(2) Completion of high school
(3) Vocational school, business school, or some college
(4) College degree (B.S., M.S., PhD, or Professional Degree)
(5) Uncertain or no choice made

84-102* The person or persons who have influenced my occupational choices
are: (Indicate those which apply by recording (1) for Yes or (2)
for No)
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<td>85.</td>
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<td>(1) (2) Vocational home economics teacher</td>
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<td>99.</td>
<td>(1) (2) Trade and industrial education teacher</td>
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<td>(1) (2) Industrial arts teacher</td>
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<td>101.</td>
<td>(1) (2) Guidance counselor</td>
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<td>102.</td>
<td>(1) (2) Others</td>
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V. EDUCATIONAL

103.* Regarding my educational plans, I desire to: (Indicate only one)
(1) Drop out of high school
(2) Complete high school
(3) Attend vocational school, business school, or some college
(4) Obtain a college degree (B.S., M.S., PhD, or Professional Degree)
(5) Uncertain

104.* If I continue my education it will be financed primarily by:
(Indicate only one.)
(1) Parents
(2) Scholarship
(3) Working
(4) Borrowing
(5) Uncertain

105.* If I do not attain my desired educational goal the main reason could be:
(Indicate only one)
(1) Interest
(2) Ability
(3) Encouragement
(4) Finances
(5) Marriage
106.* I will probably attain this educational level: (Indicate only one)
(1) Drop out of high school
(2) Complete high school
(3) Vocational school, business school, or some college
(4) College degree (B.S., M.S., PhD., or Professional Degree)
(5) Uncertain

107-125.* The person or persons who have influenced my educational choices are: (Indicate those which apply by recording (1) for Yes or (2) for No.)

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- Mother
- Father
- Brother or Sister
- Grandparent
- Other relative
- Friend
- Person in the occupation
- Clergyman
- Coach
- Principal
- Academic teacher
- Vocational agriculture teacher
- Vocational home economics teacher
- Distributive education teacher
- Business education teacher
- Trade and industrial education teacher
- Industrial arts teacher
- Guidance counselor
- Others
SAMPLE

**1. CHICAGO**
1. city
2. mountain
3. island

**SCORES**

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DIRECTIONS: Read each question and its numbered answers. When you have decided which answer is correct, blacken the corresponding space on this sheet with a No. 2 pencil. Make your mark as long as the pair of lines, and completely fill the area between the pair of lines. If you change your mind, erase your first mark COMPLETELY. Make no stray marks; they may count against you.

**IBM 250 FORM NO. 100A 32 AND O00000 IBM 1250 DOCUMENT NO. 205 WHICH CAN BE USED IN LIEU OP...**
APPENDIX "C"
FORM FOR WRITTEN ANSWERS

Page 3  A. Occupation of parents: (If retired or deceased, indicate the occupation held prior to that time.)
Specify the kind of work done and not where employed.

126__
127__   Father__________________________
128__   Mother__________________________

Page 7  B. If I were free to choose, my desired occupational choice would be:

130__   ________________________________ No choice made ( )
131__

Page 8  C. If I am unable to enter my desired occupation (listed in question B), then I will probably enter this occupation:

132__   ________________________________ No choice made ( )
133__
OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL CLASSIFICATION SCALE

1. PROFESSIONALS:

Includes persons such as teachers, professors, lawyers, engineers, artists, writers, editors, physicians, registered nurses, and all occupations requiring a college degree.

2. BUSINESS AND FARM OWNERS, EXECUTIVES, OR MANAGERS:

Consists of persons owning or managing banks, factories, wholesale and retail businesses, service and repair enterprises, contractors, and proprietors of almost every other sort.

3. CLERICAL, SALES, AND TECHNICAL WORKERS:

Are a heterogogeneous category of supervisory, clerical, technical, and salespeople, such as business machine operators, stenographers, bookkeepers, typists, draftsmen, and others whose work is primarily nonmanual.

4. SKILLED WORKERS:

Skilled workers are those such as bricklayers, plumbers, machinists, locomotive engineers, law enforcement officers, printers, plant operators, cooks, barbers, mechanics, welders, and pipefitters.

5. SEMISKILLED AND UNSKILLED WORKERS:

Semiskilled workers are truck drivers, machine operators, service station attendants, waiters, and others whose work is primarily manual and involves a minor degree of skill. Also included are models, dancers, and musicians having only limited training or formal education. Unskilled workers are the lowest grade workers in terms of skill and responsibility including sweepers, porters, janitors, cleaners, construction laborers, and other workers of similar character.

6. MISCELLANEOUS:

Included are homemakers, professional athletes, career servicemen, and others not elsewhere classified.

7. UNKNOWN OR NO CHOICE MADE:
### NUMBER AND PERCENT OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS

SURVEYED IN EACH SCHOOL

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APPENDIX "F"
## THE RELATIONSHIP OF EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATIONS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS TO SELECTED VARIABLES

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<tr>
<th>Selected Variables</th>
<th>Chi-square</th>
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<th>Significant at 0.05 level of confidence</th>
<th>Contingency coefficient</th>
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N=741 (C) was corrected for fineness of grouping.
## The Relationship of Educational Expectations of Vocational Agricultural Students to Selected Variables

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N=741 (C) was corrected for fineness of grouping.
APPENDIX "H"
### The Relationship of Occupational Aspirations of Vocational Agricultural Students to Selected Variables

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N=741 (C) was corrected for fineness of grouping.
APPENDIX "I"
## THE RELATIONSHIP OF OCCUPATIONAL EXPECTATIONS OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STUDENTS TO SELECTED VARIABLES

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N-741 (C) was corrected for fineness of grouping.
VITA

Vanik Silas Eaddy, was born March 26, 1937 in Williamsburg County, South Carolina. He received his elementary and high school education at Indiantown Public Schools in Hemingway, South Carolina, graduated June, 1955, and entered Clemson University in September, 1955. A Bachelor of Science Degree was received from Clemson University in vocational agricultural education, and he was commissioned in the United States Army, August, 1959.

He married the former Bernadine LaBorde of Mansura, Louisiana, August, 1959. To this couple were born three children, a son, Gregory Vanik in April 1961, a daughter Kecia Veronica in January, 1964, and another son, Troy Bradley in November, 1966.

After teaching vocational agriculture at Hebron High School in Cades, South Carolina from August, 1959, through August, 1960, he served in the United States Army from September, 1960, to September, 1962, and was honorably discharged. Through continuous service in the United States Army Reserve, he was promoted to the rank of Captain, and is presently serving in Active Reserve status.

A Master of Science Degree was awarded August, 1964, by Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The major area of study was in vocational agricultural education with minor specialization in animal science.

The investigator taught vocational agriculture at Dutchtown High School in Geismar, Louisiana from April, 1963, until June, 1966. He returned to Louisiana State University to engage in post graduate study
toward the Doctor of Philosophy Degree, with major preparation in vocational agricultural education and minor specialization in animal science. During his doctoral study, he was employed as a Graduate Assistant in the Department of Vocational Agricultural Education. In July, 1968, he accepted a position on the staff of Auburn University to serve that institution as Assistant Professor of Vocational Agricultural Education.
Candidate: Vanik S. Eaddy

Major Field: Vocational Agricultural Education

Title of Thesis: The Influence of Selected Factors on the Vocational Choices of Vocational Agricultural Students in Louisiana

Approved:

J. C. Atherton
Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

Ralph J. Souleware

Dean Adams

Charles C. Crites

Date of Examination: June 26, 1968