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# Selected Factors of Influence on High School Senior's Attitudes Toward Community College Occupational Programs

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**SELECTED FACTORS OF INFLUENCE ON HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS' ATTITUDES  
TOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAMS**

---

**A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Faculty of the Department of Education  
East Tennessee State University**

---

**In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Education**

---

**by  
William B. Biddle, Jr.**

**June 1973**

APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Advanced Graduate Committee of

WILLIAM B. BIDDLE, JR.

met on the

23 day of May, 19 73.

The committee read and examined his dissertation, supervised his defense of it in an oral examination and decided to recommend that his study be submitted to the Graduate Council and the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Education.

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by  
William B. Biddle, Jr.

June 1973

William B. Biddle, Jr., B. S., Carson-Newman College, June 1956.  
M. M. Ed., VanderCook College of Music, Aug. 1962.  
Ed.D., East Tennessee State University, June 1973.

SELECTED FACTORS OF INFLUENCE ON HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS' ATTITUDES  
TOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAMS

Purpose. The purpose of this study was to analyze the influence of selected factors on high school seniors' attitudes toward two-year occupational programs as career educational plans. More specifically, the study analyzed the relationship between the students' educational plans and the following selected factors: (1) parents' perceived influence, (2) fathers' occupations, (3) fathers' education, (4) peers' perceived influence, and (5) the schools' perceived influence.

Method. The subjects used in the study were 2,010 twelfth grade students in eighteen high schools served by Walters State Community College, Morristown, Tennessee. Graduates from each of these high schools were currently or previously enrolled at Walters State.

An instrument was constructed, pretested, and validated to measure perceived parent, peer, and school influence on high school seniors' attitudes toward occupational programs in community colleges as career plans. Hollingshead's seven category occupational and educational scale was used to measure the fathers' occupational and educational levels. Facilities of the East Tennessee State University Computer Center were employed to process the collected data for the production of frequency distribution tables and for calculation of Gamma,  $\gamma$ , statistics.

Summary. On the basis of this study of high school seniors in the service area of Walters State Community College, it was concluded that a distinct difference existed in the factors influencing students to enroll in community college transfer programs and the factors influencing students to enroll in technology or occupational career programs in community colleges. Community college transfer students had parent, peer, and school influence scores which compared more closely to the scores of those students who planned to enroll in college degree and college plus professional training programs than to those students who planned occupational or technology programs in community colleges. Influence scores for the community college technology or occupational career-bound students more closely resembled the scores of the vocational-technical-bound students than the scores of those who planned to terminate their education with high school graduation. The school had the most influence on these three groups, while parents had more influence on the community college transfer and higher education-bound students. The fathers' educational and occupational levels were also lower for the community college occupational career-bound students than for students planning to enroll in community college transfer programs.

Implications. A major implication of this study for the community college was that seniors who selected community college occupational career programs as their educational plan were not greatly influenced in that decision by their parents or peers. The school was found to have the most influence on these students. Since these seniors perceived the school to be the primary source of influence on their decision to enroll in community college occupational career programs, it is extremely important that the high school personnel be cognizant of the extent of their influence on these students. Two possibilities existed: (1) either the school recognized its influence on these seniors' educational plans and had advised these students accordingly, or (2) the school was unaware of the degree of influence exerted on this group of seniors and failed to carefully advise them. Therefore, seniors looking to the school for assistance in making educational plans were reluctant to select higher goals due to a lack of encouragement by school personnel.

Another implication for the community college, apparent from both the literature reviewed and the present research, was that since parents with high educational and occupational levels were found to exert considerable influence on their children's educational plans and since this influence was closely related to students selecting programs which would transfer to four-year colleges, the community colleges should consider increasing the number of transfer technology programs and should increase the publicity in this area.

Recommendations. From these conclusions and implications four major recommendations can be made:

1. It is recommended that community college recruiting personnel be oriented to the fact that high school guidance counselors and teachers have a significant influence on the educational plans of students who select post-secondary vocational programs. Therefore, recruitment procedures for community college occupational programs should be designed to influence high school personnel more effectively.
2. It is recommended that parents of community college transfer oriented students be made aware of the technological programs in community colleges and the resulting employment opportunities.
3. It is recommended that community colleges establish and publicize the transferability of their technology programs.
4. Additional research is recommended to determine if educational plans change after students leave high school and what factors influence these changes.

. . . . .

Dissertation prepared under the guidance of Dr. Harold Measel, Chairman, Dr. William Acuff, Dr. Ted Cobun, Dr. Robert Shepard, and Dr. Lewis Songer.

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W. B. B.

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION

Student attitudes toward selecting transfer over terminal occupational programs in the community college as career educational plans have become a great concern for the academic community. The transfer program in a community college was designed to provide courses parallel to those offered for the first two years of a four-year baccalaureate degree program. The evolution of junior and community college transfer programs with regard to the percent of students actually transferring to a four-year school was interesting and informative. Of those students completing these transfer programs, only a small percentage can be predicted to actually transfer to a four-year college or university. Eells' 1941 study of junior college transfer programs indicated that only 25 percent of the junior college transfer students did actually transfer.<sup>1</sup> Medsker reported on a 1952 study of sixty-three two-year colleges that "of 17,627 regular students entering some type of two-year college in 1952, only one in every three (33 percent) had by June, 1956, transferred to a four-year institution."<sup>2</sup> Trent and Medsker, in 1968, reported that another study in progress showed that "proportionally

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Crosly Eells, Present Status of Junior College Terminal Education (Washington: American Association of Junior Colleges, 1941), p. 61.

<sup>2</sup>Leland L. Medsker, The Junior College: Progress and Prospect (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), p. 93.

slightly fewer students transferred between 1961 and 1965 than in 1956."<sup>3</sup> The percentage of those transferring who actually graduate from a four-year institution, however, has not been determined. The vacillating job opportunities that await these transfer students presents still another important question.

A 1971 survey of 140 colleges and universities indicated that job opportunities for male graduates with a Bachelor of Arts degree dropped 61 percent within a one-year time period.<sup>4</sup> Also, the University of Wisconsin polled 944 graduates and discovered that only 174 were employed full time. Of those employed, only one-half indicated they were employed in the position they wanted.<sup>5</sup>

Conversely, students with two-year occupational career degrees are in great demand. As an example, para-professional health programs are training only 38 percent of the personnel actually needed.<sup>6</sup> Business Week reported even greater needs for other occupational career programs:

By 1980 the nation is expected to be short 400,000 such [occupational career] workers, trained or not. In the next four years, some 1.5 million more secretaries will be needed, the number of people employed in certain computer fields should double, and such comparatively new areas as pollution control will increase the need for technicians. In general, 50 percent of the jobs that open up in the 1970's will require

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<sup>3</sup>James W. Trent and Leland L. Medsker, Beyond High School (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., 1968), p. 85.

<sup>4</sup>"Graduates and Jobs: A Grave New World," Time, May 24, 1971, p. 49.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>"Blue-collar Training Gets a White-collar Look," Business Week, July 31, 1971, p. 76.

training beyond high school, but below the four-year degree.<sup>7</sup>

With apparently dismal employment opportunities for students with four-year degrees and the contrasting need for additional occupational career personnel indicated, it became important to investigate the reasons two-thirds of the students entering the community college continue to elect the transfer programs.<sup>8</sup>

Earlier research identified those factors primarily influencing educational plans of youth as parents, peers, and schools. The extent to which these factors influenced educational plans of youth became increasingly important to analyze since large numbers of community college students continue to elect programs that appear to offer limited employment possibilities.

## THE PROBLEM

### Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to analyze the influence of selected factors on high school seniors' attitudes toward two-year occupational programs as career educational plans. More specifically, the purpose of the study was to analyze the relationship between the students' educational plans and the following selected factors: (1) parents' perceived influence, (2) fathers' occupations, (3) fathers' education, (4) peers' perceived influence, and (5) the schools' perceived influence.

---

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, The Open-Door Colleges (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1970), p. 18.

### Significance of the Study

The transfer program statistics stated in the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education report included the Tennessee Community Colleges.<sup>9</sup> In a recent study of selected classes in sixty-eight Tennessee high schools, related information revealed that 43 percent of those responding to the questionnaire planned to attend four-year colleges. Only 4 percent, however, indicated an interest in the community college.<sup>10</sup> Although the study did not reveal the number of students in the 43 percent who will spend their first two years in a community college transfer program, it did indicate that Tennessee high school students were following the national trend in their intent to pursue a four-year baccalaureate degree.

Walters State Community College, to which this research was directed, has also been concerned with the occupational career program. When the college first opened in September, 1970, there was an enrollment of 414 students. Of this initial enrollment, 333 students were in the two-year transfer program and eighty-one in the occupational career program. After two years of operation, Walters State Community College graduated fifty-six students. Forty-six received Associate of Science degrees in transfer programs and ten students received Associate of Science degrees in occupational career programs.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Eugene W. Schoch, "Career Education and the School Counselor in Tennessee" (Knoxville: Research Coordinating Unit, 1972), p. 37. (Mimeographed.)

Since this study was an attempt to analyze the influence of selected factors on high school seniors' attitudes toward occupational programs in the community college as career educational plans, the findings should have direct implications for the proliferation of such programs.

#### Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study were as follows:

1. The population of this study was limited to the senior class members of eighteen high schools which had graduates enrolled in Walters State Community College.
2. The research was limited to data gathered through a questionnaire completed by the high school seniors enrolled during the fall of 1972 in the high schools in the ten-county service area surrounding Walters State Community College.

#### Assumptions

The following assumptions were considered pertinent to this study:

1. The factors influencing high school seniors to select occupational career programs in the community college could be detected by the constructed questionnaire administered to the students.
2. The high school seniors' educational plans were often not congruent with their occupational objective.
3. Age, sex, and race were not considered significant factors in this study.

## DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

### Educational Plans

Educational plans refer to the educational institutions and curricula high school seniors elect to enroll in to achieve desired occupational objectives.

### Vocational Education

Vocational or technical training or retraining which is given in schools or classes . . . under public supervision and control or under contract with a state board or local educational agency, and is conducted as part of a program designed to fit individuals for gainful employment as semi-skilled or skilled workers or technicians in recognized occupations including any program designed to fit individuals for gainful employment which may be assisted by federal funds under the Vocational Education Act of 1946 and supplementary vocational education acts, but excluding any program to fit individuals for employment in occupations which the Commissioner determines, and specified in regulations, to be generally considered professional or as requiring a baccalaureate or higher degree.<sup>11</sup>

### Occupational Career Program

Occupational career programs are vocational-technical educational programs that can be completed in two years at a community college with an Associate of Science degree. They are designed for the student to enter employment upon completion.

### Two-year Transfer Program

Two-year transfer programs refer to those courses designed to offer the university-parallel courses needed for the first two years

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<sup>11</sup>R. W. Roberts, Vocational and Practical Arts Education (2d ed.; New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 12.

of a four-year baccalaureate degree.

### Schools' Perceived Influence

The influence of the school on the educational plans of seniors refers to the perceived influence of teachers, counselors, and school administrators.

### Community College

The community college refers to public two-year institutions of higher education which offer transfer, occupational career, remedial, and continuing adult education programs.

### Junior College

The general term junior college is used to indicate an institution of higher education offering the first two years of college study. This term includes two-year public colleges, community colleges, community junior colleges, and two-year private colleges.

## PROCEDURES

Seniors enrolled in high schools in the ten-county service area of Walters State Community College, Morristown, Tennessee, served as the population for the study (see Map, Appendix F).

The high schools which participated in the study were identified by the Tennessee Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational-Technical Education coding numbers, in order to correlate the findings of this study with past related research.

Permission was secured from the Assistant Commissioner of Vocational-Technical Education and superintendents of schools in the

area to conduct the study in the high schools.

The questionnaire utilized in collecting the data for the study was developed with the assistance of the Tennessee Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational-Technical Education, Knoxville, Tennessee; the Dean of Occupational Careers, Walters State Community College, Morristown, Tennessee; and professors of education at East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee.

Superintendents of the schools of the ten counties included in the study were contacted and permission was obtained to distribute a questionnaire to every high school senior during the winter of 1972.

With cooperation from the high school principals and guidance counselors in the high schools, the investigator-group administered a questionnaire to all high school seniors.

Collected data were processed with the assistance of the East Tennessee State University Computer Center where statistics were computed to analyze the interrelations between the students' educational plans and the following selected factors: (1) parents' perceived influence, (2) fathers' occupations, (3) fathers' education, (4) peers' perceived influence, and (5) the schools' perceived influence.

#### HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were stated in the interrogative form:

1. Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of the fathers' education, as measured by the Hollingshead Scale?<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>August B. Hollingshead, "The Two Factor Index of Social Position" (New Haven: Yale University, 1957). (Mimeographed.)

2. Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of the fathers' occupations, as measured by the Hollingshead Scale?<sup>13</sup>

3. Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived parental influence?

4. Will there be a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' education?

5. Will there be a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' occupations?

6. Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived peer influence?

7. Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived school influence?

#### ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the study, the statement of the problem, the significance of the study, the procedures followed, the limitations of the study, definitions of terms, hypotheses, and the outline of the study.

Chapter 2 presents a review of related literature.

Chapter 3 describes the procedure used in collecting the data and the statistical methods used in analyzing the data.

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the study.

Chapter 5 contains the summary and conclusions, and presents recommendations and implications, based on the data collected for this study.

## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### INTRODUCTION

Many studies have emphasized the relationship of certain sociological variables and the educational plans of high school youth. A great number of these studies have dichotomized college and non-college-bound youth with correlations between voluminous independent variables. The review of literature presented in this chapter focused on the following independent variables: (1) parents, including the fathers' occupations and education; (2) peers; and (3) schools. These variables were perceived by the investigator as determinants of the high school seniors' attitudes toward occupational programs in the community college as career educational plans.

Albert Rhodes, in his statement on the factors of influence on youths' educational plans, supported the importance of the variables selected.

The educational plans of youth are an outcome of a complex process of involvement with various agents of socialization whose aims may be more or less congruent. The educational aspirations of an adolescent represent the end product first, of his informal interaction with parents and siblings within the home and later, interaction with peers in the neighborhood and school.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Albert Lewis Rhodes, "Effects of Parental Expectations of Educational Plans of White and Nonwhite Adolescents" (Tallahassee, Florida: Florida State University, 1968), p. 14. (Mimeographed.)

Ralph Berdie asserted that the many factors influencing high school seniors' educational plans have an order of hierarchy:

The forces that tend to direct a person toward college, and the strength of these forces, determine the certainty of his choice or his eagerness to be a college student. These forces come primarily from his home and family and secondary from his age peers, his teachers, and other individuals and agencies within his community. A sufficiently strong force from his family usually will tend to be enough to direct a person toward college, but in the absence of such force from his family, forces from these other sources, if strong enough, may result in the individual attending college. Direction and strength of the force coming from the family are related to the economic status of the family, the cultural background of various family members, the experiences the family has had with people who have attended college, the information the family has about college and other alternatives and the values the family has centering about college and alternative plans.<sup>2</sup>

Robert E. L. Faris made the following assertion about influence on youths' educational plans:

We have much reason to believe that aspiration is a controlling variable of importance within the family, peer group, communities, and other social groupings, and that these groups may effect intelligence upward or downward through supplying of limited aspirations among its members.<sup>3</sup>

Although the foregoing assertions concerning factors of influence on the educational plans of high school students reflected cumulative factors of determinants, this review of literature focused on each of the three selected factors as a separate entity: parents, peers, and school.

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<sup>2</sup>Ralph F. Berdie, "Why Don't They Go to College?," Personnel and Guidance Journal, 31:356, March, 1953.

<sup>3</sup>Robert E. L. Faris, "Reflections on the Ability Dimension in Human Society," American Sociological Review, 26:835, December, 1961.

## PARENTS

Edward Soper, in a recent study involving 955 Utah high school students, identified and measured the degree of influence that individuals perceived or believed other persons exercised in terms of education and vocational decisions. He concluded that ". . . parental and family influence is by far the greatest influence upon Utah High School students. . . ."4

Trevor Williams' longitudinal study of 3,687 Canadian students on educational aspirations supported Soper's findings by concluding that parents exert the greatest influence on the educational plans of Canadian youth.<sup>5</sup>

William Bennett and Noel Gist did a study regarding family influence on students' educational and occupational aspirations as they relate to social class. Data for the study were gathered from eight hundred ninth and twelfth grade students in four midwestern high schools during 1961. In concluding the study, they asserted that regarding the actual influence "for both Negro and white, mothers and fathers are reported about an equal number of times as the most influential."<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Edward Lewis Soper, "A Study of Factors Influencing the Post-Secondary Educational and Vocational Decisions of Utah High School Students" (Salt Lake City, Utah: Utah State Board of Education, 1971), p. 12. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>5</sup>Trevor H. Williams, "Educational Aspirations: Longitudinal Evidence of Their Development in Canadian Youth," Sociology of Education, 45:107, January, 1972.

<sup>6</sup>William Bennett, Jr. and Noel P. Gist, "Class and Family Influences on Student Aspiration," Social Forces, 43:172, December, 1964.

Edwin Peters, who surveyed 380 high school seniors in Missouri, reported that the home is the greatest single agency for determining a vocation for young people. Of those responding to his survey, 20.5 percent indicated their parents as most influential.<sup>7</sup>

While most past studies recognized the importance of parental influence on the educational plans of their children, some researchers considered other influencing factors. Such a study was conducted by Richard Rehberg and David Westby in a survey of 2,852 male sophomores in six Pennsylvania cities. The study was an attempt to analyze the relationship of fathers' occupations, fathers' educational levels, parental educational encouragement, and family size to adolescent educational expectations. Rehberg and Westby concluded that:

The larger the family the greater the reduction not only in the frequency with which the parents encourage their children to continue their education beyond high school but also in the effectiveness of any given frequency level of parental educational encouragement as well.<sup>8</sup>

Richard Simpson studied both parental and peer group influence in a 1960 survey of 917 high school boys in two southern cities. His findings supported parental influence as being the most prominent among other selected variables. "Among boys aspiring to high occupations, the percentage whose parents had advised them to enter pro-

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<sup>7</sup>Edwin F. Peters, "Factors Which Contribute to Youth's Vocational Choice," Journal of Applied Psychology, 25:430, November, 1941.

<sup>8</sup>Richard A. Rehberg and David L. Westby, "Parental Encouragement, Occupation, Education and Family Size: Artifactual or Independent Determinants of Adolescent Educational Expectation?," Social Forces, 45:374, March, 1967.

fessions was much higher than the percentage of low aspirers. . . ."<sup>9</sup>  
Simpson also concluded that " . . . of the two types of influence, that  
of the parents appears to have the stronger effect."<sup>10</sup>

Joseph Kahl, in a well-known study of "common man" or working-class boys in eight public schools that composed a part of the Boston metropolitan area, obtained more specific information about parental influence. Twenty-four boys were selected for the study. Twelve boys who were in the college preparatory courses, had good grades, and planned to go to college after high school. The other twelve boys were not in the college preparatory courses and did not plan to go to college. All other measured variables were very similar including the intellectual levels and occupations of the fathers. Kahl found that parental influence on the sons' aspirations was related to the fathers' own satisfaction in life. Satisfied parents did not attempt to push their sons, while discontented parents tended to emphasize as early as grammar school the importance of education as a means of upward mobility for their sons.<sup>11</sup>

Milton Brown related parental influence directly to curriculum selection in community colleges. The study was an analysis of attitudes and opinions concerning occupational and technical education in community colleges in Michigan cities. Brown concluded that the majority of the

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<sup>9</sup>Richard L. Simpson, "Parental Influence, Anticipatory Socialization, and Social Mobility," American Sociological Review, 27:522, August, 1962.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Joseph A. Kahl, "Educational and Occupational Aspiration of 'Common Man' Boys," Harvard Educational Review, 23:188, Summer, 1953.

respondents were aware of the increasing need for technical personnel; yet these respondents did not want their children to enroll in community college occupational programs. Low prestige was cited as the reason parents preferred their children to enter traditional transfer college programs rather than occupational programs.<sup>12</sup>

A study conducted by William Sewell and Vimal Shah indicated that parental encouragement is a greater factor than socioeconomic status or intelligence in determining youths' educational plans.<sup>13</sup> However, their study of 10,318 Wisconsin high school seniors did not claim that parental encouragement can be isolated from other factors of influence.

Socioeconomic status, intelligence, and parental encouragement all have substantial independent relationships to college plans of males as well as females, and that neither intelligence nor parental encouragement--individually or jointly--can completely account for social class differences in college plans.<sup>14</sup>

#### Fathers' Occupations

The preceding review of literature has focused on the general influence of parents on the educational plans of high school youth. Other studies have shown that the occupation of the father is the dominant influence on the educational plans of high school youth.

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<sup>12</sup>Milton D. Brown, "A Comparative Study of Attitudes and Opinions Among Selected Groups in Two Michigan Cities with Authoritative Judgment Concerning Occupational and Technical Education in Community Colleges," Dissertation Abstracts, 25:3341, December, 1964.

<sup>13</sup>William H. Sewell and Vimal Shah, "Social Class, Parental Encouragement, and Educational Aspirations," American Journal of Sociology, 73:559, March, 1968.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

Various studies on the influence of the fathers' occupations on the sons' educational and vocational plans indicated that the degree of influence varies directly with the fathers' occupational levels. The higher the fathers' occupational status, the greater the fathers' influence upon the student. In 1954, Lamar Empey supported these findings and explained the lack of influence at the lower levels in his study of occupational aspirations and social class in the state of Washington. He concluded that the reason lower-class seniors are not influenced by their fathers' occupations is that these students usually prefer and anticipate having significantly higher occupational status than their fathers.<sup>15</sup>

Research by Krippner indicated that the influence of the fathers' occupations can be identified as early as the seventh or eighth grade. In his study of the vocational and educational interests of junior high school boys and girls, Krippner stated that there is a low positive correlation between the students' preferred vocations and the occupations of the fathers.<sup>16</sup>

In 1955, David Bordua studied the relationship between fathers' occupations and youths' educational plans when he surveyed 1,529 youths in grades nine through twelve in Massachusetts. He concluded that in both sexes and in all school grades, the fathers' occupations showed a

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<sup>15</sup>Lamar T. Empey, "Social Class and Occupational Aspiration," American Sociological Review, 21:708, December, 1956.

<sup>16</sup>Stanley Krippner, "A Study of the Vocational and Educational Interests of Junior High School Girls and Boys" (unpublished Doctor's dissertation, Northwestern University, 1961), p. 5.

positive relationship with the students' educational plans.<sup>17</sup>

Ralph F. Berdie's study of Minnesota youths found that the level of the fathers' occupations is directly related to the educational plans of the children:

. . . of children who had scores of 120 or higher on the A.C.E. Psychological Examination and who had fathers in top-level occupations, approximately 90 percent planned to attend college; but of children who had scores of 120 or above on this test and who had fathers who were factory laborers, only 55 percent planned to attend college.<sup>18</sup>

James L. Lowe studied educational plans of high school youth in Missouri in 1956 and again in 1960. Of those surveyed, more than four-fifths of the students from white-collar families planned to attend college compared with over one-half of the students whose fathers were skilled workers. Only one-fourth of the students whose fathers were employed in semi-skilled positions planned to attend college.<sup>19</sup>

Elizabeth G. Cohen studied two groups of high school boys from working-class parents to determine the influence of the fathers' occupations on their educational plans. One group of boys had definite plans for college and the other group did not plan to attend college. The two groups of fifty boys each were matched on intelligence and grade level in school. The findings indicated, among other variables, that there

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<sup>17</sup>David J. Bordua, "Education Aspiration and Parental Stress on College," Social Forces, 38:262, March, 1960.

<sup>18</sup>Ralph F. Berdie, After High School--What? (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1954), p. 59.

<sup>19</sup>James L. Lowe, "Educational and Occupational Aspirations of High School Seniors," Part II, Northwest Missouri State College Studies, Vol. XXVII, No. 4 (Maryville, Missouri: Northwest Missouri State College, 1963), p. 6. (Mimeographed.)

is a significant relationship between the sons' educational plans and the fathers' occupations and attitudes toward those occupations.<sup>20</sup>

Bowles and Slocum, in a study of social characteristics of 3,117 junior and senior high school students planning to pursue post-high school vocational training in the state of Washington, discovered " . . . that having a father in a prestigious and well-paid occupation increases the probability of planning to go to college. . . ."21

### Fathers' Education

Although studies have been cited to support the fathers' occupations as determinants in the educational plans of youth, other researchers purport the fathers' educational levels as being equally important. C. G. Watson strongly supported this latter concept in his study of certain background variables as predictors of academic achievement of ninety-six male upperclassmen at Iowa State University. Watson concluded that " . . . of the nine variables studied, only educational level of the father was statistically related to the other criterion."22

Edward Soper investigated the level of the fathers' education in his survey of 955 high school students in Utah. He stated that

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<sup>20</sup>Elizabeth G. Cohen, "Parental Factors in Educational Mobility," Sociology of Education, 38:404-25, Fall, 1965.

<sup>21</sup>Roy T. Bowles and Walter L. Slocum, "Social Characteristics of High School Students Planning to Pursue Post High School Vocational Training" (Washington: Washington Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational Education, June, 1968), p. 21. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>22</sup>C. G. Watson, "Cross-validation of Certain Background Variables as Predictors of Academic Achievement," Journal of Educational Research, 59:147-48, December, 1965.

nearly one-half of the fathers of students with college plans were reported to have pursued some form of higher education.<sup>23</sup>

In a study of educational and vocational aspirations of high school seniors in Minnesota, Brandon E. Smith and Editha L. Jiloca found that in homes where at least one parent had graduated from a four-year institution of higher education, 63 percent of the children planned to attend college.<sup>24</sup>

A citizens' advisory committee, in a survey of a portion of eastern Iowa, discovered a significant relationship between the fathers' educational levels and educational plans of their children. The committee found that of those fathers with college degrees, as many as 91 percent of their children had post-high school educational plans. Fathers with no more than an eighth grade education were less influential with only 52 percent of their children planning to attend college.<sup>25</sup>

#### PEERS

Although this review of literature supported the influence of parents and many variables of family living as having the most influence on students' educational plans, other researchers contradicted these findings. William P. Ehling analyzed the responses of over four

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<sup>23</sup>Soper, op. cit., p. 8.

<sup>24</sup>Brandon E. Smith and Editha L. Jiloca, "The Relationship of Selected Factors to the Occupational-Educational Choices of Twelfth Grade Students" (Minneapolis: Minnesota Research Coordinating Unit in Occupational Education, 1971), p. 19. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>25</sup>"Study of the Needs for Post-high School Education in Eastern Iowa Community College District" (Bettendorf, Iowa: Citizens' Advisory Committee, 1968), p. 38. (Mimeographed.)

thousand Syracuse University freshmen and reported that:

. . . less than 5 percent indicated that the decision to go to college was made by their parents, while approximately 48 percent of the students indicated that their college choice was made independently of and in opposition to their parents' wishes.<sup>26</sup>

Irving Krauss, in a study of 387 high school students from working-class parents and 267 high school students from middle-class parents, found that among other factors the students' acquaintances were important in college aspirations. Of the students surveyed who reported that all their acquaintances were going to college, 81 percent had similar plans. Of the students reporting that none of their friends planned to go to college, only 10 percent expected to go themselves.<sup>27</sup>

William Spady researched 297 senior boys in two west coast high schools in 1963 and again four years after graduation to study peer group influences, among other related factors, on educational plans. His main finding was that ". . . the students' role in the high school peer group is a definite source of his success goals, particularly when his attitudinal, financial, intellectual, and academic resources are low."<sup>28</sup> Spady accounted for these findings by stating that the feeling of being

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<sup>26</sup>William P. Ehling, "Development of a Computer Model of the Factors Which Influence High School Students to Continue or Discontinue Their Education" (New York: Syracuse University, 1966), p. 13. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>27</sup>Irving Krauss, "Sources of Educational Aspiration Among Working-class Youth," American Sociological Review, 29:879, December, 1964.

<sup>28</sup>William G. Spady, "Lament for the Letterman: Effects of Peer Status and Extracurricular Activities on Goals and Achievement," American Journal of Sociology, 75:699, January, 1970.

recognized as important in the peer group during high school stimulated the student to extend his education beyond high school.<sup>29</sup>

Other investigators were more specific in their attempt to analyze peer influence on students' educational plans. Rhodes asserted that the plan of the student's best friend is one of the best predictors of educational plans. "Girls, particularly white girls, whose best friends do not plan to go to college are very unlikely to plan to attend college themselves."<sup>30</sup>

A. W. Haller and C. E. Butterworth investigated peer influence on educational plans by surveying 442 seventeen-year-old boys in the schools of Michigan in 1957. The investigators also considered parental social class status, peer-pairing members' general intelligence, and parental desire for high-level social achievement for the student. "A positive interclass correlation of close friends' levels of occupational and educational aspiration was found in most of the test."<sup>31</sup>

Robert E. Herriott surveyed 1,489 adolescents in a public high school in western Massachusetts to investigate the effect of social determinants on students' educational plans. Herriott reported that the most significant variable measured was the relationship between the students' educational plans and the educational expectations perceived from the students' best friends.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 700.

<sup>30</sup>Rhodes, op. cit., p. 72.

<sup>31</sup>A. W. Haller and C. E. Butterworth, "Peer Influences on Levels of Occupational and Educational Aspiration," Social Forces, 38:295, May, 1960.

<sup>32</sup>Robert E. Herriott, "Some Social Determinants of Education Aspiration," Harvard Educational Review, 33:172, November, 1963.

Norman C. Alexander and Ernest Q. Campbell studied peer influences on adolescent educational aspiration and attainment by surveying 1,410 male students in thirty high schools in the eastern Piedmont section of North Carolina. Their conclusion was presented in the following statement:

. . . students at a given status level are more likely to expect to attend college, to have a strong desire to go to college when he does expect to go, to want to go when he does not expect to, and actually to attend, when his best friend does rather than does not plan to go to college.<sup>33</sup>

In a 1965 study, Denise B. Kandel and Gerald B. Lesser surveyed 2,327 high school students in the eastern United States. The sample included a large, lower-class urban high school, a small rural high school, and a regional high school. Their findings supported peer influence on educational plans only in relationship to parental influence. "Agreement of educational goals with parents go together with friends, and adolescents who disagree with their parents are also likely to disagree with their friends."<sup>34</sup>

Bowles and Slocum examined peer influence by analyzing student response to the following question: "Did any of your close friends drop out of school before graduating?"<sup>35</sup> Of those responding students who had college plans, only 5 percent of the boys and 6 percent of the

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<sup>33</sup>Norman C. Alexander, Jr. and Ernest Q. Campbell, "Peer Influences on Adolescent Educational Aspirations and Attainment," American Sociological Review, 29:575, August, 1964.

<sup>34</sup>Denise B. Kandel and Gerald B. Lesser, "Parental and Peer Influences on Educational Plans of Adolescents," American Sociological Review, 34:221, April, 1969.

<sup>35</sup>Bowles and Slocum, op. cit., p. 26.

girls had one or more friends to drop out of high school. Conversely, of those students who planned to conclude their education at the end of high school, 30 percent of the boys and 23 percent of the girls had friends who had dropped out of school.<sup>36</sup> The investigators also asked the students to indicate the proportion of their friends they thought were planning to attend college. Eighty-four percent of the college-bound boys and 83 percent of the college-bound girls indicated that all or most of their friends planned to attend college. Of those students who planned to terminate their educational plans with a high school diploma, only 17 percent of the boys and 26 percent of the girls said that all or most of their friends planned to attend college.<sup>37</sup>

#### SCHOOL

While most research supported the theory that parents and peers are the dominant influence on students' educational plans, some studies showed the high school as being a significant determinant on educational plans of high school seniors.

Rhodes asserted that if a student attends a school in which more than one-half of the graduates go to college, the chances are almost two out of three that the student will have college plans. If less than half the high school graduates go to college; however, the chances drop to approximately four out of nine that the student will have educational plans beyond high school. Race and sex were not considered significant in the conclusion.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>38</sup>Rhodes, op. cit., p. 72.

Edward L. McDill and James Coleman, in a study of family and peer influence, drew the following conclusions about school influence:

College plan varies according to the social climate of the school; in those high schools where college attendance is highly valued, social status in schools is a more important source of variation in such plans than in those schools in which college-going is not highly valued.<sup>39</sup>

Phillip Cutright did a study including 8,500 students in nine northern Illinois high schools in the fall of 1957 and again in the spring of 1958 in an attempt to measure the high schools' effect on students' motivations to attend college. He concluded that the high school does have some effect in motivating the students' educational plans, but he stated the following limitations: "So far as motivating students sufficiently to get them into college, the school has virtually no effect on boys but does have some effect on girls."<sup>40</sup>

Bowles and Slocum, in a study of twelve randomly selected high schools in the state of Washington, compared junior and senior students who were planning to take post-high school business education or other types of vocational education with students planning to attend or graduate from college to students who were planning to terminate their education after high school graduation. His findings cogently supported the influence of the high school on the students' educational plans:

The experiences which students have in high school can affect their receptivity to subsequent education and their

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<sup>39</sup>Edward L. McDill and James Coleman, "Family and Peer Influence on College Plans of High School Students," Sociology of Education, 38:125, Winter, 1965.

<sup>40</sup>Phillip Cutright, "Students' Decision to Attend College," Journal of Educational Sociology, 33:299, January, 1960.

capacity to perform effectively as workers and citizens. If students . . . have not had self-fulfilling experiences in high school, or if they have negative attitudes toward high school, this will complicate the lack of giving them further education.<sup>41</sup>

Richard Boyle concurred in the influence of the school as an important factor on students' educational plans, but discovered a relationship between that influence and the population of the community. In a study of educational aspirations of 1,701 Canadian girls in 1962, Boyle found that the population composition of a high school has an important effect on the aspirations of its students, but it had a much stronger effect in large cities than in smaller communities.<sup>42</sup>

Although previously cited studies have shown a general influence of the school on the students' educational plans, other researchers related this influence to specific functions in the school. Irving Krauss found a strong correlation between students' educational plans and participation in extracurricular activities at the school. He found that 74 percent of the working-class students and 80 percent of the middle-class students who participated in high school extracurricular activities had college aspirations.<sup>43</sup>

The curriculum of the high school was also cited as having an influence on the students' educational plans. N. R. Ramsey showed that whether or not a student is enrolled in a particular kind of curriculum is partially a consequence of what choices are available to

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<sup>41</sup>Bowles and Slocum, op. cit., p. 9.

<sup>42</sup>Richard P. Boyle, "The Effect of the High School on Students' Aspirations," American Journal of Sociology, 71:639, May, 1966.

<sup>43</sup>Krauss, op. cit., p. 874.

the student in the high school.<sup>44</sup> R. A. Cobb and V. R. Cardozier, however, asserted that the type of curriculum in which a student enrolls is an outcome of interaction between the student, his teachers, parents, guidance counselors in some cases, and peers.<sup>45</sup> Marie E. Yevak discounted such theories of high school curriculum selection and asserted that the status of the college preparatory curriculum attracts all students when the time comes for the choice of a curriculum.<sup>46</sup>

While research on the high school curriculum as a specific influence on the students' educational plans appeared inconclusive, other measured variables of school influence are equally difficult to generalize.

Research findings showed that guidance counselors and teachers have also contributed to the schools' influence on the students' educational plans. Robert A. Ellis and W. Clayton Lane supported this premise in their study of 194 lower-class youth entering a high caliber university. Eighty-five percent of those students responding to the questionnaire mentioned a high school teacher as having played an important part in helping them with their educational plans, and 33 percent nominated a high school teacher as the person chiefly influencing their decisions to attend college.<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>N. R. Ramsey, "College Recruitment and High School Curriculum," Sociology of Education, 38:299, Summer, 1965.

<sup>45</sup>R. A. Cobb and V. R. Cardozier, "What Factors Influence Vocational Choice?," American Vocational Journal, 41:30, January, 1966.

<sup>46</sup>Marie E. Yevak, "Variables Associated with Curriculum Choice of Secondary School Pupils," The Journal of Educational Research, 60:209, January, 1967.

<sup>47</sup>Robert A. Ellis and W. Clayton Lane, "Structural Supports for Upward Mobility," American Sociological Review, 28:743-56, October, 1963.

A study by Betz, Engle, and Mallinson presented an entirely different concept of teacher influence. Their study was a follow-up interview of 309 high school graduates judged by school personnel to be non-college-bound students. When the students were asked who was the most influential person in helping them to make their vocational and educational decision, teachers were mentioned by only 10 percent of the students.

They also found that only 7 percent of the students mentioned that the guidance counselor had any influence on their educational plans.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, the guidance counselors' influence is more significant on the students' educational plans when personal conflicts developed, according to Herriott.

The possibility that when expectations perceived from one's father and mother conflict, the counselor becomes more significant. . . . When perceived expectations from one's parents and peers conflict, the counselor becomes highly significant.<sup>49</sup>

#### SUMMARY

From the review of literature it was concluded that there was a positive relationship between seniors' educational plans and the influence of parents, peers, and schools. Although this literature generally supported parental influence as more important than peer or school influence on seniors' educational plans, the factors contributing to

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<sup>48</sup>Robert L. Betz, Kenneth B. Engle, and George G. Mallinson, "Perception of Non-College-Bound Vocationally Oriented High School Graduates" (Kalamazoo, Michigan: Western Michigan University, 1968), p. 9. (Mimeographed.)

<sup>49</sup>Herriott, loc. cit.

parental influence were inconclusive. While some of the reviewed literature supported the fathers' occupations as the salient factor of parental influence, other literature supported the fathers' educational levels as being equally important. A general claim to parents as having the most influence on seniors' educational plans was evident; however, the factors contributing to parental influence were found to be diverse and argumentative.

Other researchers cogently contradicted parental influence as being more important in the determination of educational plans than peer influence. These studies revealed a general assertion that the educational plans of the seniors' best friends were the best predictors of educational plans.

The literature reviewed in support of school influence revealed diminutive commonality in factors of determinants within the school on seniors' educational plans. Teachers, guidance counselors, curriculum, and the social climate of the school were cited as contributing factors of school influence.

As a result of the review of pertinent literature, the decision was made to pursue this study. Furthermore, the hypotheses tested were developed as a direct result of the factors identified by the literature as having the most influence on seniors' educational plans.

## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGY

The major task of this study was to analyze the relationship of selected factors of influence on high school seniors' attitudes toward community college occupational programs as career educational plans.

A description of the procedures employed and methodology used to analyze these relationships is presented in this chapter.

It was necessary to complete the following tasks in order to achieve the objectives of the study:

1. Select schools and subjects to participate in the study and secure permission to conduct the study.
2. Construct an instrument capable of measuring the perceived influence of parents, peers, and schools on the high school seniors' attitudes toward occupational programs in community colleges as career plans.
3. Select an instrument capable of categorizing the fathers' occupations and education in order to codify voluminous variables.
4. Develop a procedure for collecting and analyzing data.

#### SELECTION OF SCHOOLS AND SUBJECTS

Seniors enrolled during the fall of 1972 in eighteen high schools in the ten-county service area of Walters State Community College, Morristown, Tennessee, served as the population for the study. Counties

and high schools represented in the study were as follows: Cocks County: Cocks County High School, Cosby High School, and Parrottsville High School; Grainger County: Rutledge High School; Greene County: Greeneville City High School and South Greene High School; Hamblen County: Morristown-Hamblen East High School and Morristown-Hamblen West High School; Hancock County: Hancock County High School; Hawkins County: Rogersville High School and Bulls Gap High School; Jefferson County: Jefferson County High School, Maury High School, Rush Strong High School, and White Pine High School; Sevier County: Gatlinburg Pittman High School, Sevier County High School, and Seymour High School.

#### CONSTRUCTION OF THE INSTRUMENT

As there were no satisfactory instruments to test the hypotheses of the study, the decision was made to construct the necessary instrument. The investigator began by formulating statements concerning the three selected factors of influence on the attitude of high school seniors toward occupational programs in community colleges as career educational plans using the criterion suggested by H. H. Remmers.<sup>1</sup> A pool of seventy-nine statements from which to construct the questionnaire was assembled by the investigator. Half of the items constructed were favorable or positive, and the other half consisted of unfavorable or negative statements. This technique of scale construction was recommended by Allen Edwards, who asserted that such procedures would insure more

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<sup>1</sup>H. H. Remmers, Introduction to Opinion and Attitude Measurement (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 174.

valid and reliable responses than could possibly occur if predominantly positive or negative statements were used in the construction of the instrument.

An initial evaluation of the statements was performed by a jury of six persons: a professor of education at East Tennessee State University, a member of the Tennessee State Vocational Advisory Council, and the following personnel at Walters State Community College: the Dean of Occupational Careers, the Director of Counseling and Testing, the Dean of Student Services, and the vocational guidance counselor. The jury members were asked to evaluate each statement regarding the proper wording to elicit responses important to the study and whether the statements were positive or negative. Thirty-eight statements were selected from the final evaluation of the jury (see Appendix A). These statements were randomly ordered and placed on forms together with a five point Likert-type scale: strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree. The Likert-type scale was selected for perceived advantages which are supported by Fred Kerlinger. The scale allowed for the intensity of attitude expression and placed the individual somewhere on an agreement continuum of the attitude in question.<sup>3</sup> For the final instrument, however, it was decided to use a three-point Likert-type scale: agree, undecided, and disagree.

#### Internal Consistency

The questionnaire was initially administered to 107 students who were graduated from high school in June, 1972. The number of

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<sup>2</sup>Allen L. Edwards, Techniques of Attitude Scale Construction (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957), p. 155.

<sup>3</sup>Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1964), p. 484.

students selected for the sample was determined adequate for initial instrument evaluation by A. N. Oppenheim.<sup>4</sup>

Since no external criterion was available to correlate with each item of the instrument, Oppenheim's method of calculating correlation coefficients for each item with the total score and retaining those items with the highest correlations was used to determine internal consistency.<sup>5</sup> The results of the item analysis eliminated fourteen questions. Twenty-four items that discriminated significantly were retained for the final form of the instrument. The total number of questions fell within the desired twenty to twenty-five item limits suggested by Edwards for Likert-type attitude questionnaire construction.<sup>6</sup>

#### Reliability

Reliability of the scores on the instrument was determined by the split-halves reliability measure. This procedure, recommended by Edwards, was used to correlate scores of the odd numbered statements on the questionnaire with those of the even-numbered statements.<sup>7</sup> The test was statistically significant according to the correlation levels stated by James L. Bruning and B. L. Kintz. They asserted that "reliability value (.70 or higher) showed that the test was reliably

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<sup>4</sup>A. N. Oppenheim, Questionnaire Design and Attitude Measurement (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p. 134.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 138.

<sup>6</sup>Edwards, loc. cit.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 156.

(accurately) measuring the characteristic it was designed to measure."<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the questionnaire, the following background information was requested: name, school, fathers' education and occupation categories, and future educational plans.

### Fathers' Occupations

To measure the occupational levels of the fathers, August Hollingshead's seven-category occupational scale was used. The scale divided occupation in the following hierarchal order:

1. executives and proprietors of large concerns, and major professionals;
2. managers and proprietors of medium-sized businesses and lesser professionals;
3. administrative personnel of large concerns, owners of small independent businesses, and semi-professionals;
4. owners of little businesses, clerical and sales workers, and technicians;
5. skilled workers;
6. semi-skilled workers; and
7. unskilled workers.<sup>9</sup>

The seven categories were dichotomized for summary purposes according to Richard Rehberg and David Westby into white-collar (categories 1-4) and blue-collar (categories 5-7).<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>James L. Bruning and B. L. Kintz, Computational Handbook of Statistics (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1968), p. 188.

<sup>9</sup>August B. Hollingshead, "The Two Factor Index of Social Position" (New Haven: Yale University, 1957). (Mimeographed.)

<sup>10</sup>Richard A. Rehberg and David L. Westby, "Parental Encouragement, Occupation, Education, and Family Size: Artifacts or Independent Determinants of Adolescent Educational Expectations?," Social Forces, 43:364, March, 1967.

### Fathers' Education

Hollingshead's seven-category educational scale was used to measure the educational levels of the fathers. The scale divided educational levels into the following categories:

1. Graduate professional training (persons who completed a recognized professional course which led to the receipt of a graduate degree);
2. Standard college or university graduation (individuals who had completed a four-year college or university course leading to a recognized college degree);
3. Partial college training (individuals who had completed at least one year but not a full college course);
4. High school graduation;
5. Partial high school (individuals who had completed the tenth or eleventh grades, but had not completed high school);
6. Junior high school (individuals who had completed the seventh grade through the ninth grade); and
7. Less than seven years of school (individuals who had not completed the seventh grade).<sup>11</sup>

The scale was trichotomized for summary purposes according to Rehberg and Westby into thirteen or more years of education (categories 1-3), twelve years of education (category 4), and eleven or less years of education (categories 5-7).<sup>12</sup>

The seniors' educational plans were also trichotomized for summary purposes into the following categories: (1) seniors who planned to enter four-year colleges or universities were classified as having high educational aspirations, (2) seniors who planned to enter community colleges (transfer or technology programs) were classified as having medium level educational aspirations, and (3) seniors who planned to enter vocational-technical schools or terminate their formal education

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<sup>11</sup>Hollingshead, loc. cit.

<sup>12</sup>Rehberg and Westby, loc. cit.

with high school diplomas were classified as having low educational aspirations.

#### PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING DATA

Permission was secured from the Tennessee Assistant Commissioner of Vocational Education and the superintendents of the schools in the ten counties selected for the study to distribute the questionnaire to every high school senior in the selected sample area.

By working with the high school principals and guidance counselors in the eighteen high schools, the questionnaire was group-administered to all high school seniors.

Following the processing of the collected data into the necessary categories, the response of each student was transferred to IBM cards. Facilities of the East Tennessee State University Computer Center were then employed for the production of frequency distribution tables and for calculation of Gamma,  $\gamma$ , statistics. Gamma,  $\gamma$ , was used, because as a measure of proportional-reduction-in-error, it can be employed to determine the degree of either positive or negative association among the variables. The formula used to determine  $\gamma$  is:

$$\gamma = \frac{\sum fa - \sum fi}{\sum fa + \sum fi}$$

where  $f_a$  equals the frequency of agreements and  $f_i$  equals the frequency of inversions. Gamma values were interpreted as showing association on a continuum ranging on the positive side from 1.0 down to 0, and on the negative side from 0 to - 1.0.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Dean J. Champion, Basic Statistics for Social Research (Scranton, Pennsylvania: Chandler Publishing Company, 1970), p. 222.

## SUMMARY

Chapter 3 included the methodology used in this study. The seniors enrolled during the fall of 1972 in eighteen high schools in the ten-county service area of Walters State Community College, Morristown, Tennessee, served as the population for the study.

An instrument was constructed, pretested, and validated to measure perceived parent, peer, and school influence on high school seniors' attitudes toward occupational programs in community colleges as career plans.

Hollingshead's seven category occupational and educational scale was used to measure the fathers' occupational and educational levels.

Facilities of the East Tennessee State University Computer Center were employed to process the collected data for the production of frequency distribution tables and for calculation of Gamma,  $\gamma$ , statistics.

## Chapter 4

### DATA AND FINDINGS

The problem of this study was to analyze the influence of selected factors on high school seniors' attitudes toward two-year occupational programs as career educational plans. More specifically, the purpose of the study was to analyze the relationship between the students' educational plans and the following selected factors: (1) parents' perceived influence, (2) fathers' occupations, (3) fathers' education, (4) peers' perceived influence, and (5) the schools' perceived influence. By analyzing these relationships for students at each aspirational level according to their stated educational plans, those characteristics relating to students selecting community college occupational career programs were isolated and identified. The results of the analysis of the data and the testing of the hypotheses stated in Chapter 1 are presented in this chapter.

Table 1 shows a summary of the population data, including the enrollment of seniors in each high school participating in the study, the Tennessee Research Coordinating Unit for Vocational-Technical education school identification number, and the number and percentage of seniors completing the questionnaire.

Table 1  
 Number and Percentage of Questionnaires Completed  
 by County and School

County and School	RCU Coding Number	Grade 12 Enrollment	Questionnaires Completed	Percent Coverage
<u>Cocke County</u>				
Cocke Co. H.S.	15910011	200	184	92.0
Cosby	15910012	75	63	84.0
Parrottsville	15910020	60	52	86.6
<u>Grainger County</u>				
Rutledge	29920020	111	100	90.0
<u>Greene County</u>				
Greeneville City	30811003	175	151	86.3
South Greene	30910043	150	134	89.3
<u>Hamblen County</u>				
Morristown-Hamblen E.	32821002	233	223	95.0
Morristown-Hamblen W.	32821009	279	264	94.6
<u>Hancock County</u>				
Hancock Co. H.S.	34910021	75	69	92.0
<u>Hawkins County</u>				
Rogersville	37811001	160	155	96.9
Bulls Gap	37910023	65	56	86.2
<u>Jefferson County</u>				
Jefferson County	45910004	139	128	92.1
Maury	45910005	106	98	92.5
Rush Strong	45910008	30	28	93.3
White Pine	45910011	28	26	92.9
<u>Sevier County</u>				
Gatlinburg Pittman	78910030	60	40	66.7
Sevier Co. H.S.	78910031	220	197	89.5
Seymour	78910039	55	42	76.4
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,203</b>	<b>2,010</b>	<b>91.2</b>

## SENIORS' EDUCATIONAL PLANS

Educational plans referred to the types of educational institutions and curricula high school seniors elect to enroll in to achieve their desired occupational objectives. Of the 2,010 seniors in the sample, all but 646 had plans to attend post-secondary educational institutions. The data in Table 2 show the educational plans of the high school seniors participating in the study. Two hundred two or 10.1 percent of the seniors in the population planned professional training beyond college degrees, while 646 or 32.1 percent planned to conclude their formal education with high school diplomas. Three hundred forty-three or 17.1 percent of the seniors selected vocational-technical schools, and 389 or 19.4 percent elected to go directly to colleges for four years. The majority of seniors who planned to attend community colleges preferred the transfer program. Three hundred eight or 15.3 percent of the seniors in the population planned to attend community colleges for two years before transferring to four-year colleges or universities. However, when the community college transfer program was compared to the four-year institutions, 19.4 percent of the seniors preferred to go directly to four-year colleges or universities. Students selecting the community college technology programs represented only 5.1 percent of the population. This was less than the 17.1 percent who planned to take their technology training in vocational-technical schools. When educational levels were combined, 68 percent of the seniors planned to continue their education beyond the high school level.

**Table 2**  
**Educational Plans of 2,010 Seniors**  
**by Number and Percent**

Educational Levels	Number	Percent
University or college plus professional training	202	10.1
University or college graduate	389	19.4
Community college transfer	308	15.3
Community college technology	102	5.1
Vocational-technical school	343	17.1
High school diploma	646	32.1
No response	<u>20</u>	<u>0.9</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,010</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### FATHERS' EDUCATIONAL LEVELS

The fathers' educational level for the population was somewhat lower than the level of the educational plans selected by their children. Data presented in Table 3 show the educational levels of the fathers in the population for the seven categories of the Hollingshead Scale as described in Chapter 3.

Only 104 or 5.2 percent of the fathers in the population received college degrees plus professional training, while 413 or 20.5 percent of the fathers completed less than seven years of schooling. The data indicated that 317 or 15.8 percent received some high school credits and 434 or 21.6 percent graduated from high school. One hundred ninety-nine or 9.9 percent of the fathers attended college while 146 or 7.3 percent received four-year college degrees.

### FATHERS' OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS

Data presented in Table 4 show the occupational levels of the fathers in the population for the seven categories of the Hollingshead Scale as described in Chapter 3.

One hundred seventeen or 5.8 percent of the seniors in the study reported that their fathers held executive, proprietor, and professional positions in the highest category. Managers, proprietors of medium businesses, and professional positions accounted for an additional 9.4 percent of the population; and 181 or 9.0 percent of the fathers were in administration, owners of small businesses, or semi-professionals. The smallest percentage was indicated in the clerical, sales worker,

Table 3  
Educational Levels of 2,010 Fathers  
by Number and Percent

Educational Levels	Number	Percent
University or college plus professional training	104	5.2
University or college graduate	146	7.3
Partial college	199	9.9
High school graduate	434	21.6
Partial high school	317	15.8
Junior high school	372	18.5
Less than 7 years of school	413	20.5
No response	<u>25</u>	<u>1.2</u>
Total	2,010	100.0

Table 4  
Occupational Levels of 2,010 Fathers  
by Number and Percent

Occupational Levels	Number	Percent
Executive Proprietor of large concern Major professional	117	5.8
Manager Proprietor of medium business Professional	189	9.4
Administrative personnel Owns small business Semi-professional	181	9.0
Owns small business Clerical Sales worker Technical	95	4.7
Skilled worker	901	44.8
Semi-skilled worker	332	16.5
Unskilled worker	139	6.9
No response	<u>56</u>	<u>2.8</u>
Total	2,010	100.0

technical worker, or owner of small business classification, where only 95 or 4.7 percent of the fathers were represented. The largest number of fathers, 901 or 44.8 percent, were in the skilled worker classification. The second largest percentage was found in the semi-skilled worker classification where 332 or 16.5 percent of the fathers were represented. One hundred thirty-nine or 6.9 percent of the fathers were unskilled workers.

#### HYPOTHESES

##### The First Hypothesis

The first hypothesis asked: will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of the fathers' education, as measured by the Hollingshead Scale?

Table 5 provides data derived from the cross-classification of the fathers' education with those seniors who planned college degrees plus professional training. Of the 202 seniors selecting college degrees plus professional training, 43 or 21.3 percent were from families whose fathers had similar educational backgrounds. Thirty-two or 15.8 percent of those seniors' fathers had completed a university or college degree and 39 or 19.3 percent had fathers who attended college. Forty-four or 21.9 percent of the seniors who planned college degrees plus professional training were from families whose fathers had only a high school education. Fourteen seniors had fathers with partial high school experience, while the fathers of 16 seniors had completed junior high school. Only 14 or 6.9 percent of the seniors who had advanced

Table 5

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning College Degrees Plus  
Professional Training by Fathers' Educational Levels

Fathers' Educational Levels	Number	Percent
University or college plus professional training	43	21.3
University or college graduate	32	15.8
Partial college	39	19.3
High school graduate	44	21.9
Partial high school	14	6.9
Junior high school	16	7.9
Less than 7 years of school	<u>14</u>	<u>6.9</u>
Total	202	100 .0

educational plans had fathers with less than seven years of school. When classifications were combined, 56.4 percent of the seniors planning college degrees plus professional training had fathers with college experience; 21.9 percent of the seniors had fathers with high school diplomas; and 21.7 percent had fathers who had not graduated from high school.

Table 6 provides data derived from the cross-classification of the fathers' education with those seniors who planned to earn university or four-year college degrees.

The data indicated that 388 or 19.3 percent of the seniors in the population planned to earn university or four-year college degrees. Of this number, only 30 or 7.7 percent of the seniors' fathers had achieved higher educational levels than their offsprings. Seventy-four or 19.1 percent of the seniors' fathers had educational levels identical to their children. Sixty-four or 16.5 percent of the fathers had partial college education, while 107 or 27.6 percent of the seniors in this classification had fathers whose formal education terminated with high school graduation. Fathers with less than a high school diploma were less closely related to the aspiration of seniors planning to attend college than to the college plus professional training level, as shown in Table 5. Only 49 or 12.6 percent of these seniors' fathers had partial high school experience while 40 or 10.3 percent had fathers with a junior high school education. Twenty-four or 6.2 percent of the seniors whose fathers had less than seven years of school planned university or college degrees.

There was a lower father-student educational relationship in the university or college degree classification than in the university or

Table 6

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning University or Four-Year  
College Degrees by Fathers' Educational Levels

Fathers' Educational Levels	Number	Percent
University or college plus professional training	30	7.7
University or college graduate	74	19.1
Partial college	64	16.5
High school graduate	107	27.6
Partial high school	49	12.6
Junior high school	40	10.3
Less than 7 years of school	<u>24</u>	<u>6.2</u>
Total	388	100.0

college degree plus professional training classification, presented in Table 5. The data indicated that 43.3 percent of the seniors had fathers with some college experience while 27.6 percent had fathers with high school diplomas. Although their fathers had not graduated from high school, 29.1 percent of these seniors planned college degrees.

The data in Table 7 present the cross-classification of the fathers' education with those seniors who planned to attend community colleges for two years before transferring to four-year colleges or universities.

Seniors selecting the community college transfer program represented 15.3 percent of the population. Of these 305 seniors, only 19 or 6.2 percent were from families whose fathers had completed college plus professional training. Only 22 or 7.2 percent of the seniors' fathers had university or college degrees and only 47 or 15.4 percent had fathers with partial college experience. When compared to cross-classifications presented in Tables 5 and 6, fathers who were high school graduates again represented the most influential factor of influence. Seventy-four or 24.3 percent of the community college transfer-bound seniors' fathers had graduated from high school. In addition, large percentages of the fathers were observed to have less than a high school education. The data indicated that 58 or 19.0 percent of the seniors' fathers had partial high school training while 50 or 16.4 percent of the fathers had only completed junior high school. Thirty-five or 11.5 percent of the seniors who planned to enter community college transfer programs had fathers with less than seven years of school.

Table 7

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning Two Years in Community  
Colleges and Transferring to Four-Year Colleges or  
Universities by Fathers' Educational Levels

Fathers' Educational Levels	Number	Percent
University or college plus professional training	19	6.2
University or college graduate	22	7.2
Partial college	47	15.4
High school graduate	74	24.3
Partial high school	58	19.0
Junior high school	50	16.4
Less than 7 years of school	<u>35</u>	<u>11.5</u>
Total	305	100.0

Although it was assumed that the community college transfer programs would lead to four-year college or university degrees, the fathers' educational levels were lower for the seniors in the community college transfer classification than for those who planned to go directly to four-year institutions. Only 28.8 percent of the fathers in this cross-classification had college experience and only 24.3 percent were high school graduates. Of the 305 seniors who planned to enter the community college program, 46.9 percent had fathers who did not graduate from high school.

The data in Table 8 present the cross-classification of the fathers' education with those seniors who planned to complete occupational career programs in community colleges. Of the 2,010 seniors participating in the study, only 102 or 5.1 percent selected community college occupational career programs as their educational plan. In addition to the low number of students in this classification, the fathers' educational levels were also low. Two seniors had fathers with university or college degrees plus professional training, 7 had fathers with university or college degrees, and 8 had fathers with partial college experience. Thirty-three seniors' fathers were high school graduates. Seniors whose fathers had not graduated from high school represented the greatest percentage for this classification. Twenty-one or 20.6 percent of the seniors had fathers with partial high school experience, 21 or 20.6 had completed junior high school, and 10 or 9.8 percent had less than seven years of school.

The data indicated that as the fathers' educational levels decreased, the levels of the seniors' educational plans decreased.

Table 8

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning Two-Year  
Occupational Career Programs in Community  
Colleges by Fathers' Educational Levels

Fathers' Educational Levels	Number	Percent
University or college plus professional training	2	2.0
University or college graduate	7	6.9
Partial college	8	7.8
High school graduate	33	32.3
Partial high school	21	20.6
Junior high school	21	20.6
Less than 7 years of school	<u>10</u>	<u>9.8</u>
Total	102	100.0

Of those seniors who planned to complete community college occupational career programs, 51 percent had fathers who had not completed high school, while 32.3 percent had fathers who were high school graduates. Only 16.7 percent of the seniors in this classification had fathers with college experience.

The data in Table 9 present the cross-classification of the fathers' education with those seniors who planned to attend vocational-technical schools.

Those seniors who selected vocational-technical schools as their educational plan represented 17 percent of the population. The 340 seniors in this classification had a lower percentage of fathers who attended college than was reported in higher educational cross-classifications. Five or 1.5 percent of these seniors had fathers with university or college degrees plus professional training; 9 or 2.6 percent had completed university or four-year college degrees; and 22 or 6.5 percent had partial college experience. It was revealed that 21.8 percent of the seniors' fathers had graduated from high school. However, the largest percentages were reported for fathers who had not graduated from high school. Fifty-four or 15.9 percent of these seniors' fathers had partial high school training; 77 or 22.6 percent had a junior high school education; and 99 or 29.1 percent had less than seven years of school.

Table 10 provides data derived from the cross-classification of the fathers' education with those seniors planning to conclude their formal education with high school diplomas.

It was revealed that 635 or 32 percent of these seniors planned to conclude their formal education with high school diplomas. Of this

Table 9

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning to Attend Vocational-  
Technical Schools by Fathers' Educational Levels

Fathers' Educational Levels	Number	Percent
University or college plus professional training	5	1.5
University or college graduate	9	2.6
Partial college	22	6.5
High school graduate	74	21.8
Partial high school	54	15.9
Junior high school	77	22.6
Less than 7 years of school	<u>99</u>	<u>29.1</u>
Total	340	100.0

Table 10

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning to Conclude Their  
Formal Education with High School Diplomas by  
Fathers' Educational Levels

Fathers' Educational Levels	Number	Percent
University or college plus professional training	5	0.8
University or college graduate	2	0.3
Partial college	19	3.0
High school graduate	99	15.6
Partial high school	120	18.9
Junior high school	164	25.8
Less than 7 years of school	<u>226</u>	<u>35.6</u>
Total	635	100.0

number only 26 or 4.1 percent of the seniors' fathers attended college. Five or 0.8 percent of the seniors' fathers had university or college degrees plus professional training; 2 or 0.3 percent had university or college degrees; and 19 or 3.0 percent had partial college experience. It was noted that 99 or 15.6 percent of the seniors' fathers had earned high school diplomas. Furthermore, the majority of the seniors in this cross-classification had fathers with lower educational levels than their own educational expectations. One hundred sixty-four or 25.8 percent of the seniors' fathers had a junior high school education while 226 or 35.6 percent had fathers who attended school less than seven years. When lower educational levels were combined, 80.3 percent of the seniors in this cross-classification planned to exceed the educational levels of their fathers by earning high school diplomas. It was revealed that 15.6 percent of the seniors planned to achieve the same educational level as their fathers by earning high school diplomas.

The data in Table 11 present a summary of the relationship of the level of the students' educational plans upon the level of the fathers' education. As indicated in Chapter 3, the Hollingshead Scale was used to measure the educational levels of the fathers. The seven categories referred to in Table 10 were trichotomized by Rehberg and Westby. Thirteen or more years of education (categories 1-3) were classified as high, twelve years of education (category 4) were classified medium, and eleven or less years of education (categories 5-7) were classified as low. The students' educational plans were trichotomized into the following categories: (1) seniors who planned to enter four-year colleges or universities were classified as having high

Table 11

The Relationship of Fathers' Educational Levels Upon the Educational Plans  
of High School Seniors

Fathers' Educational Levels	Seniors' Educational Plans						Total
	High		Medium		Low		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
High	282	62.8	105	23.4	62	13.8	449
Medium	151	35.0	107	24.8	173	40.1	431
Low	157	14.4	195	17.9	740	67.8	1,092

No Response - 38  
Gamma,  $\gamma = .63$

educational aspirations, (2) seniors who planned to enter community colleges (transfer or technology programs) were classified as having medium level educational aspirations, and (3) seniors who planned to enter vocational-technical schools or terminate their formal education with high school diplomas were classified as having low educational aspirations.

The data presented in Tables 5 through 10 and summarized in Table 11 indicate a positive relationship between the seniors' educational plans and the levels of the fathers' education. This conclusion was supported by a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .63 (Table 11) which indicated a positive association between the variables. Therefore, the first hypothesis which asked the question, will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' educational plans and the level of the fathers' education, was answered in the affirmative.

#### The Second Hypothesis

The second hypothesis asked: will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of the fathers' occupations, as measured by the Hollingshead Scale?

Table 12 shows the data derived from the cross-classification of the fathers' occupations with those seniors who planned university or college degrees plus professional training.

Of the 196 seniors selecting university or college degrees plus professional training who responded to the question, 29 or 14.8 percent had fathers in the highest occupational classification. Thirty-nine or 19.9 percent of the seniors reported their fathers' occupations in the

Table 12

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning College Degrees Plus  
Professional Training by Fathers' Occupational Levels

Fathers' Occupational Levels	Number	Percent
Executive Proprietor of large concern Major professional	29	14.8
Manager Proprietor of medium business Professional	39	19.9
Administrative personnel Owns small business Semi-professional	43	21.9
Owns small business Clerical Sales worker Technical	11	5.6
Skilled worker	52	26.6
Semi-skilled worker	18	9.2
Unskilled worker	<u>4</u>	<u>2.0</u>
Total	196	100.0

second highest classification of manager, proprietor of medium business, or professional while 43 or 21.9 percent reported their fathers as being administrative personnel, owners of small businesses, or semi-professionals. Fathers who were owners of small businesses, sales workers, clerical workers, or technicians were reported by 11 or 5.6 percent of the seniors. Fifty-two or 26.6 percent of the seniors responded that their fathers were skilled workers. Semi-skilled workers accounted for the fathers of an additional 18 seniors or 9.2 percent. The lowest number of fathers fell into the unskilled worker classification. Only 4 seniors or 2.0 percent of those seniors planning university or college degrees plus professional training had fathers in the unskilled worker classification.

When the fathers' occupations were dichotomized into white-collar and blue-collar workers as described in Chapter 3, 56.6 percent of the students who selected university or college degrees plus professional training were from families whose fathers were employed in white-collar positions. Blue-collar positions were represented by 43.4 percent of the fathers.

Table 13 shows the data derived from the cross-classification of the fathers' occupations with those seniors who planned to earn university or four-year college degrees.

Of the 383 seniors who planned to attend four-year colleges or universities, fathers of 44 or 11.5 percent of the seniors were employed as executives, proprietors of large concerns, or major professionals. This was 3.3 percent less than for those seniors planning training beyond the university or college degree. Fifty-eight or 15.1 percent of the seniors reported fathers as managers, proprietors of medium

Table 13

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning University or Four-Year  
College Degrees by Fathers' Occupational Levels

Fathers' Occupational Levels	Number	Percent
Executive Proprietor of large concern Major professional	44	11.5
Manager Proprietor of medium business Professional	58	15.1
Administrative personnel Owns small business Semi-professional	64	16.7
Owns small business Clerical Sales worker Technical	24	6.3
Skilled worker	152	39.8
Semi-skilled worker	27	7.0
Unskilled worker	<u>14</u>	<u>3.6</u>
Total	383	100.0

businesses, or professionals while 64 or 16.7 percent reported their fathers as being administrative personnel, owners of small businesses, or semi-professionals. Fathers who were owners of small businesses, sales workers, clerical workers, or technicians were reported by 24 or 6.3 percent of the seniors. The skilled worker classification was the largest. Fathers of 152 or 39.8 percent of the seniors were placed in this category. Fathers of 27 or 7.0 percent of these seniors were employed in semi-skilled positions and 14 or 3.6 percent of the fathers were unskilled workers.

The fathers' occupational levels were lower for those students who planned to earn university or college degrees than for those seniors who planned advanced training beyond the degree. Fathers of 43.3 percent of the seniors who planned to earn university or college degrees were employed in white-collar positions, while 56.7 percent were employed in blue-collar positions.

The data presented in Table 14 show the cross-classification of the fathers' occupations with those seniors who planned to attend community colleges for two years before transferring to four-year colleges or universities.

Seniors who planned to attend community colleges for two years before transferring to four-year colleges or universities had fathers with lower occupational levels than those seniors who planned to go directly to the four-year institutions. Of the 298 seniors selecting community college transfer programs, 20 or 6.7 percent of the fathers were employed in the executive, proprietor of large concern, or major professional classification; 32 or 10.8 percent were in the managerial, proprietor of medium business, or professional classification; and 42

Table 14

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning Two Years in Community  
Colleges and Transferring to Four-Year Colleges or  
Universities by Fathers' Occupational Levels

Fathers' Occupational Levels	Number	Percent
Executive Proprietor of large concern Major professional	20	6.7
Manager Proprietor of medium business Professional	32	10.8
Administrative personnel Owns small business Semi-professional	42	14.1
Owns small business Clerical Sales worker Technical	17	5.7
Skilled worker	134	44.9
Semi-skilled worker	40	13.4
Unskilled worker	<u>13</u>	<u>4.4</u>
Total	298	100.0

or 14.1 percent were in administration, owners of small businesses, or semi-professionals. Seventeen or 5.7 percent of the seniors classified their fathers as small business owners, sales workers, clerical workers, or technicians.

The skilled worker classification had a larger percentage of fathers than had been reported at higher levels of student aspirations. In this classification, 134 or 44.9 percent of the seniors reported fathers in skilled positions, and 40 or 13.4 percent in semi-skilled positions. Thirteen or 4.4 percent of the seniors reported their fathers in the unskilled worker classification.

The data indicated that 31.5 percent of the seniors who planned to pursue community college transfer programs for two years before going to four-year colleges or universities had fathers in white-collar positions. This compared to 43.3 percent of the seniors whose fathers held white-collar positions and who planned to go directly to four-year colleges or universities. Lower occupational levels were also evident when blue-collar positions were analyzed, with 68.5 percent of the community college transfer-bound seniors reporting their fathers in blue-collar positions compared to 56.7 percent planning to attend four-year colleges or universities.

The data presented in Table 15 show the cross-classification of the fathers' occupations with those seniors who planned to complete occupational career programs in community colleges.

Of the 101 seniors who planned to complete occupational career programs in community colleges, only 3 had fathers in the highest occupational classification. Thirteen or 12.9 percent of the seniors'

Table 15

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning Two-Year  
Occupational Career Programs in Community  
Colleges by Fathers' Occupational Levels

Fathers' Occupational Levels	Number	Percent
Executive Proprietor of large concern Major professional	3	3.0
Manager Proprietor of medium business Professional	13	12.9
Administrative personnel Owns small business Semi-professional	4	4.0
Owns small business Clerical Sales worker Technical	2	2.0
Skilled worker	58	57.5
Semi-skilled worker	18	17.8
Unskilled worker	<u>3</u>	<u>3.0</u>
Total	101	100.0

fathers were in the managerial, proprietor of medium business, or professional classification. Four seniors or 4.0 percent classified their fathers' occupations as administrative, owners of small businesses, or semi-professionals. The largest percentage of these seniors reported that their fathers were skilled workers. Fifty-eight or 57.5 percent of these fathers were skilled workers. Eighteen or 17.8 percent of the seniors reported that their fathers were employed in semi-skilled positions and 3 or 3.0 percent were unskilled.

The fathers' occupational levels were lower for those seniors who elected occupational career programs over transfer programs in community colleges. It was revealed that 19.8 percent of the seniors who selected occupational career programs had fathers in white-collar positions as compared to 31.5 percent for those seniors who selected transfer programs. When blue-collar positions were considered, 86.1 percent of the seniors who selected occupational career programs had fathers with blue-collar positions, compared to 80.2 percent of the fathers of seniors who selected transfer programs.

The data in Table 16 present the cross-classification of the fathers' occupations of seniors who planned to attend vocational-technical schools.

Seniors who planned to attend vocational-technical schools reported fathers with lower occupational classifications than those seniors who selected occupational career programs in community colleges. Of the 331 seniors in this classification, 14 or 4.2 percent had fathers in the executive, proprietor of large concern, or major professional positions. This was 1.2 percent higher than for seniors with fathers in the same position who selected community college

Table 16

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning to Attend Vocational-  
Technical Schools by Fathers' Occupational Levels

Fathers' Occupational Levels	Number	Percent
Executive Proprietor of large concern Major professional	14	4.2
Manager Proprietor of medium business Professional	20	6.0
Administrative personnel Owns small business Semi-professional	12	3.6
Owns small business Clerical Sales worker Technical	14	4.2
Skilled worker	176	53.3
Semi-skilled worker	60	18.1
Unskilled worker	<u>35</u>	<u>10.6</u>
Total	331	100.0

occupational career programs. However, all other occupational levels were lower than those in the community college occupational career cross-classification. Twenty or 6.0 percent of the seniors reported that their fathers were employed in the managerial, proprietor of medium business, or professional classification; 12 or 3.6 percent were in administration, owners of small businesses, or semi-professionals; and 14 or 4.2 percent were sales workers, clerical workers, owners of small businesses, or technicians. Skilled workers continued to dominate all classifications as 176 or 53.3 percent of the seniors planning vocational-technical training reported that their fathers were employed at that level. Fathers of 60 or 18.1 percent of the seniors were employed in semi-skilled positions and 35 or 10.6 percent were unskilled workers.

Fathers of 86.1 percent of the seniors who planned to attend vocational-technical schools were employed in blue-collar positions. This compared to 80.2 percent of the seniors whose fathers were employed in similar positions who planned to pursue community college occupational career programs. Fathers of only 13.9 percent of the seniors in this classification were employed in white-collar positions.

Table 17 shows the data derived from the cross-classification of the fathers' occupations with those seniors who planned to conclude their formal education with high school diplomas.

Seniors who elected to conclude their education with high school diplomas represented 32 percent of the total population. Of these 630 seniors, only 48 or 7.6 percent had fathers who were employed in white-collar positions. Seven or 1.1 percent of the fathers were employed in executive, proprietor of large concern, or major professional

Table 17

Number and Percent of Seniors Planning to Conclude Their  
Formal Education with High School Diplomas by  
Fathers' Occupational Levels

Fathers' Occupational Levels	Number	Percent
Executive Proprietor of large concern Major professional	7	1.1
Manager Proprietor of medium business Professional	25	4.0
Administrative personnel Owns small business Semi-professional	16	2.5
Owns small business Clerical Sales worker Technical	26	4.1
Skilled worker	323	51.3
Semi-skilled worker	165	26.2
Unskilled worker	<u>68</u>	<u>10.8</u>
Total	630	100.0

classifications; 25 or 4.0 percent in managerial, proprietor of medium business, or professional classifications; and 16 or 2.5 percent were in administration, owners of small businesses, or semi-professionals. Three hundred twenty-three or 51.3 percent of these seniors reported their fathers were employed as skilled workers; 165 or 26.2 percent as semi-skilled workers; and 68 or 10.8 percent as unskilled.

Fathers of 92.4 percent of the seniors who planned to conclude their formal education with high school diplomas were employed in blue-collar positions.

To test the hypothesis and ensure statistically stable cell entries, the seven occupational categories of the fathers were dichotomized as described in Chapter 3. Categories 1-4 were considered white-collar and categories 5-7 were considered blue-collar. Data in Table 18 show a summary of the consistent relationship of the fathers' occupational levels and the students' educational plans. The seniors' educational plans were trichotomized into the following categories: (1) seniors who planned to enter four-year colleges or universities were classified as having high educational aspirations, (2) seniors who planned to enter community colleges (transfer or technology programs) were classified as having medium level educational aspirations, and (3) seniors who planned to enter vocational-technical schools or terminate their formal education with high school diplomas were classified as having low educational aspirations.

The data presented in Tables 12 through 17 and summarized in Table 18 indicated a positive relationship between the seniors' educational plans and the level of the fathers' occupations. This conclusion was supported by a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .65 (Table 18) which

Table 18

The Relationship of Fathers' Occupational Levels Upon the Educational Plans  
of High School Seniors

Fathers' Occupational Levels	Seniors' Educational Plans						Total
	High		Medium		Low		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
White-collar	277	57.1	114	23.5	94	19.4	485
Blue-collar	302	20.8	285	19.6	867	59.6	1,454

No Response - 71  
Gamma,  $\gamma = .65$

indicated a positive association between the variables. Therefore, the second hypothesis which asked the question, will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' educational plans and the level of the fathers' occupations, was answered in the affirmative.

### The Third Hypothesis

The third hypothesis tested asked: will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived parental influence?

To determine other factors influencing the stated educational plans of seniors, a questionnaire was constructed as described in Chapter 3. Students were asked to respond to eight statements constructed to elicit the perceived influence of their parents on the students' educational plans. Four statements were positive and four were negative. Scoring was determined by assigning a value of 2 for agree, 1 for undecided, and 0 for disagreement with each of the positive questions. Negative questions were reversed in scoring values. The total response by the seniors to parental questions (see Appendix C) was trichotomized into high parental influence scores 12-16, medium parental influence scores 6-11, and low parental influence scores 0-5.

Table 19 shows the parental influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend universities or colleges and then pursue further professional training. Parents of students with high educational plans were scored high on the parental influence statements. Parents of seniors planning university or college degrees plus professional training represented the highest parental influence scores. One hundred

Table 19  
Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent  
of Seniors Planning College Degrees  
Plus Professional Training

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	143	70.8
Medium	50	24.7
Low	<u>9</u>	<u>4.5</u>
Total	202	100.0

forty-three or 70.8 percent of these seniors indicated high parental influence and only 9 or 4.5 indicated low parental influence. On the basis of these data, it was concluded that the greater the parental influence the higher the students' educational plans.

Data presented in Table 20 show the parental influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend four-year colleges of universities. There was a decrease in the percentage of high and medium parental influence scores at this educational level when compared to the university or college plus professional training level. Only 53.6 percent of the seniors planning to earn university or college degrees had high parental influence scores compared to 70.8 percent for seniors planning university or college plus professional training. Hence, there was an increase in medium parental influence scores. One hundred sixty-five or 42.8 percent of the seniors indicated medium parental influence compared to only 24.7 percent for the seniors with higher educational plans. Both classifications had low percentages of low parental influence scores. However, the 17.2 percent decrease in high parental influence scores and the 18.1 percent increase of medium scores over the higher educational level indicated that lower level educational plans by seniors were directly related to lower parental influence.

Data presented in Table 21 show the influence scores for parents of seniors who planned to attend community colleges for two years before transferring to four-year colleges or universities. The percentage of high parental influence scores was considerably less at this educational level than for those levels presented in Tables 19 and 20. High parental influence scores for students planning for this educational level were reported to be 37.5 percent and medium parental

Table 20

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning University or Four-Year College Degrees

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	207	53.6
Medium	165	42.8
Low	<u>14</u>	<u>3.6</u>
Total	386	100.0

Table 21

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning Two Years in Community Colleges and  
Transferring to Four-Year Colleges or Universities

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	115	37.5
Medium	165	53.7
Low	<u>27</u>	<u>8.8</u>
Total	307	100.0

influence scores increased to 53.7 percent. Of the seniors who selected this program, 8.8 percent had low parental influence scores. This was a 5.2 percent increase in low parental influence scores over those students going directly to four-year colleges or universities. A conclusion from the data was that students planning to pursue community college transfer programs are much less influenced by their parents than those students who go directly to four-year colleges or universities.

The data in Table 22 show the parental influence scores for those seniors who planned to complete occupational career programs in community colleges.

When compared to higher educational levels reported in Tables 19, 20, and 21, the seniors who planned to enroll in community college occupational career programs had lower parental influence scores. Only 19.6 percent of these seniors had high parental influence scores while 69.6 percent had medium parental influence scores. Eleven or 10.8 percent of the seniors had low parental influence scores.

Parental influence on seniors planning to terminate their education with community college occupational career programs was lower than for seniors who planned to enroll in community college transfer programs.

Data presented in Table 23 show the parental influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend vocational-technical schools.

Seniors who selected vocational-technical schools had lower parental influence scores than those seniors who selected occupational career programs in community colleges. The most observed decrease was noted in the percentage of low parental influence scores; 22.5 percent

Table 22

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning Two-Year Occupational Career Programs  
in Community Colleges

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	20	19.6
Medium	71	69.6
Low	<u>11</u>	<u>10.8</u>
Total	102	100.0

Table 23

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning to Attend Vocational-Technical Schools

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	36	10.5
Medium	229	67.0
Low	<u>77</u>	<u>22.5</u>
Total	342	100.0

of the seniors at this level registered low parental influence scores. This was an 11.7 percent increase over the community college occupational career level reported in Table 22. Only 10.5 percent of the seniors at this educational level had high parental influence scores while 67.0 percent registered medium scores.

The data in Table 24 show the parental influence scores for those seniors who planned to terminate their education with high school diplomas.

The largest percentage of low parental influence scores for all educational levels was recorded for those students who planned to conclude their education with high school diplomas, with 31.3 percent of these students having low parental influence scores and 60.6 percent having medium scores. High parental influence scores accounted for only 8.1 percent of the classification.

The seniors' educational plans were trichotomized into the following categories: (1) seniors who planned to enter four-year colleges or universities were classified as having high educational aspirations, (2) seniors who planned to enter community colleges (transfer or technology programs) were classified as having medium level educational aspirations, and (3) seniors who planned to enter vocational-technical schools or terminate their formal education with high school diplomas were classified as having low educational aspirations.

The data presented in Tables 19 through 24 and summarized in Table 25 indicated a positive relationship between the level of the students' educational plans and the level of perceived parental influence. This conclusion was supported by a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .69 (Table 25) which indicated a positive association between the variables.

Table 24

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning to Conclude Their Formal Education  
with High School Diplomas

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	52	8.1
Medium	391	60.6
Low	<u>202</u>	<u>31.3</u>
Total	645	100.0

Table 25

The Relationship of Perceived Parental Influence Upon the Educational Plans  
of High School Seniors

Parental Influence Levels	Seniors' Educational Plans						Total
	High		Medium		Low		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
High	350	61.0	135	23.6	88	15.3	573
Medium	215	20.0	236	22.1	620	57.9	1,071
Low	23	6.8	38	11.2	279	82.0	340

No Response - 26  
Gamma,  $\gamma = .69$

Therefore, the third hypothesis which asked the question, will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived parental influence, was answered in the affirmative.

#### The Fourth Hypothesis

The fourth hypothesis tested asked: will there be a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' education?

Table 26 shows the data derived from the cross-classification of the parental influence scores with those fathers who had university or college degrees plus professional training.

The data indicated that 75.5 percent of the seniors from families whose fathers had university or college degrees plus professional training had high parental influence scores. Conversely, only 1.0 percent of the seniors from families in this classification had low parental influence scores, and 23.5 percent of these seniors had medium scores. This data indicated a strong relationship between high parental influence and fathers with university or college degrees plus professional training.

Data presented in Table 27 show the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers who held four-year college or university degrees.

Influence scores for the university or college degree fathers were lower than those indicated in Table 26 for fathers with training beyond the four-year college or university degrees. It was indicated that 63.7 percent of the seniors whose fathers had university or college

Table 26

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Fathers with University or College Degrees  
Plus Professional Training

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	77	75.5
Medium	24	23.5
Low	<u>1</u>	<u>1.0</u>
Total	102	100.0

Table 27

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Fathers with University or Four-Year College Degrees

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	93	63.7
Medium	48	32.9
Low	<u>5</u>	<u>3.4</u>
Total	146	100.0

degrees but no further education had high parental influence scores. This was 11.3 percent less than for those seniors whose fathers were in the higher educational classification. The same thing was true in the medium and low parental influence score categories, as 32.9 percent of the seniors registered medium scores and 3.4 percent had low scores. Although a relationship between parental influence and the fathers' educational levels were significant in this classification, it was not as great as for the university or college degree plus professional training level reported in Table 26.

Data presented in Table 28 show the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers with partial college training.

There were lower parental influence scores for seniors with fathers in the partial college classification than for those seniors whose fathers had completed four-year college or university degrees. Only 42.1 percent of the seniors whose fathers had a partial college education had high parental influence scores, while 51.3 percent of the seniors had medium scores, and 6.6 percent had low scores.

Table 29 shows the data derived from the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers whose education terminated with high school graduation.

Only 30.7 percent of the seniors whose fathers had graduated from high school had high parental influence scores, while 56.6 percent of the seniors in this classification registered medium scores, and 12.7 percent had low scores.

Data presented in Table 30 show the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers with partial high school experience.

Table 28

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Fathers with Partial College Training

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	83	42.1
Medium	101	51.3
Low	<u>13</u>	<u>6.6</u>
Total	197	100.0

Table 29

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Fathers with High School Diplomas

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	133	30.7
Medium	245	56.6
Low	<u>55</u>	<u>12.7</u>
Total	433	100.0

Table 30

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Fathers with Partial High School Education

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	66	20.8
Medium	190	59.9
Low	<u>61</u>	<u>19.3</u>
Total	317	100.0

High parental influence scores were recorded by only 20.8 percent of the seniors whose fathers had only partial high school training, while 59.9 percent of the seniors in this classification had medium parental influence scores, and 19.3 percent had low scores.

Data presented in Table 31 show the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers who had only completed junior high school.

Scores for the junior high school classification were only slightly lower than those reported in Table 30 for seniors with fathers who had only partial high school training. Only 17.5 percent of the seniors whose fathers fell into the junior high classification had high parental influence scores, while 22.9 percent had low scores; 59.6 percent of these seniors were recorded in the medium parental influence classification.

Table 32 presents the data derived from the cross-classification of the parental influence scores with those fathers who completed less than seven years of school.

Parental influence scores for those seniors whose fathers completed less than seven years of school were lower than for any other classification reported. Only 13.5 percent of the seniors in this classification had high parental influence scores while 28.6 percent had low scores.

The data presented in Tables 26 through 32 and summarized in Table 33 indicated a positive relationship between the level of perceived parental influence and the level of the fathers' education. This conclusion was supported by a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .52 (Table 33)

Table 31

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Fathers Completing Junior High School

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	65	17.5
Medium	221	59.6
Low	<u>85</u>	<u>22.9</u>
Total	371	100.0

Table 32

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent of  
Fathers with Less Than Seven Years of School

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	56	13.5
Medium	239	57.9
Low	<u>118</u>	<u>28.6</u>
Total	413	100.0

Table 33

The Relationship of Fathers' Educational Levels to Perceived Parental Influence

Parental Influence Levels	Fathers' Educational Levels						Total
	High		Medium		Low		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
High	253	44.2	133	23.2	187	32.6	573
Medium	173	16.2	245	22.9	650	60.9	1,068
Low	19	5.6	55	16.3	264	78.1	338

No Response - 31  
Gamma,  $\gamma = .52$

which indicated a positive association between the variables. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis which asked the question, will there be a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' education, was answered in the affirmative.

#### The Fifth Hypothesis

The fifth hypothesis tested asked: will there be a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' occupations?

Table 34 shows the data derived from the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers who were executives, proprietors of large concerns, or major professionals.

Fathers of 50.9 percent of the seniors who had high parental influence scores were in the highest occupational classification. Medium parental influence scores were recorded for 44.0 percent of the seniors in this classification. Low parental influence scores accounted for only 5.1 percent of the seniors.

The above data showed a direct relationship between high parental influence scores and seniors whose fathers were in the highest occupational classification.

Data presented in Table 35 show the cross-classification of parental influence scores and those fathers who were managers, proprietors of medium sized businesses, or professionals.

Parental influence scores were lower for fathers who were managers, proprietors of medium sized businesses, or professionals than for those reported in Table 34 for the fathers in the highest occupational classification. In this cross-classification, 46.3 percent

Table 34

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent  
of Fathers Who Were Executives, Proprietors of Large  
Concerns, or Major Professionals

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	59	50.9
Medium	51	44.0
Low	<u>6</u>	<u>5.1</u>
Total	116	100.0

Table 35

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent  
of Fathers Who Were Managers, Proprietors of Medium  
Businesses, or Professionals

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	87	46.3
Medium	89	47.3
Low	<u>12</u>	<u>6.4</u>
Total	188	100.0

of the seniors had high parental influence scores. This was 4.6 percent less than for those seniors whose fathers were reported in the highest occupational classification. There were also larger percentages in both the medium and low parental influence categories; 47.3 percent of the seniors had medium scores and 6.4 percent had low scores.

The data indicated that the relationship of this cross-classification was not as significant at the above occupational classification as at the highest classification reported in Table 34.

The data reported in Tables 34 and 35 for these two occupational classifications revealed that parental influence decreased as the prestige of the fathers' occupations decreased.

Data presented in Table 36 show the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers who were employed as administrative personnel of large concerns, owners of small independent businesses, or semi-professionals.

Scores for this classification were very similar to the scores recorded for the higher classification reported in Table 35. There was a 1.5 percent increase in high parental influence scores in this cross-classification over the next highest classification. However, there was also a 1.4 percent increase in low parental influence scores.

When the above data were compared to the two higher cross-classifications presented in Tables 34 and 35, only a small variation in percentages at all levels of parental influence was seen.

Table 37 shows the data derived from the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers who were owners of small businesses, sales workers, clerical workers, or technicians. Of those seniors in this classification, only 37.2 percent had high

Table 36

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent  
of Fathers Who Were Employed As Administrative  
Personnel, Owners of Small Businesses,  
or Semi-professionals

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	86	47.8
Medium	80	44.4
Low	<u>14</u>	<u>7.8</u>
Total	180	100.0

Table 37

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent  
of Fathers Who Owned Small Businesses\*, Sales Workers,  
or Clerical or Technical Workers

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	35	37.2
Medium	46	48.9
Low	<u>13</u>	<u>13.9</u>
Total	94	100.0

\*Valued less than \$6,000

parental influence scores. Medium scores were recorded for 48.9 percent of the seniors registered at this level. Low parental influence scores accounted for an additional 13.9 percent of the seniors.

From the above data it was noted that there was a decrease in parental influence scores when compared to the next highest occupational classification reported in Table 36.

Data presented in Table 38 show the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers who were skilled workers. There were more seniors whose fathers were employed in the skilled worker classification than at any other level. However, considerably fewer high parental influence scores were recorded for seniors whose fathers were skilled workers than for the next highest occupational level reported in Table 37. Only 23.9 percent of the seniors in this classification had high parental influence scores as compared to 37.2 percent for those seniors whose fathers were owners of small businesses, clerical workers, sales workers, or technicians. There was also an increase in medium and low scores in this classification. Fifty-eight percent of the seniors had medium parental influence scores and 17.7 percent had low scores.

The data indicated that while there was little difference in the percentages of seniors reporting high parental influence scores at the three white-collar occupational levels, there was also a high correlation between the fathers' occupational levels and the students' parental influence scores at the blue-collar level.

Presented in Table 39 are the data derived from the cross-classification of parental influence scores with those fathers who were employed as semi-skilled workers. Of this classification, only

Table 38

Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent  
of Fathers Who Were Skilled Workers

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	215	23.9
Medium	525	58.4
Low	<u>159</u>	<u>17.7</u>
Total	899	100.0

Table 39  
Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent  
of Fathers Who Were Semi-skilled Workers

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	54	16.3
Medium	190	57.4
Low	<u>87</u>	<u>26.3</u>
Total	331	100.0

16.3 percent of the seniors had high parental influence scores. This further supported the data presented in Table 38, that the lower the fathers' occupational levels in the blue-collar classification, the lower the parental influence scores. In addition to lower percentages of high parental influence scores, there was an increase in low parental influence scores. Twenty-six percent of these seniors had low parental influence scores, while medium scores varied only slightly over the higher classification reported in Table 38.

Data in Table 40 show the cross-classification of the parental influence scores with those fathers who were employed as unskilled workers.

Of those seniors whose fathers were employed as unskilled workers, 29.5 percent had low parental influence scores. There was an inconsistency in this occupational classification when compared with the high parental influence score relationship developed in higher employment classifications. Only 20.1 percent of the seniors whose fathers were in the unskilled worker classification had high parental influence scores. This was an increase of 3.8 percent over the semi-skilled worker classification. Medium influence scores were consistent with relationships in higher classifications, with 50.4 percent of the seniors having medium parental influence scores.

The data indicated that there was a direct relationship between the level of parental influence scores and the level of the fathers' occupations. However, this relationship was not as highly correlated as was the relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' occupations.

Table 40  
Three Levels of Parental Influence by Number and Percent  
of Fathers Who Were Unskilled Workers

Parental Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	28	20.1
Medium	70	50.4
Low	<u>41</u>	<u>29.5</u>
Total	139	100.0

The data presented in Tables 34 through 40 and summarized in Table 41 indicated a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' occupations. This conclusion was supported by a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .49 (Table 41) which indicated a positive association between the variables. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis which asked the question, will there be a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' occupations, was answered in the affirmative.

#### The Sixth Hypothesis

The sixth hypothesis tested asked: will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived peer influence?

Seniors were asked to respond to eight statements concerning perceived peer influence. Scoring techniques and statistical analyses for these statements were the same as those employed for the parental influence statements. The total response by the seniors to peer statements (see Appendix D) was trichotomized into high peer influence, scores 12-16, medium peer influence, scores 6-11, and low peer influence, scores 0-5.

Data presented in Table 42 show peer influence scores for those seniors who planned university or college degrees plus professional training. Only 9.4 percent of the seniors in this classification had high peer influence scores, low peer influence accounted for an additional 5 percent of the seniors, and 85.6 percent of the seniors had medium peer influence scores.

Table 41

The Relationship of the Fathers' Occupational Levels Upon The Degree of Perceived Parental Influence

Parental Influence Levels	Fathers' Occupational Levels				Total
	White-collar		Blue-collar		
	No.	%	No.	%	
High	232	41.1	332	58.9	564
Medium	220	20.9	831	79.1	1,051
Low	32	9.6	300	90.4	332

No Response - 63  
Gamma,  $\gamma = .49$

Table 42  
Three Levels of Peer Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning College Degrees  
Plus Professional Training

Peer Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	19	9.4
Medium	173	85.6
Low	<u>10</u>	<u>5.0</u>
Total	202	100.0

When peer influence scores were compared to parental influence scores presented in Table 19 at this educational level, a more important finding was observed. The comparison showed that 70.8 percent of the seniors had high parental influence scores compared to 9.4 percent who had high peer influence scores. This indicated that students selecting the highest educational levels were more influenced by parents than by their classmates and friends.

Data presented in Table 43 show peer influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend four-year colleges or universities. There was an increase in high peer influence scores for this classification over the college plus professional education classification presented in Table 42. Of the university-bound seniors, 14.7 percent had high peer influence scores, 79.4 percent had medium peer influence scores, and 5.9 percent had low peer influence scores.

When peer influence scores were compared to parental influence scores at this educational level, as reported in Table 20, peer influence scores were lower, with 53.6 percent of the seniors having high parental influence scores and only 14.7 percent having high peer influence scores.

Data presented in Table 44 reflect peer influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend community colleges for two years before transferring to four-year colleges or universities.

The percentage of both high and low peer influence scores increased at this educational level. Of the seniors 17.2 percent had high peer influence scores, 72.7 percent had medium peer influence scores, and 10.1 percent registered low peer influence scores.

Table 43

Three Levels of Peer Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning University or  
Four-Year College Degrees

Peer Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	57	14.7
Medium	309	79.4
Low	<u>23</u>	<u>5.9</u>
Total	389	100.0

Table 44

Three Levels of Peer Influence by Number and Percent of Seniors Planning Two Years in Community Colleges and Transferring to Four-Year Colleges or Universities

Peer Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	53	17.2
Medium	224	72.7
Low	<u>31</u>	<u>10.1</u>
Total	308	100.0

When peer influence scores were compared to parental influence scores at this educational level as reported in Table 21, parent influence was observed to be stronger than peer influence; 37.5 percent of the seniors had high parental influence scores, while only 17.2 percent had high peer influence scores. Hence, 8.8 percent of the seniors had low parental influence scores while 10.1 percent registered low peer influence scores.

The data in Table 45 represent peer influence scores for those seniors who planned to complete occupational career programs in community colleges.

Seniors who selected community college occupational career programs had slightly lower percentages of high peer influence scores than community college transfer seniors as reported in Table 44. Of the occupational career-bound seniors, 13.6 percent registered high peer influence scores. However, 78.6 percent of the seniors had medium peer influence scores. Low peer influence scores accounted for an additional 7.8 percent of the seniors at this educational level.

When peer influence scores were compared to the parental influence scores at this educational level, as reported in Table 21, it was apparent that seniors who selected community college occupational career programs were not highly influenced by parents or peers.

The data in Table 46 reflect peer influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend vocational-technical schools.

Seniors who selected vocational-technical schools had lower peer influence scores than those seniors who selected occupational career programs in community colleges. It was noted that 11.4 percent

Table 45

Three Levels of Peer Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning Two-Year Occupational Career Programs  
in Community Colleges

Peer Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	14	13.6
Medium	81	78.6
Low	<u>8</u>	<u>7.8</u>
Total	103	100.0

Table 46

Three Levels of Peer Influence by Number and Percent of Seniors Planning to Attend Vocational-Technical Schools

Peer Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	44	12.9
Medium	259	75.7
Low	<u>39</u>	<u>11.4</u>
Total	342	100.0

of the seniors at this educational level had low peer influence scores. However, when compared to parental influence scores at this educational level, as reported in Table 23, it was found that 22.5 percent of these seniors also had low parental influence scores.

From the above data it was concluded that while seniors who selected this educational level were less influenced by their classmates and friends than those seniors at higher educational levels, they were more influenced in their educational planning by their peers than their parents.

Data presented in Table 47 summarize the peer influence scores for those seniors who planned to conclude their formal education with high school diplomas.

The largest percentage of low peer influence scores for all educational categories was registered for those seniors who planned to conclude their education with high school diplomas. It was noted that 22.6 percent of these students had low peer influence scores while 66.5 percent had medium peer influence scores. High peer influence scores were recorded for only 10.9 percent of the seniors in this classification.

When compared to parental influence at this educational level, as reported in Table 24, peer influence was stronger than parental influence.

The seniors' educational plans were trichotomized into the following categories: (1) seniors who planned to enter four-year colleges or universities were classified as having high educational aspirations, (2) seniors who planned to enter community colleges (transfer or technology programs) were classified as having medium

Table 47

Three Levels of Peer Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning to Conclude Their Formal Education  
with High School Diplomas

Peer Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	70	10.9
Medium	429	66.5
Low	<u>146</u>	<u>22.6</u>
Total	645	100.0

level educational aspirations, and (3) seniors who planned to enter vocational-technical schools or terminate their formal education with high school diplomas were classified as having low educational aspirations.

The data presented in Tables 42 through 47 and summarized in Table 48 indicate a positive relationship between the level of the students' educational plans and the level of perceived peer influence. This conclusion was supported by a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .24 (Table 48) which indicated a positive association between the variables. Therefore, the sixth hypothesis which asked the question, will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived peer influence, was answered in the affirmative.

#### The Seventh Hypothesis

The seventh hypothesis tested asked: will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived school influence?

School influence was determined by asking the seniors to respond to eight statements that were constructed in the same manner as those questions used to elicit perceived influence of parents and peers. Scoring and statistical techniques were the same as those used to determine perceived parental and peer influence. The total response of the seniors to the statements (see Appendix E) pertaining to school influence was trichotomized into high influence, scores 12-16, medium influence, scores 6-11, and low influence, scores 0-5.

Table 48

The Relationship of Perceived Peer Influence Upon the Educational Plans  
of High School Seniors

Peer Influence Levels	Seniors' Educational Plans						Total
	High		Medium		Low		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
High	76	29.6	67	26.1	114	44.3	257
Medium	482	32.7	305	20.7	688	46.6	1,475
Low	33	12.8	39	15.2	185	72.0	257

No Response - 21  
Gamma,  $\gamma = .24$

Data presented in Table 49 show the school influence scores for those seniors who planned university or college degrees plus professional training.

Of the seniors who planned to pursue the highest educational level, 45.0 percent had high influence scores, 47 percent had medium school influence scores, and only 8.0 percent had low scores.

When school influence scores were compared to parental and peer influence scores as presented in Tables 19 and 42, parental influence appeared the most significant for this educational level.

Data presented in Table 50 reflect the school influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend four-year colleges or universities. There was a decrease in the percent of seniors in the highest school influence level for this educational category when compared to the highest planned educational level reported in Table 49. It was noted that 38.3 percent of the seniors had high influence scores compared to 45.0 percent for the college-bound educational classification. Medium school influence was recorded for 54.0 percent of the seniors which was an increase of 7.0 percent over the highest educational category.

The above data indicated that the students who planned to pursue a college education were not influenced as much by the school as were those students who looked forward to college or university plus professional training.

When parental, peer, and school influence scores were compared, parental scores were the highest for this educational level.

Data presented in Table 51 reflect the school influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend community colleges for two years

Table 49

Three Levels of School Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning College Degrees  
Plus Professional Training

School Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	91	45.0
Medium	95	47.0
Low	<u>16</u>	<u>8.0</u>
Total	202	100.0

Table 50

Three Levels of School Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning University Or Four-Year College Degrees

School Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	149	38.3
Medium	210	54.0
Low	<u>30</u>	<u>7.7</u>
Total	389	100.0

Table 51

Three Levels of School Influence by Number and Percent of Seniors Planning Two Years in Community Colleges and Transferring to Four-Year Colleges or Universities

School Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	87	28.2
Medium	185	60.1
Low	<u>36</u>	<u>11.7</u>
Total	308	100.0

before transferring to four-year colleges or universities.

The percentage of seniors who planned to pursue community college transfer programs had a lower percentage of high level school influence scores than did those seniors who planned to attend four-year colleges or universities. Only 28.2 percent of the transfer seniors had high level school influence scores compared to 38.0 percent for those seniors who planned to attend four-year institutions. It was noted that 66.7 percent of these seniors had medium school influence scores and 11.7 percent had low scores.

When school influence scores were compared to parental and peer influence scores, as presented in Tables 21 and 43, parental influence accounted for the highest percentage of the scores.

The data in Table 52 show the school influence scores for those seniors who planned to complete occupational career programs in community colleges. The students who selected community college occupational career programs had higher percentages of high level school influence scores than high parental or peer influence scores; 56.3 percent of the seniors had medium school influence scores, and 11.7 percent had low scores.

The above data indicated that community college occupational career-bound seniors are more influenced in their educational plans by the school than by their parents or peers.

Data presented in Table 53 show the school influence scores for those seniors who planned to attend vocational-technical schools.

Seniors who selected vocational-technical schools had lower school influence scores than those seniors who selected occupational career programs in community colleges. The most significant decrease

Table 52

Three Levels of School Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning Two-Year Occupational Career Programs  
in Community Colleges

School Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	33	32.0
Medium	58	56.3
Low	<u>12</u>	<u>11.7</u>
Total	103	100.0

Table 53

**Three Levels of School Influence by Number and Percent of Seniors Planning to Attend Vocational-Technical Schools**

<b>School Influence Levels</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
High	87	25.5
Medium	213	62.5
Low	<u>41</u>	<u>12.0</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100.0</b>

was observed in the percentage of high level school influence scores. Only 25.5 percent of the seniors who planned to attend vocational-technical schools registered high level school influence scores compared to 32.0 percent for community college occupational career students. Medium school influence scores were recorded for 62.5 percent of the seniors in this classification. The number of low school influence scores was only slightly higher in this classification than for community college transfer-bound students, but was still higher than reported for all higher educational categories.

When school influence scores were compared to parental and peer influence scores for this educational classification, as reported in Tables 23 and 46, vocational-technical students appeared to be more strongly influenced by the school.

The data presented in Table 54 reflect the school influence scores for those students who planned to conclude their formal education with high school diplomas.

Seniors who planned only for high school diplomas had larger percentages of low school influence scores than did seniors anticipating other educational plans. The data indicated that 17.5 percent of these seniors had low school influence scores and 60.8 percent had medium school influence scores.

Perceived school influence scores were lowest in the high educational category with 21.7 percent recorded. When school influence scores were compared to parental and peer influence scores for this educational classification, as reported in Tables 24 and 47, the school influence was the strongest for those seniors who planned only for high school diplomas.

Table 54

Three Levels of School Influence by Number and Percent of  
Seniors Planning to Conclude Their Formal Education  
with High School Diplomas

School Influence Levels	Number	Percent
High	140	21.7
Medium	392	60.8
Low	<u>113</u>	<u>17.5</u>
Total	645	100.0

The seniors' educational plans were trichotomized into the following categories: (1) seniors who planned to enter four-year colleges or universities were classified as having high educational aspirations, (2) seniors who planned to enter community colleges (transfer or technology programs) were classified as having medium level educational aspirations, and (3) seniors who planned to enter vocational-technical schools or terminate their formal education with high school diplomas were classified as having low educational aspirations.

The data presented in Tables 49 through 54 indicated a positive relationship between the students' educational plans and the level of perceived school influence. This conclusion was supported by a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .26 (Table 55) which indicated a low positive association between the variables. Therefore, the seventh hypothesis which asked the question, will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived school influence, was answered in the affirmative.

Table 55

The Relationship of Perceived School Influence Upon the Educational Plans  
of High School Seniors

School Influence Levels	Seniors' Educational Plans						Total
	High		Medium		Low		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
High	240	40.9	120	20.4	227	38.7	587
Medium	305	26.4	243	21.5	605	52.5	1,153
Low	46	18.5	48	19.5	154	62.1	248

No Response - 22

Gamma,  $\gamma = .26$

## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### SUMMARY

The problem of this study was to analyze the influence of selected factors on high school seniors' attitudes toward two-year occupational programs as career educational plans. More specifically, the study analyzed the relationship between the students' educational plans and the following selected factors: (1) parents' perceived influence, (2) fathers' occupations, (3) fathers' education, (4) peers' perceived influence, and (5) the schools' perceived influence.

The subjects used in the study were 2,010 twelfth grade students in eighteen high schools served by Walters State Community College, Morristown, Tennessee. Graduates from each of these high schools were currently or previously enrolled at Walters State.

A specific instrument was developed and validated to generate the data for the study (see Appendix B).

Findings in the study have been grouped according to the following seven hypotheses.

#### Hypothesis One

Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of the fathers' education, as measured by the Hollingshead Scale?

The results of the study indicated a strong positive relationship between seniors' educational plans and the level of their fathers' education. Thus, the hypothesis was answered in the affirmative with a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .63.

Of particular interest in this study were those seniors who selected the occupational career or technology programs in community colleges. Although a relationship was observed between these seniors' educational plans and their fathers' educational levels, this relationship was not as strong as observed for those seniors with either higher or lower educational aspirations.

#### Hypothesis Two

Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of the fathers' occupations, as measured by the Hollingshead Scale?

A strong positive relationship, as measured by the Gamma,  $\gamma$ , with a value of .65, was discovered between the seniors' educational plans and the fathers' occupations. Thus, the hypothesis was answered in the affirmative. The largest percentage of seniors who had high educational plans were from white-collar families. Conversely, the largest percentage of seniors with low educational plans were from blue-collar families. The largest percentage of community college technology-bound seniors were from blue-collar families.

#### Hypothesis Three

Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived parental influence?

The data indicated a strong positive relationship between the degree of parental influence and the educational plans selected by these seniors. The greater the percentage of high parental influence scores, the higher the seniors' educational plans. Accordingly, students who selected community college technology programs had proportionately lower parental influence scores than seniors with higher educational goals. The relationship was positive, with a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .69. Therefore, the hypothesis was answered in the affirmative.

#### Hypothesis Four

Will there be a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' education?

Students who had high parental influence scores were from families whose fathers had high educational achievements. A relatively strong positive relationship was clear and consistent at all educational levels selected by the seniors. As the educational level of the fathers decreased, the parental influence scores also decreased. The hypothesis was answered in the affirmative, with a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .52.

#### Hypothesis Five

Will there be a positive relationship between the level of parental influence and the level of the fathers' occupations?

The fathers' occupations showed a positive relationship to the degree of parental influence on the educational plans of the seniors. The question asked by the hypothesis was answered in the affirmative with a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .49. However, the relationship between the fathers' occupations and the degree of parental influence was not as strong as was the relationship between the fathers' education and

parental influence. The three levels of white-collar positions had approximately the same degree of parental influence. However, there was a decline in parental influence by blue-collar fathers.

#### Hypothesis Six

Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived peer influence?

Peer influence had a low positive relationship to the seniors' educational plans. As a result, the hypothesis was answered in the affirmative, supported by a Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value of .24. There was, however, an inconsistency in the relationship at different educational levels. Peer influence was lower than parent or school influence for all college-bound seniors, but was second in importance to the schools' influence for vocational-technical and high school diploma seniors.

#### Hypothesis Seven

Will there be a positive relationship between the level of the students' stated educational plans and the level of perceived school influence?

It was concluded that school influence had a low positive relationship on seniors' educational plans, since the Gamma,  $\gamma$ , value was only .26. Therefore, the hypothesis was answered in the affirmative.

When the community college was considered, those seniors who selected the transfer programs were more strongly influenced by their parents than by their peers or their high school. However, those seniors who selected community college occupational career or technology programs were more strongly influenced by the high school than by their parents or peers.

### CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of this study of high school seniors in the service area of Walters State Community College, it was concluded that a distinct difference existed in the factors influencing students to enroll in community college transfer programs and the factors influencing these students to enroll in technology or occupational career programs in community colleges. Community college transfer students had parent, peer, and school influence scores which compared more closely to the scores of those students who planned to enroll in college degree and college plus professional training programs than to those students who planned occupational or technology programs in community colleges. Influence scores for the community college technology or occupational career-bound students more closely resembled the scores of the vocational-technical-bound students than the scores of those who planned to terminate their education with high school graduation. The school had the most influence on these three groups, while parents had more influence on the community college transfer and higher education-bound students. The fathers' educational and occupational levels were also lower for the community college occupational career-bound students than for students planning to enroll in community college transfer programs.

A review of the literature suggested that an awareness of the community college occupational career program offerings would encourage more students to enroll in this area and would reduce the number enrolling in community college transfer programs. This theory could

be accepted if all factors of influence were near equal for those students selecting community colleges. However, data in this research showed a disparity of influence between the students selecting the two types of community college programs. Students who selected community college occupational career programs as their educational plan had influences more closely related to those students selecting vocational-technical schools or high school diplomas. Community college transfer students had influences more closely related to students who selected higher educational goals.

#### IMPLICATIONS

A major implication of this study for the community college was that seniors who selected community college occupational career programs as their educational plan were not greatly influenced in that decision by their parents or peers. The school was found to have the most influence on these students. Since these seniors perceived the school to be the primary source of influence on their decision to enroll in community college occupational career programs, it is extremely important that the high school personnel be cognizant of the extent of their influence on these students. Two possibilities existed: (1) either the school recognized its influence on these seniors' educational plans and had advised these students accordingly, or (2) that the school was unaware of the degree of influence exerted on this group of seniors and failed to carefully advise them. Therefore, seniors looking to the school for assistance in making educational plans were reluctant to select higher goals due to a lack of encouragement by school personnel.

Another implication for the community college, apparent from both the literature reviewed and the present research, was that since parents with high educational and occupational levels were found to exert considerable influence on their children's educational plans and since this influence was closely related to students selecting programs which would transfer to four-year colleges, the community colleges should consider increasing the number of transfer technology programs and should increase the publicity in this area.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

From these conclusions and implications four major recommendations can be made:

1. It is recommended that community college recruiting personnel be oriented to the fact that high school guidance counselors and teachers have a significant influence on the educational plans of students who select post-secondary vocational programs. Therefore, recruitment procedures for community college occupational programs should be designed to influence high school personnel more effectively.

2. It is recommended that parents of community college transfer oriented students be made aware of the technological programs in community colleges and the resulting employment opportunities.

3. It is recommended that community colleges establish and publicize the transferability of their technology programs.

4. Additional research is recommended to determine if educational plans change after students leave high school and what factors influence these changes.

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**APPENDIXES**

**APPENDIX A**

**PRETEST**

**EDUCATIONAL PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PRETEST**

Please mark an (X) in the appropriate column.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. My parents have not discussed college plans with me yet.					
2. I would not attend a college or consider a career that my favorite teacher did not approve.					
3. The guidance counselor feels a four year degree is more important than a two year vocational program in a community college.					
4. I have not discussed an occupation with my parents.					
5. My teachers do not seem interested in my future educational plans.					
6. My guidance counselor has been very helpful in selecting a college.					
7. My teacher and guidance counselor know more about what is best for my future education than my parents.					
8. My parents feel getting a job with the least amount of college necessary is more important than going to college for four years.					
9. My parents want me to attend a community college because it is less expensive.					
10. Going to the same college with my high school friends is more important than going to an outstanding university.					
11. I seldom discuss educational plans beyond high school with my friends and classmates.					

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
12. My parents do not know enough about my abilities and interests to give me good advice about going to college.					
13. I would not select a college or a university without a conference with the guidance counselor.					
14. It is impractical for me to rely on my classmates and friends suggestions about college.					
15. I would rather attend an expensive university which is located far away with my classmates and friends than to attend a less expensive college located near home without my friends.					
16. I have taken courses to be in classes with my classmates and friends although my teachers did not like the idea.					
17. Teachers and counselors do not know enough about my future educational plans to offer me good advice.					
18. I would not want to go to any college where none of my classmates and friends were going although the college was known to be better.					
19. It doesn't matter to my parents if I decide to get a two year vocational degree from a community college or to go for a general four year degree.					
20. My parents want me to go four years to college and get a degree.					
21. My parents would agree for me to attend a community college as long as I finish the last two years at a major college or university.					

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
22. If I attended college for less than four years my parents would be disappointed.					
23. College representatives place more emphasis on four year degrees than they do on a two year vocational program.					
24. I do not believe my parents would approve of me going to college for only two years and getting a job.					
25. My classmates and friends would not be pleased if I decided to go to a community college for two years and then get a job.					
26. It is not important to discuss college plans with my classmates and friends.					
27. My parents feel I should get a four year college degree before accepting a job.					
28. I would select a two year college vocational program with my classmates and friends over a similar program at a university.					
29. I have never had a teacher or guidance counselor to discuss college plans with me.					
30. I would attend a college that offered the best program for me although I probably would not have any old classmates and friends there.					
31. I would change my occupational plans in order to attend college with my classmates and friends.					
32. None of my close classmates and friends have asked me about college.					
33. Guidance counselors are too busy to keep up with college programs.					

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
34. My parents feel a four year college degree would be better for me than a two year vocational degree in a community college.					
35. My best teacher expects me to get a four year college degree.					
36. My guidance counselor was the first person to suggest that I attend college.					
37. My parents have planned for a long time for me to go to college.					
38. I have taken courses that my classmates and friends thought were unwise.					

**APPENDIX B**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

EDUCATIONAL PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SEX    M    F SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

Also write your name and the name of your school at the top of your answer sheet.

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The following three questions are to be answered on lines 1-3 on your answer sheet. Please read all choices under each question before marking your answer. Mark ONLY ONE CHOICE for each answer.

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1. What are your educational plans?  
(Use line 1 on your answer sheet for this question--select only ONE.)
  - 1 High School Diploma
  - 2 Vocational-Technical School
  - 3 Community College Technology Program
  - 4 Community College 2 year then transfer to University
  - 5 University or College Graduate
  - 6 University or College Graduate plus Professional Training
  
2. What is the educational level of your father (or head of household)?  
(Use line 2 on your answer sheet for this question--select only ONE.)
  - 1 Less than 7 years of school
  - 2 Junior High School
  - 3 Partial High School
  - 4 High School Graduate
  - 5 Partial College
  - 6 University or 4 year College Graduate
  - 7 University or 4 year College Graduate plus Professional Training
  
3. How would you classify your father's (or head of household) job in the categories below:  
(Use line 3 on your answer sheet for this question--select only ONE.)

- 1 Unskilled worker
- 2 Semi-skilled worker
- 3 Skilled worker
- 4 Owns a small business (no employees outside the family), clerical, sales worker, or technician
- 5 Administrative personnel of large concern, owns a small independent business, or semi-professional
- 6 Manager or proprietor of medium-sized business or professional
- 7 Executive proprietor of large concern, or major professional

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STATEMENTS 4-15 concern your friends, parents, classmates, and school. If you AGREE with the statement MARK 0 on your answer sheet. If you are UNDECIDED about the statement MARK 1. If you DISAGREE with the statement MARK 2.

0 = AGREE

1 = UNDECIDED

2 = DISAGREE

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- 4. My parents have not discussed college plans with me in detail.
- 5. My teachers do not seem interested in my future educational plans.
- 6. I seldom discuss educational plans beyond high school with my friends and classmates.
- 7. My parents do not know enough about my abilities and interests to give me good advice about going to college.
- 8. It doesn't matter to my parents if I decide to get a two year vocational degree from a community college or a general four year degree.
- 9. Teachers and counselors do not know enough about my future educational plans to offer me good advice.
- 10. It is not important to discuss college plans with my classmates and friends.
- 11. I have never had a teacher or guidance counselor discuss college plans with me.
- 12. My parents feel getting a job with the least amount of college necessary is more important than going to college for four years.
- 13. I have taken courses that my classmates and friends thought were unwise.

14. Guidance counselors are too busy to keep up with college programs.
15. None of my close classmates and friends have asked me about my college plans.

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STATEMENTS 16-27 concern your friends, parents, classmates, and school. If you AGREE with the statement MARK 2 on your answer sheet. If you are UNDECIDED about the statement MARK 1. If you DISAGREE with the statement MARK 0.

2 = AGREE            1 = UNDECIDED            0 = DISAGREE

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16. Going to the same college with my high school friends is more important than going to an outstanding university.
17. My parents want me to go four years to college and get a degree.
18. My classmates and friends would not be pleased if I decided to go to a community college for two years and then get a job.
19. The guidance counselor feels a four year degree is more important than a two year vocational program in a community college.
20. My parents have planned for a long time for me to go to college.
21. I would select a two year college vocational program with my classmates and friends over a similar program at a university.
22. I would rather attend an expensive university which is located far away with my classmates and friends than to attend a less expensive college located near home without my friends.
23. I would not select a college or a university without a conference with a guidance counselor.
24. My best teacher expects me to get a four year college degree.
25. My parents would agree for me to attend a community college as long as I finish the last two years at a major college or university.
26. My guidance counselor has been very helpful in selecting a college.
27. My parents feel a four year college degree would be better for me than a two year vocational degree in a community college.

END

**APPENDIX C**

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO STATEMENTS  
REGARDING PARENTAL INFLUENCES**

Appendix C-1

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 4

Statement 4: My parents have not discussed colleges plans with me in detail.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	134	66.3	221	56.8	140	45.5	47	45.6	9	34.1	170	26.3
Undecided	16	7.9	38	9.8	62	20.1	12	11.7	148	20.1	122	18.9
Agree	51	25.2	129	33.2	103	33.4	44	42.7	69	43.1	344	53.3
No Response	1	0.5	1	0.3	3	1.0	0	0.0	117	2.6	10	1.5

Appendix C-2

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 7

Statement 7: My parents do not know enough about my abilities and interests to give me good advice about going to college.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	144	71.3	266	68.4	186	60.4	67	65.0	185	53.9	368	57.0
Undecided	25	12.4	47	12.1	41	13.3	16	15.5	71	20.7	106	16.4
Agree	33	16.3	72	18.5	78	25.3	19	18.4	83	24.2	167	25.9
No Response	0	0.0	4	1.0	3	1.0	1	1.0	4	1.2	5	0.8

Appendix C-3

Percentage Distributions of Responses to Statement 8

Statement 8: It doesn't matter to my parents if I decide to get a two-year vocational degree from a community college or a general four-year degree.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	149	73.8	222	57.1	151	49.0	40	38.8	108	31.5	192	29.7
Undecided	20	9.9	67	17.2	61	19.8	16	15.5	87	25.4	160	24.8
Agree	33	16.3	97	24.9	94	30.5	47	45.6	144	42.0	289	44.7
No Response	0	0.0	3	0.8	2	0.6	0	0.0	4	1.2	5	0.8

Appendix C-4

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 12

Statement 12: My parents feel getting a job with the least amount of college necessary is more important than going to college for four years.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	186	92.8	344	88.4	251	81.5	79	76.7	225	65.6	357	55.3
Undecided	13	6.4	33	8.5	40	13.0	14	13.6	72	21.0	175	27.1
Agree	3	1.5	8	2.1	17	5.5	10	9.7	41	12.0	109	16.9
No Response	0	0.0	4	1.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	1.5	5	0.8

Appendix C-5

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 17

Statement 17: My parents want me to go four years to college and get a degree.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	18	8.9	43	11.1	44	14.3	28	27.2	128	37.3	292	45.2
Undecided	41	20.3	93	23.9	114	37.0	50	48.5	159	46.4	230	35.6
Agree	143	70.8	253	65.0	147	47.7	23	22.3	52	15.2	117	18.1
No Response	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.0	2	1.9	4	1.2	7	1.1

Appendix C-6

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 20

Statement 20: My parents have planned for a long time for me to go to college.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	35	17.3	82	21.1	73	23.7	32	31.1	157	45.8	396	61.3
Undecided	27	13.4	60	15.4	79	25.6	33	32.0	96	28.0	132	20.4
Agree	140	69.3	246	63.2	154	50.0	38	36.9	85	24.8	110	17.0
No Response	0	0.0	1	0.3	2	0.6	0	0.0	5	1.5	8	1.2

Appendix C-7

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 25

Statement 25: My parents would agree for me to attend a community college as long as I finish the last two years at a major college or university.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	45	21.3	77	19.8	77	25.0	41	39.8	119	34.7	256	39.6
Undecided	65	32.2	152	39.1	94	30.5	38	36.9	166	48.4	287	44.4
Agree	92	45.5	159	40.9	133	43.2	21	20.4	52	15.2	93	14.4
No Response	2	1.0	1	0.3	4	1.3	3	2.9	6	1.7	10	1.5

Appendix C-8

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 27

Statement 27: My parents feel a four-year college degree would be better for me than a two-year vocational degree in a community college.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	21	10.4	51	13.1	79	25.6	36	35.0	147	42.9	248	38.4
Undecided	33	16.3	115	29.6	125	40.6	43	41.7	138	40.2	272	42.1
Agree	145	71.8	222	57.1	97	31.5	22	21.4	50	14.6	108	16.7
No Response	3	1.5	1	0.3	7	2.3	2	1.9	8	2.3	18	2.8

**APPENDIX D**

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO STATEMENTS  
REGARDING PEER INFLUENCES**

Appendix D-1

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 6

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Statement 6: I seldom discuss educational plans beyond high school with my friends and classmates.

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Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	178	88.1	321	82.5	225	73.1	82	79.6	204	59.5	237	36.7
Undecided	11	5.4	16	4.1	24	7.8	1	1.0	36	10.5	62	9.6
Agree	13	6.4	51	13.1	56	18.2	18	17.5	101	29.4	344	53.3
No Response	0	0.0	1	0.3	3	1.0	2	1.9	2	0.6	3	0.5

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Appendix D-2

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 10

Statement 10: It is not important to discuss college plans with my classmates and friends.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	162	80.2	320	82.3	226	73.4	70	68.0	230	67.1	302	46.7
Undecided	19	9.4	35	9.0	42	13.6	15	14.6	55	16.0	99	15.3
Agree	21	10.4	33	8.5	39	12.7	18	17.5	54	15.7	238	36.8
No Response	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0.0	4	1.2	7	1.1

Appendix D-3

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 13

Statement 13: I have taken courses that my classmates and friends thought were unwise.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	116	57.4	223	57.3	154	50.0	48	46.6	174	50.7	351	54.3
Undecided	27	13.4	53	13.6	55	17.9	19	18.4	63	18.4	102	15.8
Agree	58	28.7	112	28.8	95	30.8	36	35.0	100	29.2	183	28.3
No Response	1	0.5	1	0.3	4	1.3	0	0.0	6	1.7	10	1.5

Appendix D-4

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 15

Statement 15: None of my close classmates and friends have asked me about my college plans.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	188	93.1	362	93.1	263	85.4	87	84.5	269	78.4	422	65.3
Undecided	4	2.0	5	1.3	16	5.2	3	2.9	19	5.5	44	6.9
Agree	9	4.5	22	5.7	29	9.4	12	11.7	48	14.0	174	26.9
No Response	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	1.0	7	2.0	6	0.9

Appendix D-5

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 16

Statement 16: Going to the same college with my high school friends is more important than going to an outstanding university.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	157	77.7	262	67.4	170	55.2	54	52.4	184	53.6	300	46.4
Undecided	18	8.9	61	15.7	72	23.4	17	16.5	66	19.2	125	19.3
Agree	25	12.4	63	16.2	65	21.1	32	31.1	83	24.2	213	33.0
No Response	2	1.0	3	0.8	1	0.3	0	0.0	10	2.9	8	1.2

Appendix D-6

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 18

Statement 18: My classmates and friends would not be pleased if I decided to go to a community college for two years and then get a job.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	64	31.7	170	43.7	137	44.5	62	60.2	191	55.7	340	52.6
Undecided	93	46.0	162	41.6	119	38.6	24	23.4	101	29.4	208	32.2
Agree	45	22.3	57	14.7	49	15.9	16	15.5	46	13.4	87	13.5
No Response	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.0	1	1.0	5	1.5	11	1.7

Appendix D-7

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 21

Statement 21: I would select a two-year college vocational program with my classmates and friends over a similar program at a university.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	136	67.3	226	58.1	119	38.6	27	26.2	89	25.9	216	33.4
Undecided	40	19.8	89	22.9	100	32.5	29	28.2	121	35.3	217	33.6
Agree	25	12.4	73	18.8	87	28.2	47	45.6	127	37.0	203	31.4
No Response	1	0.5	1	0.3	2	0.6	0	0.0	6	1.7	10	1.5

Appendix D-8

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 22

Statement 22: I would rather attend an expensive university which is located far away with my classmates and friends than to attend a less expensive college located near home without my friends.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	124	61.4	224	57.6	198	64.3	74	71.8	205	59.8	359	55.6
Undecided	36	17.8	92	23.7	63	20.5	12	11.7	74	21.6	141	21.8
Agree	42	20.8	73	18.8	46	14.9	16	15.5	56	16.3	138	21.4
No Response	0	0.0	0	0.0	1	0.3	1	1.0	8	2.3	8	1.2

**APPENDIX E**

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES TO STATEMENTS  
REGARDING SCHOOL INFLUENCES**

Appendix E-1

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 5

Statement 5: My teachers do not seem interested in my future educational plans.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	125	61.9	249	64.0	171	55.5	67	65.0	201	58.6	357	55.3
Undecided	35	17.3	75	19.3	63	20.5	18	17.5	66	19.2	132	20.4
Agree	41	20.3	64	16.5	70	22.7	18	17.5	72	21.0	142	22.0
No Response	1	0.5	1	0.3	4	1.3	0	0.0	4	1.2	15	2.3

Appendix E-2

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 9

Statement 9: Teachers and counselors do not know enough about my future educational plans to offer me good advice.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	103	51.0	192	49.4	108	35.1	36	35.0	135	39.4	224	34.7
Undecided	44	21.8	85	21.9	72	23.4	29	28.2	74	21.6	144	22.3
Agree	54	26.7	112	28.8	128	41.6	38	36.9	132	38.5	272	42.1
No Response	1	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.6	6	0.9

Appendix E-3

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 11

Statement 11: I have never had a teacher or guidance counselor discuss college plans with me.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	177	87.6	324	83.3	231	75.0	71	68.9	222	64.7	364	56.3
Undecided	3	1.5	12	3.1	7	2.3	7	6.8	18	5.2	38	5.9
Agree	21	10.4	52	13.4	69	22.4	25	24.3	100	29.2	240	37.2
No Response	1	0.5	1	0.3	1	0.3	0	0.0	3	0.9	4	0.6

Appendix E-4

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 14

Statement 14: Guidance counselors are too busy to keep up with college programs.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	143	70.8	283	72.8	209	67.9	79	76.7	234	68.2	436	67.5
Undecided	33	16.3	72	18.5	70	22.7	16	15.5	71	20.7	134	20.7
Agree	26	12.9	32	8.2	28	9.1	8	7.8	34	9.9	69	10.7
No Response	0	0.0	2	0.5	1	0.3	0	0.0	4	1.2	7	1.1

Appendix E-5

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 19

Statement 19: The guidance counselor feels a four-year degree is more important than a two-year vocational program in a community college.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	35	17.3	75	19.3	59	19.2	25	24.3	105	30.6	153	23.7
Undecided	119	58.9	244	62.7	186	60.4	47	45.6	174	50.8	364	56.3
Agree	47	23.3	69	17.7	59	19.2	29	28.2	55	16.0	115	17.8
No Response	1	0.5	1	0.3	4	1.3	2	1.9	9	2.6	14	2.2

Appendix E-6

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 23

Statement 23: I would not select a college or a university without a conference with a guidance counselor.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	80	39.6	129	33.2	92	29.9	26	25.2	99	28.9	190	29.4
Undecided	22	10.9	74	19.0	70	22.7	29	28.2	61	17.8	121	18.7
Agree	99	49.0	185	47.6	144	46.8	45	43.7	177	51.6	325	50.3
No Response	1	0.5	1	0.3	2	0.6	3	2.9	6	1.7	10	1.6

Appendix E-7

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 24

Statement 24: My best teacher expects me to get a four-year college degree.

Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	27	13.4	72	18.5	86	27.9	36	35.0	155	44.0	315	48.8
Undecided	66	32.7	173	44.5	146	47.4	36	35.0	124	36.2	215	33.3
Agree	109	54.0	144	37.0	73	23.7	30	29.1	60	17.5	103	15.9
No Response	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.0	1	1.0	8	2.3	13	2.0

Appendix E-8

Percentage Distribution of Responses to Statement 26

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Statement 26: My guidance counselor has been very helpful in selecting a college.

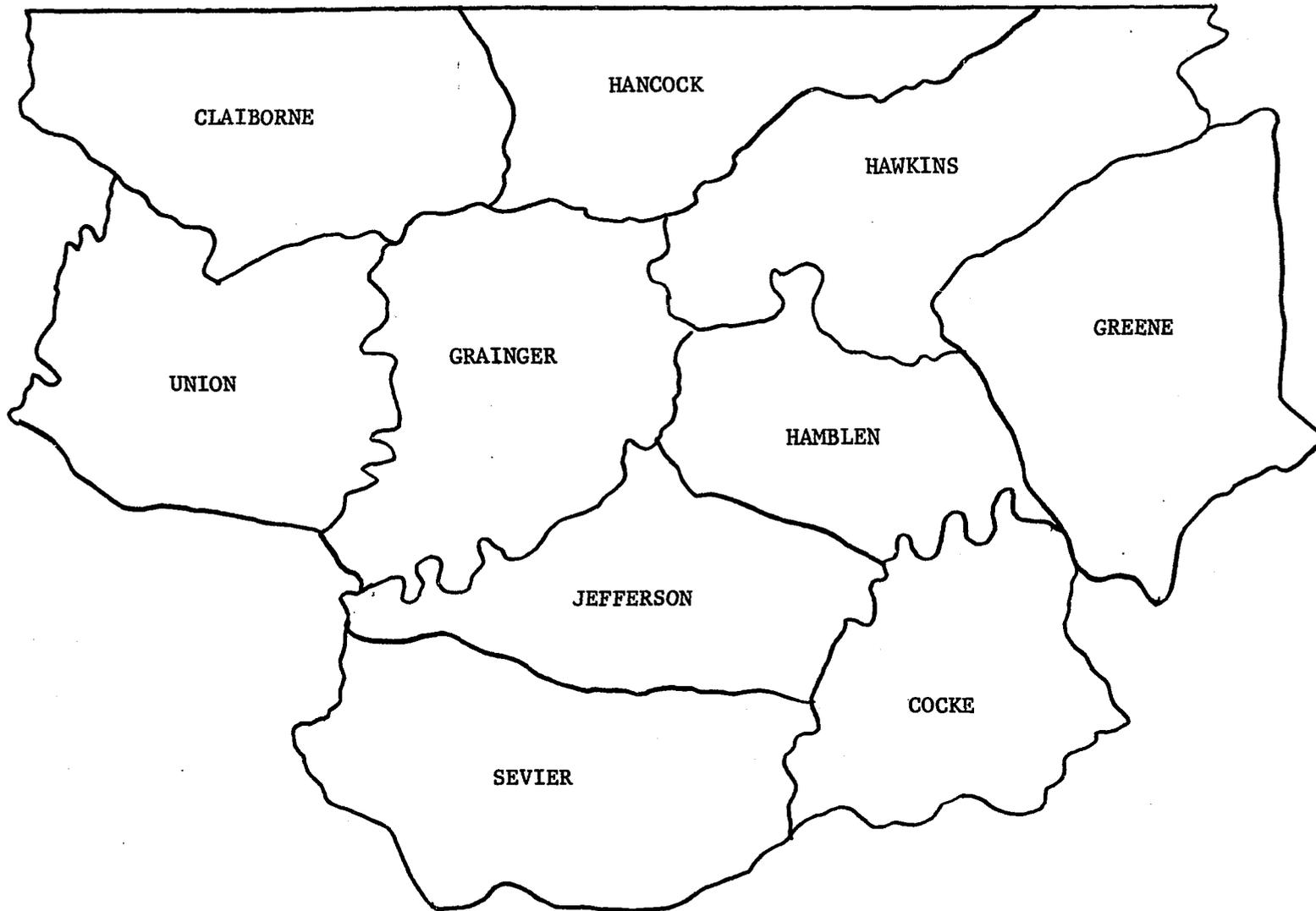
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Statement Response	College Plus Prof.		College Degree		Community College Transfer		Community College Tech.		Vo. Tech.		H. S. Diploma	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disagree	70	34.7	149	38.3	116	37.7	33	32.0	118	34.4	240	37.2
Undecided	48	23.8	84	21.6	89	28.9	29	28.2	94	27.4	218	33.7
Agree	83	41.1	156	40.1	101	32.8	37	35.9	121	35.3	175	27.1
No Response	1	0.5	0	0.0	2	0.6	4	3.0	10	2.9	13	2.0

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APPENDIX F

MAP OF TEN COUNTY SERVICE AREA  
OF  
WALTERS STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Map of Ten County Service Area of Walters State Community College