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## **A Study of the Effects on Dropout Migrant Students, Relative as to How it Affects Their Lives**

Frances D. Macias

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A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS ON DROPOUT MIGRANT STUDENTS,  
RELATIVE AS TO HOW IT AFFECTS THEIR LIVES

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A Project Report  
Presented to  
the Graduate Faculty  
Central Washington University

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for  
Master of Education

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by  
Frances D. Macias  
January, 1991

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

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A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS ON DROPOUT MIGRANT STUDENTS,  
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Frances D. Macias

February, 1991

A survey was conducted of 15 migrant students and their parents. Students and their parents were interviewed with a list of questions. These students attended two secondary and two senior high schools in Yakima, Washington.

It was determined that because of continued migration of families, students get behind in their studies and therefore lose interest because of the frustration and low self-esteem these students feel. Families still migrate from Yakima, Washington, to other states in search of seasonal work, farm labor is still a way of life for migrant families from schools in the Yakima School District.

It's sad to say, but many migrant families will never know any other way of life, except farm labor. Most of the migrant families from schools in Yakima are of Mexican decent.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To my husband Jesse for all the support and patience he provided me through this project. Also, to my seven children and nine grandchildren who believed in me through it all.

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My project was made possible because of everyone's help and support. May God bless all of you.

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## CHAPTER 1

### Background of the Study

Students who drop out of school and students who are from economically deprived families can be at a great disadvantage as they enter the adult world. In addition, students of minority families may also be at risk in a number of ways. Students with these conditions certainly have a life style that is different and difficult, and it profoundly effects each student. One of those effects is an increased dropout rate, and many of these dropouts are from migrant families. This has a significant effect on the lives of these young people.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to create a reference description of the effects of school dropout on migrant students.

#### Need for the Study

This dropout problem has effects on both the students and us all. There is a need to portray the problems dropouts encounter, in order to help students, educators, and others to become more aware of and sensitive to the problem. In addition, migrant students who have not dropped

out of school should have a reference to consult which describes the problems they might encounter if they should decide to drop out.

#### Limitations

The project was limited to selected students in the Chapter 1 Migrant Program in two middle schools and two senior high schools in Yakima, Washington, School District #7.

#### Definition of Terms

Migrant. A migratory child or a migratory worker who has moved with his/her family from one school district to another during the past year, in order that a parent or other member of his/her immediate family might secure employment in agriculture or in a related food processing activity.

Migratory Agricultural Worker. A person who has moved within the past 12 months from one school district to another school district in the state or region, and has moved from one school administrative area to another in order to enable him/her to obtain temporary or seasonal employment in an agricultural activity (MSRTS Booklet).

Dropout. One who drops out before completing high school.

MAS. Migrant Alternative School.

MDVP. Migrant Dropout Youth Program.

Organization of the Remainder of the Paper

Chapter 2 is a review of the related literature; Chapter 3 describes the procedures of the study; Chapter 4 will be a reference guide of migrant dropout problems; Chapter 5 will be a summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## Chapter 2

### Review of Related Literature

Chapter 2 is devoted to a review of current literature and research related to the problem of how dropout effects the lives of migrant students. The rising dropout rate has increased the need for more research and for incorporation of more alternative programs to help these students. In the Yakima School District alone there are several programs to help district youth. As far as the migrant student is concerned, two Yakima programs are available: The Migrant Program, and MAS (Migrant Alternative School).

#### The Migrant Program

The Yakima Migrant Program is designed especially for students who move with their parents in search of agricultural employment. The Migrant Program has remedial classes for students' academic work. The program also has health benefits including: medical, dental, blood test, urine test, T. B. skin test, and help with classes. This helps students if they have any medical or dental problems. Having medical and dental problems can hinder the students' learning process and success. For this reason, the migrant program is a God-send to many migrant students.



### The MAS Evening Program

The Yakima Migrant Alternative School Program is designed to fit the needs of students who must help their families work during the day. These students also have the same medical and dental benefits as those in the regular migrant program.

The Migrant Alternative Program employs teachers who work in shifts to help accommodate the needs of students. For example, some students may attend classes from eight in the morning to one or two in the afternoon, because their job starts at three or four in the afternoon. Some students may work all day until four, five, or six and are not able to attend school during the day. In this case, students can attend night classes from six to nine in the evening five nights per week. Students in the MAS Program range in ages 16 to 22.

### History and Effects of Migrant Dropout

Because of the migration of families from one state to another in search of agricultural employment, children from these families start school one or two months after other students are in school. The reason for this is because of the autumn apple picking, hop harvest, cannery, and warehouse work.

Starting school late and leaving two to three months before the end of the school year contributes to the migrant

dropout rate. Here again, students get so far behind in their studies that there's no way they can catch up. Every year they get behind a little more. Because they get behind, their self-esteem is low and they dread being asked questions because they don't know the answer. This can be very intimidating.

Moving from one place to another and living in deplorable camps, with little or no sanitation, are some of the sad living conditions of migrant families.

The social and economic injustice suffered by migrant workers of the 1960s was evident in the film titled The Harvest of Shame, done 30 years ago by Edward R. Morrow who traveled into the fields and produced the documentary film (CBS, 1960, p. 3). In 1985, a follow-up on The Harvest of Shame was done, and it found little or no change in the living and working conditions of the migrant (CBS, 1985, p. 3). Rats, lack of hot water and toilet facilities, long hours, sub-minimum wages, use of poisonous chemicals, and exploitation by crew leaders are still common factors in a migrant's work place and in the camps in which they live (Goldman, 1984). The average income for a migrant family of six often with children working is \$3,900.00 annually (Moore, 1985, p. 3). They often receive far less than they earn because of the unauthorized deductions taken out for food and housing (Noonan, 1984, p. 3).

In 1984, a Pennsylvania joint subcommittee heard testimony from over 100 migrant farmworkers and found that:

- a) Men and women worked 75-85 hour/week.
- b) They were overcharged by the crew chief for staple foods.
- c) They received only a portion of their paycheck since the crew leader received all their checks and made deductions prior to remitting the balance to them.
- d) They lived 40 workers to one trailer with children sleeping 3-4 to a bed.
- e) They had no privacy or decent toilet facilities (Taylor, 1984, p. 3).

An extreme example of neglect was found in Michigan in 1985, where a crew was abandoned in a camp. Officials said the crew was recruited from Chicago, Illinois, and Atlanta, Georgia, and received no pay for the year and a half period they worked for the farm (AP, 1986, p. 3). These conditions illustrate some of the injustices and humiliation which migrant families have to put up with.

As Robert Coles reported in 1982, on the plight of the migrant:

No group of people I have worked with...tries harder to work. Indeed travels all over the country working, from sunrise to sunset, seven days a week. There is something ironic and special about that. In exchange for the desire to work, for the terribly hard work of bending and stooping to harvest our food, these workers are denied rights and privileges no others are denied, denied half-way decent wages, asked to live homeless and vagabond lives, lives of virtual peonage (Coles, 1982).

It's not possible to believe the human body and mind were made to sustain the stresses the migrant must face. One fears what it does to men, women, and especially the children (Escape, 1983, p. 3).

These factors severely impact the learning process of migrant children. Because the children must move with their families for economic survival, they regularly leave school early and return back home to find classes already full. Too many times they are placed in classes not according to their individual needs, but according to the need of the school to maintain reasonable class sizes and teacher loads. In an attempt to make educational opportunities more equitable for these youth, Congress passed a special amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, 1966, p. 3). It set aside funds for supplementary instruction and support services. The design of each states' migrant education program provides for remediation of some of the effects of poverty and frequent interruptions to regular education programs (Plaquemines-Gazett, 1984, p. 4) and is reflected in the motto of the film, A Harvest of Hope.

Failing school closes doors, not only school doors, but the doors to a decent life. The lack of a high school diploma marks today's young adult as unfit for employment, for advancement, for the good things in life; in short, it marks him or her as a misfit (Namenwirth, 1969).

Migrants are still one of the most disadvantaged and impoverished groups in the United States. Among their problems is that they have neither the political, economic, nor other means of mitigating their problems. Some of their problems include uncertain jobs, changing work locations, seasonally induced intermittent work periods, traveling to

distant areas, temporary and often inadequate housing, low earnings, fewer educational opportunities, and lower educational attainment (McElroy, 1971).

The children of the migrant families are possibly the ones who suffer the most because they are not allowed stability nor enough education to remove themselves from the migrant stream. They tend to follow the same migrational patterns as their parents. A major hope for breaking the poverty cycle is through education of the children, but deprivation and the transitory nature of migratory work causes migrant children to have fewer educational opportunities and lower educational attainment than any other group of American children. Although the funds for improving primary and secondary schools have increased, as has the average educational level of the American labor force level, migrants attained an average level of about 8.5 years and many remain functionally illiterate (McElroy, 1971).

Characteristics of Dropouts

(Excerpt from a 1965 publication of the New York State Department of Education entitled Work-Study Programs for Potential Dropouts.)

In the Holding Power Project...the following pupil attributes were found to distinguish adequately, the advance of school leaving, between pupils who become dropouts and those who did not. The factors are listed in decreasing order of their discriminative power.

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Qualifying Condition</u>
1	age	old for age group (over 2 years)
2	grade retardation	one year or more retarded
3	learning rate	below 90 I. Q.
4	interest in school work	little or none
5	school marks	predominately below average
6	ability to read	2 years or more below grade level
7	parental attitudes	negative
8	general adjustment	fair or poor
9	participation in out- of-school activities	none
10	attendance	chronic absenteeism (20 days or more per year)
11	acceptance by pupils	not liked
12	# of children in family	five or more

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Qualifying Condition</u>
13	reactions to school controls	resents controls
14	mother's education	grade 7 or below
15	parental attitude	vacillating
16	school activities	none
17	father's education	grade 7 or below
18	father's occupation	unskilled or semiskilled
19	health	frequently ill, easily fatigued
20	school to school transfers	pattern of "jumping" from school to school
21	physical size	small or large for age group

It was found that roughly 75 percent of those individual pupils with five or more of the characteristics cited above actually become school dropouts. The items predicted male dropouts with greater efficiency than female dropouts (pp. 8-101).

Age was ranked as the number one factor for students dropping out; second was grade retardation. Other factors were below 90 I. Q., little or no interest in school, and many more factors.

It was observed and recorded that the main factors cited by the Yakima School District students, who were interviewed along with their parents, were: (1) migration from one state to another to seek seasonal work; and (2) getting behind grade level.

In comparing the characteristics of dropouts reported by the 1965 publication by the New York State Department of

Education and the Yakima School District students interviewed, it can pretty much be established that both groups basically have the same or similar characteristics.

#### Factors Affecting School Progress and Leaving School

A number of outside problems or situations appear to have affected the school progress of dropout students. The problems cited by those dropouts interviewed are listed below in rank order (Y.S.D. #7 Dropout Booklet).

1. Constant moving (migrating)
2. Family conflict
3. Financial problems
4. Chronic absenteeism
5. Illness--lack of medical and dental care
6. Trauma (serious emotional problems)
7. Divorce and/or separation
8. Alcohol (usually father had problem)
9. Death

Close examination of the problems faced by most secondary migrant students has resulted in the identification of five major barriers to completion of high school:

1. Economic necessity, i.e., the need for migrant student to work. A report by the California State Department of Education noted that "about the end of the sophomore year, when many students are reaching 16 years of



age, the economic pressures on migrant students by their peers and their families to leave school and become a full-wage earner become quite heavy."

2. Schools often have a negative attitude toward migrant students. Many school district personnel feel "that migrant students are not interested in graduation and that in many cases it does not matter, as their probable future does not require a diploma."

3. Students face a bewildering array of curriculums, requirements, and class schedules. One analysis of state curriculum requirements found 116 different courses required by state statutes (Ogletree, 1979, p. 5). Even when the differences in curriculum are minimized by cooperation between SEA's such as the Texas/Washington Project, adjusting schedules or finding classes for students remains a problem (Hunter and Peny, 1980, p. 6). A student may not be able to get the same five classes in a receiving school that he/she was taking in the home-base school, because the courses are not offered, are full, or are scheduled at times when the student cannot take them.

4. Specific or local proficiency or competency standards may impede graduation or continuation for a number of reasons. First, if students do poorly on the tests they are likely to be discouraged. Second, the remedial classes for those students who fail may be held when the students are out of the district or state. Third, there is no clear

picture of whether a passing score in one state can be transferred to another state.

5. Access to many social types of education services is cut off for migrant students because of their mobile lifestyles or because of the rural nature of many of the schools the students attend. For example, a review of special education for handicapped students found that migrant students were not being served at a rate similar to nonmobile students (Pyecha, 1980, p. 6), although it is well established that migrant students have an unusually high incidence of poor health and handicapping conditions (Serrano, Vicente, 1983, pp. 5 and 6).

In Table 1, information on minority students, is furnished by the State of Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction Information Services (1990) located in Olympia, Washington. For minority students the ethnic breakdown of the student population (enrolled, dropout, graduates, and G. E. D.) is based on the last six years from 1982-83 to 1987-88 for the entire State of Washington. This report also gives the reasons for dropping out of school, and again age and grade retardation lead the list.

Table 2 shows a steady increase of white and Hispanic dropout students in the State of Washington.

Table 1

STATE OF WASHINGTON  
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION  
INFORMATION SERVICES

8-JUN-1989  
PAGE 9  
REPORT 1257-1

ANNUAL DROPOUT RATES FOR SCHOOL YEAR 1987-88

	DROPOUTS					TOTAL	REASONS																				
	BLACK	ASIAN	INDIAN	HISPAN	WHITE		UNKM	D	S	N	D	C	M	R	R	F	I	D	M	S	H	M	H	T	T	O	
MERIDIAN				2	16	18				10										2	6					3	
HOOKSACK VALLEY			5	2	16	23		7	4			2	1	2		1	2			1	1					7	
MOUNT BAKER			3	1	31	35	2	3	17	4				1												63	
** COUNTY TOTAL **	1	27	36	10	239	321	48	45	64	9	5	3	6	14	3	17	2		15	32	2	4					
WHITMAN					1	1			1																	1	
LACROSSE JOINT					2	2	1	1														1	1				
TEKON			1		14	15			13																	1	
PULLMAN				1	3	4		2																		1	
COLFAX					1	1																				1	
PALOUSE					1	1																					
GARFIELD					0	0																					
COLTON					0	0																					
ENDICOTT					1	1			1																		
ROSALIA					1	1			1																		
ST JOHN					0	0																					
DAKESDALE					0	0																					
** COUNTY TOTAL **			1	1	23	25	3	3	14														1	1		3	
YAKIMA					4	4															1					3	
WACHES VALLEY					4	4															4	26				235	
YAKIMA	18	2	10	90	187	315			25	1		4		14	3		3		1	4			2		10		
EAST VALLEY (YAK)			1	3	16	20			4			1		2	2		1	1		6	3	1			33		
SELAM				4	92	96	31	1	12	2			3	2			1	1								1	
MANTON				3	2	5			2				1	1	1			1			3	10	1			24	
GRANDVIEW			1	22	10	41		21	32	1		1	1	2	1		1			2	21					42	
SUNNYSIDE		1		57	20	78	1		17			1		7	5											2	
TOPPENISH			7	24	13	44	2								7						2					3	
HIGHLAND				6	7	13			1				1								2						
HIGHLAND				6	7	13			1				1								2						
GRANGER			1	12	3	16	1		2	1			5	3							3						
ZILLAM				4	9	13			2			3	1	2						2		3			1	50	
WAPATO	2	2	45	25	21	95	4	1	2	4				4			1	1		20	7			1	19		
WEST VALLEY (YAK)				4	19	23			2					1							1					3	
MOUNT ADAMS			12		1	13			4					2						3	1						
** COUNTY TOTAL **	20	5	85	254	412	776	39	23	103	11		10	14	35	19	3	9		43	72	2	3	1		425		
** STATE TOTAL **	1185	436	687	813	11763	14804	982	557	1962	676	45	98	219	506	112	154	81	128	1020	67	369	36				7208	

Table 2

8-JUN-1983  
PAGE 3  
REPORT 1257-2

STATE OF WASHINGTON  
SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION  
INFORMATION SERVICES

MINORITY ENROLLMENT SUMMARY  
1987-88 SCHOOL YEAR

	---BLACK---		---ASIAN---		---INDIAN---		---HISPANIC---		---WHITE---		---TOTAL---	
	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%
STATE TOTAL (K-12)	31857	4.00	3814	5.04	10509	2.40	36872	6.47	65250	84.09	71592	226.70
OCT ENROLL (9-12)	8543	3.64	12837	5.30	5233	2.23	1726	3.29	208584	85.43	236703	58516
OCT ENROLL (12M)	1815	3.10	3000	5.13	1083	1.85	1742	2.90	50874	86.94	58516	85.75
GRADUATES (12M)	1431	78.04	2073	88.10	822	75.90	1490	74.05	43962	86.41	50178	14886
GRADUATES (9-12)	1105	13.07	436	1.12	687	13.13	813	10.52	11763	5.87	14886	6.36

MINORITY  
DROPOUTS FOR SCHOOL YEAR 1987-88

	E		K		P		R		S		M		H		T		O		D		I		A		M		E		R		
	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	
ASIAN	32	13	32	24	2	4	12	3	4	3	30	27	3	17	1	238															
BLACK	1185	30	11	39	37	1	19	6	4	1	19	16	18	10	998																
HISPANIC	813	67	28	135	16	1	8	40	38	4	1	64	88	2	36	1	293														
INDIAN	687	53	31	97	18	6	7	15	36	4	15	9	81	34	1	5	3	296													
WHITE	11763	800	474	1649	581	36	86	188	319	68	127	47	1089	855	61	293	31	5303													
** TOTAL **	14886	902	537	1962	676	45	98	215	506	112	154	81	12833	1020	67	369	36	7208													

DROPOUT

SCHOOL YEAR	ENROLL		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP		DROPP			
	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%	Y	%		
1987-88	58,643	2,873	4.87	59,327	3,763	6.34	81,488	3,894	4.77	60,317	4,392	7.28	239,755	14,884	6.20																	
1984-87	60,934	3,416	5.61	65,089	4,446	6.83	42,508	4,885	11.50	57,864	3,917	6.77	246,395	15,874	6.44																	
1983-86	64,330	3,498	5.27	65,590	4,329	6.60	60,298	3,987	6.61	54,710	3,429	6.27	246,928	15,242	6.17																	
1984-85	67,179	3,346	4.98	63,522	4,241	6.68	37,485	4,034	10.76	56,581	3,649	6.49	242,747	15,270	6.24																	
1983-84	62,181	2,838	4.56	57,991	3,658	6.31	54,423	3,516	6.46	51,388	3,132	6.10	225,976	13,202	5.84																	
1982-83	58,140	2,971	5.11	60,160	3,958	6.51	56,970	3,992	7.01	56,518	3,635	6.43	232,388	14,556	6.26																	
** SUMMARY **	373,407	19,000	5.09	372,279	24,395	6.55	353,132	23,480	6.65	335,371	22,154	6.61	1,434,189	89,029	6.21																	

AGE-15 13  
AGE-16 144  
AGE-17 396  
AGE-18 247  
AGE-19 1508  
AGE-20 704  
AGE-21 477  
ALL-OTHER 6035  
TOTAL\* 9524

1987-88  
G E O CERTIFICATES ISSUED

Dropout Collection (Form SPI P-2100)

Appendix A, page 38 shows the information gathered by the Yakima School District #7 to report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction Office on page 12. This information gives ethnic dropout students rates for the state of Washington. The information also includes the reason students dropped out.

For the purposes of collecting student dropout data, a dropout is defined as a student who leaves school for any reason, except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies and does not transfer to another school. An individual is considered a dropout whether dropping out occurs during or between regular school terms. An individual should be counted as a dropout only once during any one school year. The report period is October 1 to September 30.

Students who left school for the following reasons are not included as dropouts: (Form SPI P-2100)

1. Enrolled in another public or private school
2. Deceased
3. Supervision by public or private agency
4. Completion of, or enrolled in, a General Education Development (G. E. D.) Certificate Program.
5. Suspension or expulsion with pupil returning or transferring during period being reported
6. Physically unable to attend

7. Left for other reason, but currently enrolled

The reasons on the current Form P-210D were taken from "High School and Beyond Study. A National Longitudinal Study for the 1980's "published by the National Center for Education Statistics. The reasons were separated into four major areas as follows:

School-related

1. Expelled or suspended without returning or transferring to another school during period being reported
2. Had poor grades
3. School was not for me
4. Completed grade 12--did not graduate
5. Did not get into desired programs
6. Could not get along with teachers

Family-related

1. Married or planning to marry
2. Pregnant or had a baby
3. Had to support family

Peer-related

1. Friends were dropping out
2. Could not get along with other students
3. Chose to stay home

Other

1. Offered training or chose to work
2. Wanted to enter military
3. Moved too far from school
4. Wanted to travel
5. Other or unknown

Summary

In developing an approach to addressing the needs of the estimated more than one million migrant students in America, it is necessary to recognize the impact of mobility on their educational development. As a group, they do share many of the characteristics of other special needs populations--poverty, language differences, negative stereotyping by others, health, and handicapping conditions, urban and rural isolation, etc.--and need the same kind of services that other special needs students do. But those needs are secondary to the need for continuity in the students' educational program, a need that cannot be fully understood unless the effects of mobility are understood.

Over the years, various studies have cited mobility as a disruptive factor in the education of migrant students. Constant movements of students from one LEA to another, irregular school attendance, often attributed to employees' needs, is a handicap to worthwhile participation in a vocational program. It is difficult to include parents in

the educational program of the student due to items such as the lack of parental understanding of the educational program.

Unless migrant students receive enough education to break away from the migrant stream they will be continuing the same patterns as their parents.



### Chapter 3

#### Procedures of the Study

The purpose of this project was to create a reference description of effects of school dropout on migrant students.

To identify the effects of school dropout on migrant students a review of related literature was conducted. Also, a total of 15 students selected from two middle schools and two senior high schools along with their parents were interviewed at different times and places. These students attend Yakima School District schools in Yakima, Washington.

Although an ERIC search revealed some information concerning the migrant dropout student, information was limited because not enough research has been done on migrant dropout students.

All of the 15 students and their parents who were interviewed were Hispanic. All questions were asked in Spanish.

## CHAPTER 4

### Results of the Study

In May, 1990, a survey was taken of selected population of migrant dropout students and their families. The 15 migrant students attend two middle and two senior high schools in the Yakima School District. The interview was done through a home visit of each family. Parents were asked questions in regards to their education, their child/children who dropped out of school, and their child/children who are still attending school.

**Question One:** Did you graduate?

**Parent Data:** Yes 2 No 28

**Response:** The majority of the parents indicated that because of their need to work for survival, they couldn't continue to study. Many attended one or two years of school and only two were able to graduate. The two who graduated were the mothers of students who had received their certificate to be secretaries in Mexico.

**Question Two:** Do you plan on having your child/children graduate from high school?

**Data:** Yes 5 No 25

**Response:** Five said they were planning on having their child or children graduate, because they wanted a better life for their child/children. Twenty-five of the parents said that because of their large family, their children had to work to help support the younger children.

**Question Three:** Is it necessary for students to dropout?

**Data:** Yes 25 No 5

**Response:** Twenty-five parents said it was necessary for their child/children to dropout to help earn money to support their large families. Five parents felt that it was worth the sacrifice to help their child/children so that they might have a better life than their parents.

**Question Four:** Does dropping out affect you, your child/children?

**Data:** Yes 25 No 5

**Response:** Twenty-five parents felt that dropping out would certainly affect both the parent and their child/children. The reason being that if a child/children had financial, personal, or any other problem later on in life, the parent would have to continue to help. Five parents felt that once

their child/children were on their own later on in life, it would be their responsibility to fend for themselves.

**Question Five:** Will your child/children return to school once they've dropped out?

**Data:** Yes 0 No 30

**Response:** All the 30 parents answer was no. The reason they felt their child/children wouldn't return to school once they dropped out was because they had to work to survive. Most of the time the students of whom marry very young had to work to support their own families.

**Question Six:** Did your parents graduate from high school or attend college?

**Data:** Yes 0 No 30

**Response:** All the families response was no. The reason again involved having to work to survive.

**Question Seven:** Do you think your child/children will have a better life than yours?

**Data:** Yes 15 No 15

**Response:** The response was half and half. Fifteen parents hoped that their child/children's life would be better than theirs. And 15 parents felt their child/children would follow their pattern.

**Question Eight:** Do you think your grandchild/grandchildren will graduate and go to college?

**Data:** Yes 30 No 0

**Response:** Here all families responses were very positive. All 30 parents felt that their grandchild/grandchildren would have a better chance of receiving a high school diploma and college education. It was very ironic that while not all parents could foresee graduation and a better future for their child/children, all hoped and foresaw a better life and attainment of graduation and college degree for their grandchild/grandchildren.

**Question Nine:** Do you plan on returning to school yourself?

**Data:** Yes 20 No 10

**Response:** Twenty parents' responses were yes. They said that someday they may return to school. Seven parents were attending ESL classes at night, after work. Ten parents felt that they didn't have the time or didn't read or write either in Spanish or English; therefore, there was no hope for them.

**Question Ten:** Will you continue to move with your child/children?

**Data:** Yes 25 No 5

**Response:** The response on planning to move was 25 yes. Those planning on moving said they had to follow the crops.

The response on planning to stay was five. These five families have more or less settled in Yakima, Washington. They may commute to Sunnyside to work in the asparagus, commute to Wapato and Toppenish, but mostly they stay put. Once in a while they will move to Mount Vernon, Washington, to pick strawberries, or Wenatchee to pick apples; but they always return to Yakima.

**Question Eleven:** What is your occupation? And are you currently employed?

**Data:** Yes 20 No 10

**Response:** The response to the question on occupation was farm laborer. Twenty said "yes" they were employed in farm labor, and their wives were either not employed at time of interview, or were expecting a baby and couldn't work at that time.

**STUDENT QUESTIONS:**

**Question One:** Why did you dropout?

**Data:** Yes 5 No 10

**Response:** The response of five students was that they had to dropout to help support the family. The students had dropped out of the day school program but were attending night school at MAS (Migrant Alternative School).

**Question Two:** Do you want to graduate from high school?

**Data:** Yes 15 No 0

**Response:** All students wanted to graduate, but didn't think it was possible because of their having to work and migrate to from one state to another to follow the crops.

**Question Three:** Do you plan on going to college?

**Data:** Yes 7 No 8

**Response:** Seven students said they were hoping and praying they could go to college. Eight felt it was hopeless for them to go to college. They felt they weren't smart enough for college.

**Question Four:** Do you like migrating from one state to another?

**Data:** Yes 5 No 10

**Response:** Five said they liked the excitement of going to a new place and meeting new friends. Also, they were pleased by the fact that their relatives and friends' families usually traveled with them to the different states. They said they were tired of moving, and not being able to study like other students. They also hated the uncertainties of not knowing where to live, whether they would have food, jobs, or a residence. They didn't like having to live in their cars, parks, or under a bridge.

Question Five: What do you see yourself doing five years from now? Will things change?

Data: Yes 2 No 13

Response: Two felt that their lives would be better. Thirteen felt that they would be doing the same thing five years from now because of their need to work to survive. They said they would have to do their best to try and establish a better life for themselves. They didn't look very hopeful.

#### Summary

Of the 15 families and their child/children interviewed only five families have settled here in the Yakima Valley. Occasionally they'll move to Mount Vernon, Washington, to pick strawberries, or to Wenatchee to pick apples. They have hopes of their child/children graduating.

Ten of the families interviewed continue to migrate from state to state following the crops. These families would like for their child/children to graduate. But, because of their need for help from their child/children, they feel it's a dream, but impossible to obtain. Most of these parents weren't aware of grants and loans for higher education.

Most of the families interviewed got married at an early age, therefore continued in their parents' pattern of



migration and employment. The survey indicates that while some families are becoming permanent residents here in Yakima, the majority continue to migrate to other states in search of work.

## CHAPTER 5

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

#### Summary

High dropout rates for migrant students have existed since the beginning of farm labor in this country. Because the migration of hundreds of families following the western stream of the Yakima Valley through western states from the state of California. The seasonal employment that brings the migrant families to the Yakima Valley consists basically of farm labor and harvesting the fruit.

The migrant children help with the harvesting of cherries, apricots, peaches, prunes, pears, tomatoes, grapes, apples, and hops. This harvesting runs into the middle of October, making students at least six weeks late starting school. Many times the family returns to Mexico, furthering the length of time before the children returns to school. By the time a student returns to the Yakima Valley he's anywhere between one, two, or three years behind in his studies. Once a child reaches his/her twelfth birthday, chances are he/she are frustrated and not willing to return to school. Therefore, they prefer to continue working, rather than face their peers. Knowing there's no way to catch up on their studies can be very depressing to a child.

The constant interruption of the migrant children's education must stop in order for them to break away from the migrational patterns of their parents so that they may establish roots.

### Conclusions

From the review of the literature and the data collected from the study, the following conclusions have been identified as important to the purpose of the project as indicated in Chapter 1.

1. The number of migrant dropout students in the state of Washington has doubled in the last six years because of poverty.

2. The number of migrant students in the Yakima School District has more than doubled in the last six years.

3. A large number of migrant students are returning to the same schools in the Yakima School District. The younger children are attending schools their older brothers/sisters attended here in the Yakima School District.

4. Former migrant students are returning to the Yakima Valley and sending their children to schools in the Yakima School District.

5. While some families are still migrating to other states, they are returning to settle in the Yakima Valley.

6. Former migrant students, while still migrating, are making more of an effort to register their children in preschool and regular school on the first day of school.

7. Some migrant families are really making an effort to keep their children in school and, at times, sacrifice going without so their children can receive an education.

#### Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on conclusions of the study.

1. School personnel must be made aware of the special needs migrant students have. School districts must expand and accommodate the needs of these students in the area of curriculum and materials. Migrant students who are monolingual only should have the help of bilingual education to meet their needs. The district should hire more administrators, counselors, and teachers, not only to help these students, but also to serve as role models.

2. The community needs to have more housing for low-income families. The community needs to write pamphlets in Spanish, besides English, and offer a directory of services offered in the community for everyone, i.e. work, doctors, hospitals, Employment Security Department, babysitting, legal, food banks, and interpreting services, above all.

3. School districts should make sure parents understand the number of credits a student needs to graduate. Also, parents need to enroll their child as soon as these children are of age, and as soon as school starts.

4. School districts should educate parents about the importance of education and parent participation.

5. School districts should show their concern and respect for the migrant families coming into their community.

6. Further study of the problem is needed. Long and in-depth study should be done on this problem by someone who can relate to and understand the plight of the dropout migrant student.

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APPENDIX A

Letter to Parents to Set-Up Home

Visit to Do Questionnaire

APPENDIX A  
Letter to Parents

April 16, 1989

Dear Parents,

As a graduate student of Central Washington University, I'm doing a study on the Effects on Dropout Migrant Students in the Yakima Valley. This study is being conducted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Masters of Education Degree.

I would like to schedule a home visit with you to go over the enclosed questionnaire with you. The questionnaire has been devised so that it will not take over 5-10 minutes of your time. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated in helping complete this portion of my program.

It is required that you respond to the items that pertain to your situation. Responses will be treated confidentially and no signature is required.

Friday, April 20th has been scheduled for the home visit. Please call [redacted] if this time is not convenient to you.

Sincerely yours,

Frances Macias

**APPENDIX B**  
**Parent Questionnaire**

APPENDIX B

Parent Questionnaire

1. Did you graduate? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you plan on having your child/children graduate from high school? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
3. Is it necessary for students to dropout? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
4. Does dropping out affect you, your child/children? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
5. Will your child/children return to school once they've dropped out? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
6. Did your parents graduate from high school? Attend college? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you think your child/children will have a better life than yours? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
8. Do you think your grandchild/grandchildren will graduate and go to college? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you plan on returning to school yourself? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
10. Will you continue to move with your child/children? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
11. What is your occupation?\_\_\_\_\_.  
Are you currently employed? (yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C**  
**Student Questionnaire**

APPENDIX C  
Student Questionnaire

1. Why did you drop out?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Do you want to graduate from high school?  
(yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Do you plan on attending college?  
(yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Do you like migrating from one state to another?  
(yes)\_\_\_\_\_ (no)\_\_\_\_\_
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. What do you see yourself doing five years from now?  
Will things change?