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The Effect of Federal Cut-Backs in Financial Aid to College Students on the Career Aspiration of Freshmen Students at Prairie View A&M University

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THE EFFECT OF FEDERAL CUT-BACKS IN
FINANCIAL AID TO COLLEGE STUDENTS ON THE CAREER ASPIRATION OF
FRESHMEN STUDENTS AT PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

by

Margaret Penn Sherrod

THESIS

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The 1980's has brought with it some of the most trying times, financially, that Americans have experienced in recent years. Banks have raised their interest rates beyond the average man's reach, credit has been limited or cut off completely to many consumers by retailers, gasoline prices are expected to climb to \$2.00 a gallon by mid-summer, and the list seemingly goes on and on. Many of these drastic measures occurred as a result of President Carter's effort to balance the budget. While most Americans are anxious to see a stop brought to runaway inflation, many feel that the President has misjuggled the economic factors this time.

The sources of much of the disenchantment, of course, are those persons whose personal, or professional lives, will be affected by these cut-backs. Home builders, potential home owners, and persons seeking to establish credit, have perhaps been crying the loudest. However, one group of Americans that has not yet been heard from is the tens of thousands of college students who are attending school on federally funded financial aid programs. Education was by no means left untouched when the President swept through his departments' programs, and saw many of them thrown out the back door as if they were yesterday's trash. One has to wonder

why college students have been so quiet, or so unconcerned by a decision so relevant to their well being. Perhaps, it is because the cut-backs in educational programs have been overshadowed by other budgetary cuts, that the media or, indeed, the general public, consider more crucial.

However, what is more crucial than the sustaining of plans by a young adult, in school, trying to realize his career aspirations? The future of this country lies in the hands of today's students. To curtail their educational preparation is to insure future ineffectiveness in the professional arenas of business, industry, education and politics.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to decide what effect the reduction of Federal Financial Aid Programs will have on career aspirations of freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University. This hypothesis will be tested through the research of this study. The problem to be answered here is, whether or not, students who may have their educational loans or grants reduced or terminated, will have viable career alternatives, should it become necessary to leave school.

It is assumed that a majority of the freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University are receiving some form of governmental financial assistance. It is further assumed that the cases chosen to study, will agree to participate in

the survey.

Method

Method

To facilitate the testing of the hypothesis stated in this study, a survey was taken of freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University. Before the survey could be administered, there were certain other details which had to be addressed. First of all, approval to conduct the survey was sought and granted by the Chairman of the Committee on the use of Human Subjects at Prairie View A&M University. Secondly, a computerized listing of all freshmen students, currently enrolled at the university, was secured from the Registrar's Office. Third, a random selection process was used to identify cases to be studied from the Registrar's print out of freshmen students; (every tenth person's name was selected, until 100 cases were chosen). Variables used in the study were sex and college majors. The Offices of the Dean of Women and Dean of Men were then contacted with a request for dormitory rooms numbers and phone numbers of the cases chosen for study.

The next step was the contacting of Senior Fellows (staff representatives) in the dormitories, who enlisted the aid of Junior Fellows (student representatives) to assist the researcher in locating the cases to be studied. The researcher briefed the Junior Fellows on the survey, and

they, in turn, assisted in assembling the students and administering the survey. Results of the survey were tabulated, charted, and analyzed by the use of percentages.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

One tends to wonder exactly how students financed their college education prior to the implementation of financial aid programs by state and federal governmental agencies. Unfortunately, there were no available facts documented that could satisfy this question. However, conversational literature on the subject was provided by Mr. Francis G. Fry, a 1918 graduate of Prairie View A&M University. According to Mr. Fry, there was only one form of financial assistance available to students of Prairie View, at that time. This assistance was called Contract Jobs. Contract Jobs was a program similar to the current work-study program, where students work for wages that are applied to the payment of their fees. Mr. Fry admitted that wages for Contract Jobs amounted to only forty dollars a month, with half the sum going to student fees, and half to the student of personal use. These wages would hardly sound encouraging to today's students, but, in 1918 room and board was only \$10.00 a month. Mr. Fry reported that two years later, in 1920, the students were ready to protest when an increase was announced that sent room and board up to a whopping \$12.00 a month.

Of course, our very own social heritage tells us that many a church and social club in the Black community sponsored

dinners, dances, raffles and the like, to finance scholarship awards to needy students who desired a college education. With the creation of so many financial aid programs by the government, however, these social institutions, seemingly, have relaxed their efforts to provide scholarship awards in the community.

The current status of the economy is of grave concern to most Americans. Though the President's cut in government spending has focused some attention on the financing of educational programs, the concern for availability of financial aid has always been crucial to minority students. These are students who, on the average, do not come from affluent or even moderate income households, where their educational expenses and fees could be otherwise provided. Dr. June W. McCarron found in her study of Selected Characteristics Of A Sample Black Freshmen At Traditionally Black Institutions,¹ that half of Black freshmen were dependent on some means of financial assistance from their colleges. Seventy percent of these freshmen came from families with annual incomes below the national average for Black families (9,361) and approximately half these freshmen came from families that could be classified as near poor, or below the national poverty level. Over forty percent of those freshmen who experienced delays between high school and college enrollment give financial reasons

¹McCarron, June W., Ph.D., "Selected Characteristics Of A Sample Of Black Freshmen At Traditionally Black Institutions," Dissertation Abstracts International, (1978), Volume XXXIX.

for the delay, according to Dr. McCarron. In a study on Student Loan Defaults At East Texas State University,² Dr. Sammy Barnes found that the highest risk borrowers appeared to be single Black males from families of two to four dependents with incomes of less than \$7,500. They also had grade point averages below 2.0, were undecided, and had completed less than two years of post secondary education.

The federal government has, in its own way, tried to keep pace with the rapid demand for educational programs over the past two decades. Thomas Linney, Jr. did a study last year on the "Social Demand For Higher Education."³ In his study, Linney first points out that in 1972 the 92nd Congress passed an extension to the Higher Education Act in 1965 known as the Education Amendments of 1972. Within these amendments were new federal programs designed to shift, and significantly expand, the focus of federal aid to post secondary education from aid to institutions to aid to individual students. In 1976, these programs were continued through 1980 by the Education Amendments of 1972, these include: 1) The history and development of federal policies with respect to higher Education leading up to the programs adopted by the 1972 legis-

²Barnes, Sammy R., Ed.D., "Student Loan Defaults At East Texas State University," Dissertation Abstracts International, (1979), Volume XXXIX.

³Linney, Thomas J., Jr., Ph.D., "Social Demand For Higher Education," Dissertation Abstract International, (1979) Volume XXXIX.

lation; 2) the implementation of programs adopted in the area of student aid, especially the State Student Incentive Grant (SSIG) Programs, which as a cooperative federal and state program provides some identification of state policies in response to the federal policy initiatives adopted by the Education Amendments of 1972 and 1976; 3) The development of an expanded literature of public policy research as a result of new federal involvements with higher education; 4) An exploration of theoretical implications of the new federal and state programs adopted as a result of the 1972 legislation.

This study discusses, extensively, both the history and development of federal policy with respect to higher education and recent research concerning public policy involvements with Student Incentive Grant Program are analyzed and compared by Dr. Linney, with reports from state sources to develop a comprehensive picture of the implementation of the State Student Incentive Grant Program among 56 state and territorial units. Dr. Linney's findings suggest that the system of direct aid to the individual student, rather than to the institution, is far more realistic approach to accomodating the students who actually are in need of financial assistance.

In essence, the State Student Incentive Grant Program has accomplished the major goals established by the 1972 legislation. Overall investments of State funds in need-

based scholarship programs has nearly doubled in the period studied and all states and territories now offer state scholarship programs that meet federal criteria for their operation. Linney suggests that problems in state operations be examined more closely, particularly the relationship and coordination between the State Student Incentive Grant Program and other federal student aid programs.

According to Dr. Linney, organizational complexities are suggested along with theoretical implications by both budgetary and intergovernmental theories as explanations of both the success and problems created by the State Student Incentive Grant Program and by the range of federal student aid policy initiatives passed in 1972.

The status of the State Student Incentive Grant Program is a crucial instrument to measuring the success of financial aid packages to needy students. Another interesting study was done by Dr. James P. Garner, The American University entitled An Analysis of The Impact Of The State Student Incentive Grant Program On Student Aid Programs. The purpose of this study was to determine whether the objectives of the State Student Incentive Grant Program, as legislated by the congress, are being realized, the objectives were: 1) to encourage the states and territories to expand their existing

⁴Garner, James P., Ph.D., "An Analysis of The Impact Of The State Student Incentive Grant Program on Student Aid Programs, "Dissertation Abstract International, (1978) Volume XXXIX.

scholarship programs and/or establish new ones; 2) to assist private higher educational institutions by encouraging the states and territories to increase their funding of student assistance programs; and 3) to assist needy students in acquiring a college education. During the first three-years (1974-76) of the program's operation, \$83 million were expended to accomplish these objectives.

Data obtained from the annual surveys of the National Association of State Scholarship and Grant Programs and from the annual reports of the State Student Incentive Grant Program, U. S. Office of Education, were compiled for two periods: 1971-73 and 1974-76. Three hypotheses were formulated from the objectives. These were: 1) there would be no difference in the results achieved by the program in attempting to induce the states and territories to expand, or establish new, scholarship programs; 2) there would be no difference in the funding of student aid programs in order to assist private higher educational institutions; and 3) there would be no difference in the percentage of eligible students who were assisted on the basis of the following criteria: 1) the percentage increase of 7.9% that occurred in enrollment in higher education during 1974-76.

Based upon the criteria, the following was disclosed: 1) over half the states and territories had increases in funds during 1974-76 that met, or surpassed, the criterion of 118% of the criterion. Consequently, hypotheses I was

not rejected; 2) forty-one of a total of 45 states and territories increased the number of awards by at least 7.9%, the mean percentage of 171% surpassed the criterion of 7.9%, 39 out of a total of 45 states and territories had increases in funds that met, or surpassed, the criterion of 118%, and the mean percentage increase in funds of 121% surpassed the criterion of 118%. Consequently, hypotheses II was rejected; and 3) 54 out of a total of 55 states and territories had increases in funds that met, or surpassed, the 118% criterion and mean percentage increase of 114% in funds did not meet, or surpass, the criterion of 118%. Consequently, hypotheses III was not rejected.

The following conclusions were derived from the study: 1) the first objective of the program was not fully realized. The program fully satisfied one of the elements of the criterion but the mean percentage change was below the 118% of the criterion; 2) the second objective of the program was fully realized and the data confirms this conclusion; the third objective of the program has not been fully attained. The mean percentage increase in both hypotheses I and II was too low in meeting the criterion.

Dr. Garner concluded that the State Student Incentive Grant Program is operating effectively in attempting to attain its objectives.

When one speaks of needy students, there is a ten-

dency to think only in terms of those students who are dependents of parents whose income will not allow full responsibility for financial support of the child's college education. There is, however, another clientele of student incorporated in this massive group of needy students. This other clientele of students associated with the needy, is the self-supporting student. Delores Myers, Ph.D., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, did a study on the Accountability To The Federal Government And The Reporting Practices of Self-Supporting Students Seeking Financial Aid.⁵

Dr. Myers contends that the self-supporting student is the cause of much concern in the area of Student Financial Aids with respect to accountability to the Federal Government, most notably in the area of fiscal responsibility.

The United States Office of Education has defined the self-supporting student as one who has not been claimed by, received support from or lived with anyone acting in loco parentis (excluding spouse) during the calendar year prior to which aid is requested and subsequent years. Using the above definition to define the population, the accuracy of the student's report of actual resources was examined. The student's reported resources were compared with the verified resources using the Student's 1973 Federal Income Tax Return

⁵Myers, Delores G., Ph.D., "Accountability To The Federal Government and The Reporting Practices of Self-Supporting Students Seeking Financial Aid, "Dissertation Abstract International, (1978) Volume XXXVII.

1973 W-2 forms, University records of assistantships, fellowships, tuition waivers, employment, veteran's benefits and financial aid.

Differences between the reported resources and the verified resources were calculated and tested for significance. Comparisons were made by income level, graduate status, class level, college, marital status and sex.

The results of Dr. Myers study indicate that under-reporting of financial resources is prevalent among self-supporting student applicants for financial assistance, as least on the campus of which the study was conducted and during the period of time when the data were collected. The size and range of the discrepancies as well as the average discrepancy lend credence to the belief that independent students are less than accurate in reporting their resources.

The significant frequency of under-reporting by certain categories of students provides some insight into the possible areas of concern for increased accountability in the area of financial aids. The data suggests types of independent students to whom careful attention should be paid in the evaluation of need. These types of independent students include:

1. Students with income greater than \$7,499 (as adjusted for inflation).
2. Students who are married.
3. Students who are male.

Since the average discrepancy for these students seems to be significantly high, perhaps follow-up inquiries should be done prior to the award of financial aid, if any such award is to be made.

The results of this study should aid the financial aids administrator in meeting demands for accountability in the use of funds and also point the way toward more accurate assessment of student financial need and more equitable treatment of student aid applicants.

Another form of student financial aid is the work-study program. This program that provides job assignments for students that will pay wages, to be used for payment of fees. There are some educational administrators who believes that a student's course load and study time is so demanding that the responsibility of a job can be too great a burden for the already busy student.

Alvin C. Lomax, Ph.D., The College of William and Mary in Virginia did a study on The Relationship of Work-Study To The Grade Point Averages of Selected Students Enrolled In Norfolk State College During 1973-1974 Through 1976-1977.⁶ The following is an overview of Dr. Lomax's study.

Students financial aid is according to Dr. Lomax, of paramount importance to students in gaining access to post-secondary educational opportunities. It is through the

⁶Lomax, Alvin C., Ph.D., "The Relationship of Work-Study To The Grade Point Averages of Selected Students Enrolled In Norfolk State College During 1973-1974, Through 1976-1977, Dissertation Abstract International, (1979) Volume XXXVII.

availability of grants, loans, scholarships, and employment that students from low and moderate income situations are able to begin and continue their educational preparation. From these funds students can pay all or major portions of their educational costs, and receive valuable employment experiences that may be career related.

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of part-time college work-study to grade point averages of students enrolled in Norfolk State College during the period, 1973-74 through 1976-77. In addition, the study was designed to investigate the interrelationship the variables; family income levels, rank in high school graduating class, total college board scores, and academic major to the grade point averages of the selected students.

The population for the study included all students who 1) enrolled in Norfolk State College as freshmen in the Fall Semester, 1973; 2) were awarded financial aid; and 3) remained enrolled through Academic Year 1976-77, on a full-time basis (twelve semester hours or more). Students selected for the study were divided into two groups. Group I (work study included 146 students with financial aid packages, but no work study. Those students selected for work study had the higher total college board scores, and rank in high school graduating class.

Appropriate data for the study were collected from records contained in the Admissions, Registrar's and Fi-

nancial Aid Officer of Norfolk State College. These data, (rank in high school graduating class, total college board scores, family income levels, and academic major), were analyzed for statistical significance using analysis of Variance and Multiple Regression. The computer program for statistical analysis was developed using the SPSS software package. The "t" test for significant differences was applied to each of the variables.

The data analyzed revealed that: (1) for each year of the study Grade Point Averages of students in Groups I (work study) were higher than the Grade Point Averages of students in Group II (non-work-study); (2) rank in high school graduating class and total college board scores related directly to the Grade Point Averages of the students in this study, while family income levels did not produce a strong relationship to after the first year (1973-74); (3) students who worked as freshmen (1973-74) had Grade Point Averages of financial aid; (4) academic major and the interaction of work and major to Grade Point Average was significant only in the first year of the study.

In conclusion, based on the findings which were the results of the hypotheses tested, it appears that Grade Point Averages of students on work study were not adversely affected by the part-time work experience. The extent to which this study may be applied and/or implemented in the future should be monitored in accord with institutional goals

and emerging patterns of financial aid to students.

One of the major concerns of financial aid students and their parents is the actual administration of financial aid programs. Dr. Harlan T. Cooper of Stanford University did a study on the Diversity In College And University Administration Of Federal Student Financial Aid.⁷ Dr. Cooper introduces his study with a few basic facts; one being that the federal government annually distributes over \$3 billion to students needing financial assistance for post secondary education.

To administer these funds, the government relies on educational institutions to provide staff, office support, and essential services. In recent years students and student aid officials have expressed concern about complexity, inconvenience and inconsistencies in student aid.

This research examined institutional administration of four major, need-based federal programs: Basic Educational Opportunity Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, College Work-Study, and National Direct Student Loans. One hundred eight institutions of all types and sizes in California were surveyed in March, 1978. Seventy one percent responded, providing data for comparison of institutions' office management resources and operating procedures (program participation, need analysis and packaging).

⁷Cooper, Harlan T, Ph.D. "Diversity In College And University Administration Of Federal Student Financial Aid" Disertation Abstract International (1979) Volume XXXX

Analysis showed that most student aid offices have staffs and administrative costs roughly proportionate to the numbers of students they serve. They participate in all four federal programs, use the College Scholarship Service's uniform methodology for need analysis, and package aid from multiple sources for most aid recipients. But many administrative practices are not standardized, and their operation changes the character of federal student aid. For example, directors' backgrounds and professional interaction vary widely. Office expenditures for administration, not counting awards to students, average \$48 per student aid applicant, but they range from \$0 to \$416 per student aid applicant. Thirty five percent of students attend institutions that do not offer federal aid under all four federal programs. Rates of individual adjustments to standard classifications and expected contributions reach 80% of all applicants at some institutions. Packaging varies most. Some institutions give most recipients grants and then add loans for students who need extra help. Some provide jobs for most recipients and then add grants for those who need more. Others use different approaches, including first-come, first-served.

Such diversity is not necessarily either good or bad in itself. Evaluation depends on the values applied. Traditional values of democratic administration include openness and explicitness of policies and the reasons behind them, relevance of policies to the desired results, predictability, equity, and effectiveness. These values are important in institutional administration of federal programs because the money is public.

This report recommends that student aid directors increase

efforts to develop standards, and that they seek to advance expectations for professional performance within student aid administration.

DATA ANALYSIS CHART

QUESTIONS

	YES	NO	DID NOT RESPOND
1. Are you in school on a federally funded financial aid program?	96%	4%	
2. Are you aware of plans to cut back on federal funds for financial aid to college students?	63%	30%	7%
3. Are you a work study student?	38%	40%	22%
4. Are your fees paid by your parents, if you are not receiving financial aid?	4%	26%	70%
5. If financial aid is no longer available to you, are there other resources that you can count on to pay your fees for college?	8%	80%	12%
6. If you had to drop out of school because of no available financial aid, would you go home and get a job?	97%	2%	1%
7. Is your home a single parent household?	70%	28%	2%
8. If you dropped out of school and went to work, do you think that your salary would equal the possible salary you might have made, had you stayed in school and received your degree?	5%	90%	5%
9. If the size of your loan were cut, would you be willing to work as a student employee to make up the balance for your student fees?	70%	22%	8%
10. If your financial aid is cut off, or drastically reduced, could you afford to continue your education, providing you were granted day student status?	89%	10%	1%
11. If you dropped out of school and went to work, would you save your money and return to school later?	56%	44%	
12. If you dropped out of school and went to work, would you forget about school and continue to work.	44	56%	
13. Has this survey triggered any thoughts in your mind about alternative plans, for your education and career should your financial aid be reduced or cut off?	93%	5%	2%

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The results of the survey administered to the cases involved in this research are documented in chart form. However, there were some responses which could not be systematically reflected on the data chart. These responses are reported below:

Of the hundred students surveyed, 72% said that they learned of their financial aid program through a high school teacher or counselor; 20% said that they were informed by a recruiter, instructor, or other official of Prairie View A&M University; and 8% said that they learned through a friend.

Students were asked to identify the approximate income of their parents. Of the students surveyed, 20% said that their parents income was in the \$20,000 and above range; 16% said that their parents income fell within the \$15,000-\$19,000 bracket; 22% said that their parents income was from \$10,000 to \$14,000; 20% said that their parents income fell within the \$6,000 to \$9,000; 8% said that their parents income was less than \$6,000; 4% of the students did not report their parents income.

Asked whether this income figure represented a single parent household or both parents in the home, 70% said that the fig-

ure represented a single parent household income; 28% said that it represented a joint income (both parents in the home); 2% did not respond to the question.

The students surveyed represented a cross-section of majors from the Colleges of Business, Education, Arts and Sciences, Nursing, Engineering, Agriculture, Home Economics, and Industrial Education and Technology.

The data gathered in this study makes some very significant indications about the educational status and career aspirations of freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University.

First of all, the data clearly indicates that the average freshman student at Prairie View A&M University is receiving some form of financial aid. The fact that over half the students were not aware of current plans by the Federal government to cut back on appropriations for educational financial aid programs suggests that the students are not well informed. Whether or not this lack of information is due to poor communication from the Office of Financial Aid, or failure of the students to keep themselves informed is subject to further investigation.

It is assumed that the 26% of the students who were not receiving any form of financial aid, and whose parents were not paying their fees, are in school on some form of scholarship, (athletic, engineering, nursing, church, etc.).

Perhaps one of the most disturbing facts brought out in this survey was the choice of students to go back home and get a job, should their financial aid be reduced or cut off, forcing them to withdraw from school. One might question exactly how such a move, which actually shows some clear signs of responsibility on the part of the students, could possibly be conceived as disturbing. A prime consideration, here, has to be the status of the job market. Unemployment is already at epidemic proportions. Secondly, in addition to the cut-backs on educational appropriations, the Federal government has also

announced drastic cut-backs, into the millions of dollars, for existing welfare programs. This cut will force a significant number of present welfare recipients into the job market, which is going to add still another, rather large, group of unprofessional laborers into a job market that is already in need of a revitalization. With most of the students coming from a single parent household, it does not appear that the parent's income can be relied upon for this "new" or "unexpected" financial obligation, as this single income is likely to be already stretched out over the responsibility for other siblings and other financial commitments more basic and fundamental to the maintenance of the household and family unit.

It was comforting, at least, to know that these young students were so realistic about the difference they could expect in salary if they had to quit school and get a job, as opposed to being able to stay in school, receive their degrees and land professional jobs upon graduation. Its only natural that the better informed students are, the more realistic they are in making those crucial and important decisions, particularly those which affect their career aspirations.

Recognizing the inevitable possibility of reduction in financial aid to college students, more than half the students surveyed indicated that they would accept work-study positions to subsidize their existing funds for payment of their fees. This willingness to accept alteration of the financial aid package, which will reduce the existing leisure time of these students, suggests that the students are being realistic and

objective about their career aspirations. It further shows that they are willing to take on added responsibility for the actions needed to make those aspirations a reality.

The 1960's saw the nation's institutions of higher learning bombarded with protesting students who, seemingly, felt the system, indeed the world, owed them everything. However, the dispositions of the freshmen students surveyed at Prairie View A&M University reveal a fairness and maturity that is quite different, in contrast, to that of students who were in college in those earlier years of educational turmoil, most especially because these young students are black.

For some reason, blacks, even those who are college students, are envisioned by many as inferior individuals, desirous of the first and fastest available "hand-out", when the truth is that America's socio-economic system is designed to keep blacks in the "Have-Nots" column of almost every aspect of American life; it always has and probably always will. Consequently, because black parents' incomes do not nearly match the incomes of white parents, in terms of the average household income, black students, naturally, constitute the largest component group of financial aid recipients, (this, of course, being based on ratio of population figures). This matter was addressed in Dr. McCarron's study, which showed that half the freshmen enrolled in black institutions of higher learning were dependent on some form of financial aid, and that 70% of these students were from families whose incomes were below the national average for black families.

It is therefore, reasonable to expect the "system" to take responsibility for problems and inequities that it has had a role in creating.

Though many of these students are willing to accept student employment as a modification to their financial aid packages, it would be unrealistic to expect that the University could accommodate 1,500 freshmen students with jobs. Almost ninety percent of the students indicated that they could afford to stay in school if they were granted day student status. Day student status makes a college education more affordable, in that it eliminates the cost of room and board and other auxiliary services such as laundry. It goes without saying, however, that this would be a "last resort" tactic on the part of the University simply because the University would lose many desperately needed dollars if its residential halls and dining halls were not filled to capacity. It would seem, then, that while the granting of day student status would be of great service to financially unassisted students, it would certainly create an even greater problem for the University, as most traditionally black institutions of higher learning already are struggling for their very survival.

A little over half the students surveyed said that if they had to quit school and get a job, they would save their money and return later; the other students indicated that they would forget about school. These two different decisions about going back to school will greatly affect the career achievements of these students. To return or not to return, that is the

question. The student's decision concerning this issue can make the difference in his occupational future, particularly in terms of salary. But, an interesting observation here is of the fact that the statistics in this survey show that if students are given some form of hope or assistance for their financial woes, they are willing to help themselves and stay in school; however, if it comes down to the students having to leave school as a result of financial woes, the chance of those students returning to school and finally realizing their career aspirations are about fifty-fifty.

Frankly speaking, this researcher feels that young, black, first year college students deserve better odds.

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the findings of this study among a hundred randomly selected freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University, the researcher would like to make the following recommendations. The researcher sincerely hopes that these recommendations will serve as some assistance in the examination and solving of the problems created by Federal government cut-backs on financial aid programs in education, as it relates to the altering of career aspirations of freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University. The recommendations are that:

1. The Financial Aid Office should revise its existing communication system with students to include a regularly published newsletter-type publication to keep students notified of guidelines, changes, applications, deadlines, etc. pertaining to the affairs of financial aid.

2. The University should research and implement a program that would administer the granting of day student status for "hardship" or "emergency" situations, as they relate to students' inability to pay their fees. A parent on sick leave without pay might constitute an "emergency" situation, assuming the parent will return to work in a few months.

3. The Office of Admissions should increase its efforts to inform students, prior to graduation from high school, on the various financial aid programs available to needy students. The information program should stress application deadlines and the reporting of particular circumstances, however unfortunate, that can aid in the fair assessment of the students' applications.

4. The Office of Career Planning and Placement should research and implement a special program that would assist students who, out of necessity, have to withdraw from school and go to work. Such placement could be with companies that have professional-type trainee programs, as in management, that could offer students the best possible alternative salary to what they could have made graduating from college.

5. The University should strive to make available additional student employment positions on campus, to aid those students with financial problems.

6. The Office of Community Affairs should establish a program with local community merchants that would create part-time jobs for needy students, who could function on jobs in close proximity to the University.

7. The School of Business should provide workshops and/or courses that will aid students in the management of limited funds in college. If these workshops and/or courses are "tailored" to the real problems and finances of the students they serve, they could mean a world of difference in the management abilities of these students.

8. The Financial Aid Office should establish a "follow-up" system for identifying and maintaining communication with students of any new developments in financial aid programs, which might be of some encouragement in re-routing them back into the classrooms of Prairie View A&M University.

9. Each School and Department at Prairie View A&M University should strive to tap resources for additional scholarships to be awarded, not just to high academic achievers, but to average students with financial needs, as well.

10. The Financial Aid Office should improve communications with the teaching faculty, so that they might become better equipped with knowledge that could assist them in advising students with financial problems.

11. The Career Planning and Placement Office should reserve a specific number of co-op slots for needy students. A given student should be placed with a given company, which can commit itself to that student for the four year duration of his or her college career.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to test the Effect of Federal Government Cut-backs In Financial Aid To College Students On The Career Aspirations Of Freshmen Students At Prairie View A&M University.

A questionnaire survey was designed to be administered to randomly selected freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University. The random selection was made by identifying every tenth student's name on the Registrar's print out of freshmen students, until the hundred cases to be studied were selected.

The major findings in this study were:

1. Ninety-six percent of the students surveyed were receiving some form of federal financial assistance for their education.
2. More than half the students were unaware of the proposed federal cut-backs in educational financial assistance.
3. Seventy percent of the students were willing to take on part-time jobs to cover educational cost, rather than drop out of school.
4. Ninety percent of the students realized that their plans for the future, in terms of professional jobs and competitive salaries, would be a "dream deferred" if they lost their financial assistance.
5. Forty-four percent of the students surveyed indicated that they would not return to school, once they dropped out of school and went to work.

The analysis of data gathered in the study proves that Federal cut-back in Financial Aid to College Students will affect the career aspirations of freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University. Consequently, the researcher offers a few recommendations that she sincerely hopes will assist in the examination and solving of the problems created by the Federal government's cut-backs on financial aid in education, as it relates to the altering of career aspirations of freshmen students at Prairie View A&M University. The recommendations are that:

1. The Financial Aid Office should revise its existing communication system with students to include a regularly published newsletter-type publication to keep students notified of guidelines, changes, applications, deadlines, etc. pertaining to new developments in financial aid affairs.
2. The Office of Admissions should increase its efforts to inform students, prior to graduation from high school, on the various financial aid programs for needy students. The information program should stress application deadlines and the importance of reporting particular circumstances, however unfortunate, that can aid in the fair assessment of the students' applications.
3. The University should strive to make available additional student employment positions on campus, to aid those students with financial problems.
4. Each School and Department should strive to tab resources

for additional scholarships to be awarded, not just to high academic achievers, but to average students with financial needs, as well,

5. The Financial Aid Office should establish a follow-up system for identifying and maintaining communication with students who leave school due to financial difficulty. This system would serve to inform these students of any new developments in financial aid which might be of assistance in re-routing the students back into the academic fold.

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A P P E N D I X

THESIS SURVEY

THESIS: The Effect Of Federal Cut-backs In Financial Aid To College Students Will Have On The Career Aspirations Of Freshmen Students At Prairie View A&M University

1. Are you in school on a federally funded financial aid program?
 Yes No
2. Are you aware of plans by the Federal Government to cut-back on appropriations and programs for financial aid in education?
 Yes No
3. Are you a work-study student?
 Yes No
4. If you are not on financial aid, do your parents pay your fees?
 Yes No
5. How did you find out about the financial aid program in which you are participating?
 High school teacher or counselor
 Prairie View Recruiter, instructor, etc.
 Friend or other
6. Which family unit is representative of your household?
 Single parent
 Both parents

7. If financial aid is no longer available to you, are there other sources that you can count on to pay your fees?
() Yes () No
8. Identify the resources you would have for paying your fees:
1.
2.
9. If you had to drop out of school due to the unavailability of financial aid, which would you most likely resort to doing?
() Working on a job
() Sitting around home
() Getting married
10. What is the approximate income of your parent (s) ?
() \$20,000 and above
() \$15,000-\$19,000
() \$10,000-\$14,000
() \$ 6,000-\$ 9,000
() Less
11. Which family unit does this income figure represent?
() Single parent
() Both parents
12. What is your major in college?

13. What annual salary do you feel that you can command if you graduate and land a job in your major field?
() \$20,000 and above
() \$15,000-\$19,000
() \$10,000-\$14,000
() Less

14. If you had to drop out of school, what type of job would you pursue?

15. What monthly salary do you think you would make on this job?

\$ _____

16. If you had to drop out of school, and go to work, would you work and save your money and return to school later, or would you simply forget about school and continue to work?

() Save money and return to school

() Forget school and continue to work

17. If the size of your financial aid package were reduced, would you be willing to work as a student employee to make up the balance for your student fees?

() Yes

() No

18. If your financial aid were cut off, could you afford to continue your education, providing you were granted day student status?

() Yes

() No

19. Has this survey triggered any thoughts in your mind concerning future preparations for your college education and career aspirations?

() Yes


() No

VETA

Margaret Penn Sherrod is a native of Tyler, Texas and is the daughter of Mrs. Hattie Penn Jones and Mr. George DeWitt Penn. Having attended public school in Houston, Texas, Ms. Sherrod received her Bachelor's Degree in Sociology from Prairie View A&M University in August, 1973. After graduation she joined the staff at Prairie View A&M University as Associate Director of the Career Planning and Placement Center, and in 1975 was appointed Associate Director of Student Activities, where she continues to serve.

Ms. Sherrod is a former "Miss Black Texas" (1968) and "Miss Prairie View" (1970). A member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc., Ms. Sherrod is the mother of twins, Eddie Cedric Sherrod, Jr., and Edlecia Carol Sherrod.

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