A STUDY OF SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS
IN THE NINTH GRADE IN AN URBAN INNER-CITY
SCHOOL IN NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Pulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

By

Madell Bailey, B. S., M. Ed.

Denton, Texas

May, 1980

The problem of this study was to determine the effect of academic self-concept, student aspiration, intellectual achievement responsibility, and certain other personal factors on the attendance patterns of selected ninth grade students. The specific purposes were (1) to determine the academic self-concept, intellectual achievement responsibility, and aspirations of selected groups of school attenders and non-attenders, (2) to describe the personal-social characteristics of school attenders and non-attenders, and (3) to develop from data on all factors a typical profile of conditions likely to result in high absenteeism, and make recommendations for initial steps in remediation.

The first chapter is an introduction to the study. The second chapter is the presentation of related research concerning the participants in this investigation, and the procedures in conducting the study are described in Chapter III. Findings are presented and discussed in Chapter IV. A summary of the study, along with conclusions, discussion
of findings and recommendations for further consideration, are presented in Chapter V.

Sixty subjects participated in this study. All of the subjects were ninth grade students in an urban inner-city school. All subjects qualified for the government subsidized free lunch program. Because of the ethnic population of the selected school, all subjects of this study were black. Groups were identified and maintained intact throughout the study. Measurement data were collected on all participants in small group meetings, and personal data were collected in interview sessions.

Four instruments were used in this study. They were the Academic Self-Concept Scale, the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale, Student Aspirations Scale, and the Structured Interview.

As a result of the statistical analysis and subsequent retention or rejection of the null hypotheses, the significant findings of this study may be summarized as follows. (1) Ninth grade school attenders are significantly younger than ninth grade non-attenders. (2) Ninth grade school attenders had significantly higher numbers of siblings than did non-attenders. (3) School attenders are significantly more involved in school organizations than are students who do not attend regularly. (4) There is a significantly higher frequency in the number of student suspensions among ninth grade non-attenders.
Based on analysis of the findings of this study and within the limitations of the population described in the procedure section, the following conclusions were formulated. (1) Students who have been retained, started school later, or for some reason are older than their classmates, are more likely to attend school irregularly. (2) Educators cannot expect to find the major causes of student absenteeism to be academic self-concept, intellectual achievement responsibility, or student aspiration. (3) Family size may be an important consideration for educators to investigate when working with school non-attenders. (4) School attenders can be expected to be actively involved in the co-curricular elements of the school program. (5) Higher rates of student suspensions are more likely to increase attendance problems rather than reduce them. (6) How students use their time outside the school day is not likely to be the crucial factor in school attendance. (7) While students often complain about schedules, teacher selection, and proximity of friends, it is not likely that changes in these factors would influence student attendance.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES ............................................ iv

Chapter

I. INTRODUCTION ............................................. 1
   Statement of the Problem
   Purposes of the Study
   Hypotheses
   Background and Significance
   Definition of Terms
   Organization for the Remainder
   of the Study

II. A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ......................... 15
   Compulsory Laws
   Factors Influencing Absenteeism
   Effect on the Student, School, and
   Community
   Role of School Personnel
   Programs to Treat Absenteeism
   Summary

III. PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING DATA ................. 56
   Description of the Subjects
   Description of the Instruments
   Procedures for Collecting Data
   Analysis of the Data

IV. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS ............................ 65
   Presentation and Analysis of IAR,
   ASCS, and SAS
   Presentation and Analysis of Student
   Responses to the Structured Interview
   Summary

V. SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
   AND RECOMMENDATIONS ............................... 86
   Summary
   Discussion of Findings
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Number of Subjects: Attenders and Non-Attenders</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Variations in the Mean Scores of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders on the Academic Self-Concept Scale</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Variations in the Mean Scores of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders of Positive Responses to the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Variations in the Mean Scores of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders of Negative Responses to the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Variations in the Mean Scores of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders of Total Responses to the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. Variations in the Mean Scores of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders of Student Desire for Wealth Responses to the Student Aspirations Scale</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. Variations in the Mean Scores of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders of Student Desire for Fame Responses to the Student Aspirations Scale</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII. Variations in the Mean Scores of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders of Student Occupational Goal Responses to the Student Aspirations Scale</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IX. Variations in the Mean Scores of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders of Student Educational Goal Responses to the Student Aspirations Scale</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X. Variations in the Mean Age of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XI. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding Mothers' Level of Education</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XII. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding Fathers' Level of Education</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIII. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding School Suspensions</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIV. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding Club Membership</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XV. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding Time Spent at Home</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVI. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding Where Free Time Was Spent</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVII. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding How Free Time Was Spent</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XVIII. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding Part-Time Employment</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XIX. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Regarding General Attendance Factors</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XX.  Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Concerning the Household Member the Student Lives With</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XXI. Chi Square Analysis of Responses of the Structured Interview of Ninth Grade School Attenders and Non-Attenders Concerning Siblings</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to an analysis of the 1970 United States Bureau of Census data on nonenrollment, nearly two million children seven to seventeen years of age were not enrolled in school. Over one million were between seven and fifteen years of age. More than three-quarters of a million were between the ages of seven and thirteen. The census defines nonenrolled as having been out of school for two or more consecutive months prior to April, 1970 (7, p. 1).

Presently, compulsory attendance laws exist in forty-nine of the fifty states and the District of Columbia. Mississippi remains the single state without compulsory attendance. The Texas compulsory attendance law is found in paragraphs 21.032 and 21.033 of Vernon's Texas Education Codes. The law states,

Unless specifically exempted by section 21.033 of this code or under other laws, every child in the state who is as much as seven years of age and not more than 17 years of age shall be required to attend the public schools in the district of his residence or in some other district of which he may be transferred as provided or authorized by law a minimum of 165 days of the regular school term of the district in which the child resides or to which he has been transferred (26, p. 84).

During the school years 1977-1978 and 1978-1979, the school district in this study has made a thrust to increase
enrollment and improve attendance. There are various formal alternatives for increasing attendance. The ultimate power in enforcing attendance lies in legal remedy. Although school districts have legal remedy through compulsory attendance laws, most school administrators prefer to encourage student attendance by less stringent methods. This view is shared by Copeland in his report on a study concerning the effect of praise given to parents by a school principal. The process was one of giving praise to parents of students with regular school attendance. His study reveals that direct reinforcement promoted a decrease in school absenteeism (8, p. 58). A study by Bittle also stressed the importance of direct communication between school officials and parents (2, p. 49).

Absence from school is unprofitable for the child and costly to the school district. Funds to schools in Texas are allocated according to average daily attendance. In 1978-1979 the school district in which this study was conducted received from the state of Texas an average of $812.00 for each child, which is a daily amount of $4.64. When a student is absent, the school district does not receive reimbursement for that day. Therefore, a high rate of absenteeism is an important financial consideration to the school district.

Both voluntary absence and involuntary absence are time lost to the student and the school district. Brimm
reports on a survey of student absenteeism in Tennessee with high school principals as respondents. He states, "There was a strong consensus among the respondents that too much administrative time and effort were spent on attendance related matters" (3, p. 66). This time represents an undetermined financial burden to the school district as well as a loss of education to the student.

When a child is absent from school, he cannot avail himself of the learning opportunities there and often loses the continuity which is crucial for most learning. School curricula are most typically organized on a spiral design. This means that the learning of a particular concept or idea is usually based on a previously mastered set of related materials. Thus, through this empirical method of learning, the student with frequent or significant lapses in the learning sequence is more likely to fall behind and to fail in his school work than the child who attends regularly. The problems generated by a high rate of absenteeism affects children of every economic level in every part of the country.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study was to determine the effect of academic self-concept, student aspiration, intellectual achievement responsibility, and certain other personal
factors on the attendance patterns of selected ninth grade students.

Purposes of the Study

The purposes of this study were (1) to determine the academic self-concept, intellectual achievement responsibility, and aspirations of selected groups of school attenders and non-attenders, (2) to describe the personal social characteristics of school attenders and non-attenders, and (3) to develop from data on all factors a typical profile of conditions likely to result in high absenteeism and make recommendations for initial steps in remediation.

Hypotheses

To fulfill the purposes of the study, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. There will be no significant difference in the mean measures of academic self-concept between school attenders and school non-attenders.

2. There will be no significant difference in the mean measures of the belief in one's control over academic and intellectual accomplishments and failures between school attenders and school non-attenders.

3. There will be no significant difference in the mean measures of student aspirations between school attenders and school non-attenders as measures in the sub-areas of
(a) student desire for wealth, (b) student desire for fame, (c) occupational goals of student, and (d) educational goals of student.

4. There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the personal-social factors of (a) age of students in the study, (b) educational level of parents, (c) number of student suspensions, (d) extracurricular activities in which students participate, (e) the school factors of friendship, teacher acceptance, scheduling of lunch period, treatment by classmates and preferences in classes, (f) student employment, (h) general attendance factors including transportation, clothing, friends, illness, and weather, (i) parents, and (j) number of siblings.

Background and Significance

The American commitment to universal education has usually been interpreted to mean that all of the nation's children shall have reasonable access to education. The compulsory education laws in the District of Columbia and forty-nine of the fifty states are predicated on the assumption that it is in the public's interest to educate all children (6, p. 41).

At the turn of the century, only 11 percent of the high school youth were in school. At the present time almost 90 percent begin high school. In spite of these attendance
gains, there are still educational problems. One of the most crucial problems is absenteeism (23, p. 249).

The Children's Defense Fund reports that "All states have at least 2.4 percent of their school-age children out of school, 15 states had 5 percent or more not enrolled, and 10 states had over 6 percent of their children out of school" (7, p. 34).

In 1974, one out of every three fifth grade students could not be expected to complete high school (23, p. 249). There are children out of school all over the nation. They are members of all races and nationalities. These children come from families with all levels of education and income. While it is clear that being out of school affects all ages, it is equally clear that the older a child gets, the more likely he or she will have difficulty staying in school (7, p. 33).

Davis states that "In many inner-city schools, attendance is often below 50 percent of enrollment" (10, p. 560). He reports on a study of two high schools in Omaha, Nebraska. All current innovations were abandoned and all efforts were concentrated on getting students back in the classroom so that an attempt at education could occur (10, p. 560).

Hoback believes that the home is a stronger influence on the student than the school. He further indicates that familial ties are important factors to be considered in any
discussion of student absenteeism (13, p. 24). Lerman found that family income and the educational attainment of the family head exerted large positive effects on school activity (15, p. 379). Tseng also reports on the importance of family background as a factor in school attendance. He found that the degree of family encouragement on matters concerning education had a significant effect on student attendance (25, p. 465).

Wright reports on a 1976 study in Virginia regarding the effect of the school upon attendance. An analysis of the statewide data indicated that there were statistically significant relationships between certain school factors (work programs, health and physical education programs, school size, open campus, student-teacher ratio) and the attendance rate. The strongest correlation was between the attendance rate and the population density classifications of urban, suburban, and others. Schools in the urban areas had the poorest attendance, while schools in suburban areas had better attendance, with schools in rural areas having the best attendance (30, p. 116).

Early social structure theorists such as George Herbert Mead, Charles Cooley, and John Dewey are credited with setting the stage for research concerned with self-concept. These theorists developed a type of theoretical framework within which man is perceived as a social being who sees himself and the world through others' eyes. Thus each human
being forms an evaluation of himself and a personal value system using society as his yardstick and reference point (19, p. 385).

In keeping with this view, Hoback believes that a traditional, authoritarian approach to attendance problems cannot work in contemporary schools. He suggests that a successful attendance program needs to be based on positive reinforcement, thus making each student feel needed, wanted, and involved in his own education (13, p. 20). Everhart supports this view in that he contends that attractiveness to the student is central to any discussion of attendance. He states that

... the creation of any variety of educational means without the concurrent presence of meaningful and humanistic, economic, social, and cultural opportunities is myopic (11, p. 76).

Morgan reports on a study investigating the utility of material plus social reinforcement of teacher and peers for improving school attendance. His results strongly support the large scale utilization of social reinforcement from peers in combination with social reinforcement from the teacher. These factors working together helped reduce the number of school absences (18, p. 214).

Lietz has expressed concern about the influence of teacher behavior on students' classroom performance. He found that teachers who have high expectation levels may frustrate students and risk a high incidence of absenteeism
(16, p. 296). The student with low intellectual achievement responsibility could view the demanding teacher as one who offers little support. The student may choose to avoid what he interprets as an unpleasant situation by not attending school.

Thornburg argues that most school programs are irrelevant to the needs or life styles of minority or culturally disadvantaged youth (24, p. 181). Grant reports on a study that examined the effect of relevant curriculum materials upon the self-concept, achievement, and school attendance of black students. He suggests that if a student is provided with relevant materials he will have a more positive self-concept, better achievement, and better school attendance. The stated findings of his research suggest that relevant curriculum materials do have a positive effect on the school achievement and attendance of black inner-city students (12, p. 403).

According to Wright, "Recent polls of the National Association of Secondary School Principals continue to place poor attendance as the most perplexing student problem" (28, p. 115). Traditional methods of dealing with school attendance problems have ranged from verbal counseling by teachers and school counselors to intensive psychotherapy by school psychologists (6, p. 208).

Lauer and Thomas have said that "some studies point out the deleterious effects of absenteeism, but questions
about the nature of the absentees and the reasons for absenteeism are left unanswered" (14, p. 324).

**Definition of Terms**

For the purposes of this study the following terms have been defined:

**School attenders**--All ninth grade students on the government subsidized free lunch program in a large metropolitan high school in North Central Texas who were absent no more than four days during the first two quarters of the 1978-1979 academic school year.

**School non-attenders**--All ninth grade students on the government subsidized free lunch program in a large metropolitan high school in North Central Texas who were absent thirty days or more during the first two quarters of the 1978-1979 academic school year.

**Intellectual Achievement Responsibility**--A measure of belief in one's control over academic and intellectual accomplishments and failures as measured by the *Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale* (IAR).

**Academic Self-Concept**--A measure of a student's perception of his or her capabilities in an academic setting as measured by the *Academic Self-Concept Scale*.

**Student Aspirations**--A measure of aspirations in the areas of wealth, fame, occupational status, and educational goals as measured by the *Student Aspiration Scale*. 
Urban inner-city high school—For the purposes of this paper this term refers to a high school located within four miles of the downtown area of a city in the North Central Texas area with a population of over 100,000.

Organization for the Remainder of the Study

The second chapter presents related literature. Information concerning the participants in this study and the data collected are described in Chapter III. Findings are presented and discussed in Chapter IV. A summary of the study, along with findings, conclusions, and recommendations, is presented in Chapter V.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature was undertaken to provide a fundamental understanding of school attendance and school non-attendance. This review was also initiated to provide a basis for a viable research design. The material reviewed included books, periodicals, unpublished reports, school district records, and microfiche pertaining to the subject of school attendance and non-attendance.

The research and literature relevant to this investigation is subdivided into the following topics: (1) compulsory education laws, (2) factors influencing absenteeism, (3) effect on the student, school and community, (4) role of school personnel, and (5) programs to treat absenteeism.

Compulsory Laws

The idea of compulsory education has been with civilized man for over 2000 years. In 170 B. C., the Jews made education compulsory for boys when they reached the age of six. Prussia was the first country to make education compulsory for its people, and that was in 1787, almost 200 years ago. Nations have long recognized the importance of an educated citizenry (34, p. 1).
The concept of compulsory education is based on the assumption that certain kinds of knowledge are required if one is to be capable of functioning in a complex society. Theoretically, compulsory schooling provides students with the rudimentary tools and general knowledge which are necessary for personal participation in today's society. "Society benefits in that there is a reservoir of its members with at least certain minimal skills to engage in various occupational functions" (23, p. 14).

It is Thomson's contention that

The process of education requires a regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study in order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each individual child. The regular contact of the pupils with one another in the classroom and their participation in well-planned instructional activity under the tutelage of a competent teacher are vital to this purpose. This is the well established principle of education which underlies and gives purpose to the requirement of compulsory schooling in every school in the nation (45, p. 4).

Tyack has divided compulsory schooling in the United States into three stages which include symbolic, bureaucratic and postcompulsory. In the symbolic stage, the concept of compulsory public school education began to gain strength but lacked enforcement procedures. The bureaucratic phase began around 1900, when new organizational technologies made compulsory attendance effective. A post-compulsory stage began in the 1960s, when the legitimacy of
the compulsory school was being questioned and truancy was rampant (46, p. 1).

Neal contends in a paper presented to the National School Board Association that the existence of compulsory school attendance at the secondary level may help to assure school attendance for some students, but it does little to assure that any will learn. It is her belief that both the laws requiring attendance and the basic high school programs offered in most states must be remodeled. She sets forth Arizona's system as a good example to follow.

Although Arizona's attendance laws require only that a child attend school through the eighth grade, most students stay through high school. A number of factors account for the schools' retention of students. One is the state's child labor laws that limit the number of available worthwhile jobs for youths under age 16. Another is the state's program of work-study courses, vocational education, and career education. It is hoped that a student's exposure to these kinds of courses and programs will help him set a personal goal or develop an idea of what he wants for the future. The state also has an extensive special education program for meeting the needs of students who have difficult learning experiences and who are prime candidates to become dropouts. Finally, societal pressure and self-respect help keep students in school until they have acquired enough education to enable them to be self-supporting and productive (34, p. 1).

According to a 1973 Gallup poll, over 90 percent of the public favored compulsory attendance at least through the elementary school years. Disagreement over compulsory school attendance seems to center on the secondary school level. In the same Gallup poll, compulsory attendance was favored at the senior high level by 73 percent of the
general public and 56 percent of the professional educators (34, p. 3).

After an exhaustive study by the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, it was concluded that "The nation does not need laws that force adolescents to go to school. It needs school and school-related programs that make adolescents wish to come" (33, p. 25). Based on these conclusions the Commission recommended that the formal school-leaving age should be dropped to age fourteen.

The opposite position is taken by Kiernan. Kiernan presents a brief but poignant historical sketch of compulsory schooling dating back to the mid-1600s, and emphasizes the reasons for such schooling from that period of time to the present. His position is that compulsory schooling laws not only must be maintained but increased to age eighteen in order that the nation's students be afforded opportunities to acquire competencies prior to receiving a high school diploma. Kiernan believes that the acquisition of a diploma attests to achievement of the following: (1) functional literacy in reading, writing, and speaking, (2) ability to compute, including decimals and percentages, and (3) knowledge of the history and culture of the United States, to include the concepts and processes of democratic government.

In agreement with the National Commission on the Reform of Secondary Education, Brown strongly believes that the nation's public secondary schools cannot continue as custodial
institutions and at the same time excel or even survive in the matter of teaching and learning. He favors the lowering of compulsory attendance to age fourteen. He supports this judgment by citing three factors which made custodianship impossible to administrators.

(1) earlier maturity of youth; (2) numerous legal and quasi-legal rights extended to school-age young people by courts, especially the Tinker decision in which the Supreme Court conferred constitutional rights on school children; and (3) the change in attitudes of youth toward authority (6, p. 63).

Kiernan cites the need for school districts to provide numerous viable options to students, especially at the secondary level, as an attempt to remove the custodial nature of the secondary school. This would be done while simultaneously providing programs that would afford students the opportunity to acquire the skills and aptitudes to meet the complexities of contemporary life and become rational contributing members to the society. To abolish compulsory schooling past age fourteen would create multitudes of unskilled, idle young people unable to acquire or maintain gainful employment. This situation would then result in social upheaval (26, p. 6).

Brown observes that compulsory schooling laws are rarely enforced above age fourteen. If youth are to be brought up to understand citizenship, and have respect for the law, then legislation relating to compulsory school
attendance must either be rigidly enforced or abolished (6, p. 6).

Hazell finds merit in both positions. He concludes that it is highly possible that secondary schools can get on with the business of teaching and learning if the schools and communities of which they are a part commit themselves to developing thoughtfully and systematically various educational options commensurate with the needs of their students. At the same time, compulsory attendance statutes can and must be enforced. Creative educational options will compensate for attendance requirements by explicitly defining program objectives and requirements for satisfactory completion of the program (23, p. 6).

Thomson notes that the age of compulsory attendance does affect the school's legal responsibilities for requiring youth of a certain age to be in school. School officials normally have an obligation to report to the courts those students who do fall within the age of the compulsory attendance laws. All other students attend school by choice. All of these other students, however, still must abide by the policies that govern the institution, including those affecting attendance (45, p. 5).

A United States Office of Education panel proposed that compulsory attendance at secondary schools be reduced to four hours a day. Time not in school would be devoted to a variety of paid and possibly unpaid activities; on-the-job
training, employment, service to community agencies, independent study, and others. In opposition to this, the President's Panel on Youth Report urges a system in which citizens would be entitled to fourteen years of tuition-free education beyond kindergarten. Eight years would be compulsory; the remaining six would be available at the option of the individual at any later time (29, p. 122).

Educational historians have increasingly turned their attention to the origins of compulsory schooling. In his essay, "The Goddess, the School Book, and Compulsion," Charles Burgess places the development of compulsory school attendance laws in a broad social context. Noting the social disorder brought about by the Civil War and by rapid technological growth, Burgess maintains that "compulsion was used in many aspects of American life to secure stability and to forge a new sense of nationhood" (7, p. 199).

It is obvious that changes in compulsory attendance laws lowering school exit age would have massive repercussions not just in education but throughout the economy. If millions of teenagers enter the labor force sooner, the effects might include greater unemployment among those now working and a much lower employment rate among those seeking jobs (29, p. 121).

If intellectual development is central to compulsory education, then the focus must be turned to the very processes of education and the limiting factors set by the
The issues of school exit age and the abolishment of compulsory school attendance laws are overshadowed by concern for the primary purpose of education, intellectual development (14, p. 75).

Factors Influencing Absenteeism

The problem of illegal student absenteeism continues to be a serious one for many school administrators and other teaching staff members. In 1973 and again in 1974 the National Association of Secondary School Principals, in its annual membership poll on school organization and curriculum, rated poor attendance as the most perplexing student problem by a ratio of two to one over discipline, the second most frequently mentioned difficulty with students. Hazell cites the fact that although absenteeism may be symptomatic of an inadequate curriculum, analysis indicates that this is only one of many causes. Even schools with broad and flexible programs continue to face severe attendance problems. Obviously, increasing absenteeism has deep roots leading in many directions. The causes are both personal and institutional (23, p. 5).

Contributing to poor attendance may be negative family attitudes, social forces, peer pressures, economic circumstances, home-school relationships, school size, student age, and health. More recently the dramatic growth of student absenteeism has been attributed to winter vacations, erosion
of parental control, economic affluence, novel life-styles, and a breakdown in court enforcement of attendance laws (17, p. 3).

Neal offers several reasons for non-attendance. One being that many poor people cannot afford to go to school. Some parents cannot afford clothing or books or school supplies, and simple pride will not allow them to admit to their poverty publicly. Some children need to work to earn whatever meager wage they can, or stay home baby-sitting for the younger children so mother can work (34, p. 3).

Thomson states that "Whatever the contributing causes, student truancy invariably becomes the subject of informal discussions whenever school administrators meet. Expensive and time consuming, it is of ever-present administrative consequence" (45, p. 1).

Levanto contends that several factors appear to influence school attendance. They are dependent on and are related to social forces, home and community relation, the appeal of school programs, and teacher and peer pressures. These factors and others need to be identified before remedial procedures can be effectively initiated. Today, many high school administrators are openly concerned with rising absenteeism and its complex implications for curriculum and program development (28, p. 3).

Another factor contributing to student absenteeism is suspension from school. Community workers employed by the
local school districts to help bring youngsters back to public school complain that the number of expelled students is both astronomical and unjustifiable. Expulsions sometimes follow such minor offenses as gum chewing or scuffling in the hall (34, p. 3).

Thomson found at the conclusion of a study of five consecutive school years that (1) absenteeism is on the increase, for absenteeism rose during each succeeding year of the five years studied; (2) second semester absenteeism is higher than first semester absenteeism; and (3) days of important tests experience a low rate of absenteeism (45, p. 5). Although this study was undertaken in but one large high school, the findings are of general interest to all school administrators.

In a paper presented at the annual convention of the American Association of School Administrators, Lewis Kohler listed four factors influencing absenteeism. The first, "In School," includes inadequate program selection, direction, and supervision, as well as ineffective teaching and grievance procedures. The second factor is that of "School Relationships Affecting Student Attitude." These relationships include personality conflicts between teachers and students, lack of motivation, task and subject repetitiveness, and little variety in daily and weekly scheduling of classes. The two final factors of "Environment and
Personal Influences" include home and community involvement (27, p. 7).

Neal states that many students who remain in school find upon graduation that dropouts have gotten most of the jobs and have collected experiences and seniority. While those who stay in school are more qualified for long term positions, many feel immediately that their high school courses have afforded them little useful knowledge or job experiences (34, p. 3).

Problems of attendance involve all school personnel and the total school community. Excessive absenteeism is a complex and continuing public school problem with personal, institutional, economic, and social causes. Absenteeism is a problem that extends into adulthood. Employers demand daily attendance. If the ultimate goal of education is to help an individual become a productive and contributing member of society, then as Fogelman reports, "a student's absences cause him to be educationally backward and socially poor adjusted" (16, p. 148).

Effect on the Student, School, and Community

Using the 180-day school year as a base, the normal absentee rate of seven to nine days is translated to a 4 percent to 5 percent absentee rate. This rate was not uncommon to high schools of ten to fifteen years ago. Today,
it is not uncommon to hear rates ranging from 10 percent to over 50 percent absenteeism (17, p. 3).

This insidious development in our schools should be of serious concern to all of us. There is a message in this development. It is time to take a hard look at our education system. It should be noted here that the schools are not to bear the brunt of the blame for increasing absenteeism. Attendance is and should be the responsibility of the parents and students. Those who advocate that learning should be fun or that innovation brings the students crashing through the doors, are sadly mistaken. Serious and good education is plain hard work (28, p. 5).

One result of the increased absenteeism is the additional time teachers, counselors, and administrators are spending just to manage the attendance situation. Less opportunity remains for more constructive tasks. The quality of teaching, counseling and administering can easily be affected by excessive absentee patterns (45, p. 3).

Levanto believes that since humans are creatures of habit, it is of the utmost importance that proper work habits be established early in life. Schools can and should assist as a formative instrument in the process. Good attendance habits learned and developed in school have a good chance of being carried over into the world of work. The same applies to bad habits. It is not uncommon today to hear employers express their increasing concern with the erratic absenteeism among the twenty-to thirty-year-old workers (28, p. 1).
Karweit states that on any current school day, many urban schools report more students absent than present in school. This fact of contemporary school life is inconsistent for a nation that has historically placed a high value on educational attainment. Excessive absenteeism keeps the individual student from taking full advantage of his educational opportunities. It also indirectly disrupts the education of his regularly attending classmates as teachers try to reteach the missed subject material. School systems as a whole lose economically by this absenteeism due to the fact that most states disburse funds on the basis of average daily attendance. In a society which values educational attainment, the habit of absenteeism and early withdrawal from school is most disruptive. Presently, over 40 percent of eligible students do not complete high school (24, p. 4).

Kohler contends that the extent of administrative, staff and faculty time wasted because of student absenteeism has not been completely researched. A high rate of absenteeism has been recognized in many instances to be a symptom of poor supervision, management and administration leading to low morale, tardiness, inferior teaching, poor student achievement, and excessive school terminations. Absenteeism is costly to school districts in loss of student achievement, record keeping, pupil services, increased teacher costs, increased student orientation time
and costs, and to the student in the loss of quality education experiences. It greatly disrupts the meeting of educational goals. Many schools, in estimating absenteeism costs, equate every five percent of absenteeism to five percent of lost educational achievement and results (27, p. 2).

Karweit believes that, to some extent, excessive student absenteeism reflects the failure of the school to win the student's attention in the face of strong competition from outside events. It also reflects changing student attitudes toward authority and the school itself. Many students today simply do not regard unexcused absences as serious (24, p. 1).

The academic and social success of a student can be greatly hindered by failure of that student to attend school classes. Further, frequent absences have been demonstrated to be related to involvement in delinquency. As far back as 1926, Healy and Bonner reported that 40 percent of offenders in the Chicago and Boston areas had at one time been truant and had been considered an absentee problem in school. But despite the consistent findings of high rates of absenteeism in delinquent populations it is difficult to determine if a causal relationship exists between delinquency and absenteeism. Part of the difficulty is that attendance problems may be related to poor achievement in school in general. Fiordaliso concludes that "Although
it cannot be demonstrated at this point, it does appear that absenteeism may be a factor contributing to delinquency" (14, p. 2).

If there is a relationship between delinquency and the rate of absenteeism, then a logical application would be the development of delinquency prevention programs that have school attendance as an important focus. Included in the approaches undertaken to help solve this problem have been guidance and counseling programs.

Bennings writes that in recent years there has been a resurgence of interest by educators in the development of morality and moral orientations. This trend suggests a shift in emphasis from the theoretical formulation of behavior to the practical application of morality theory. He asserts that there is a resurgence of interest in value clarification techniques in classrooms throughout the country, thus providing for students of all ages an insight into how they look at choices and how they work at making decisions. "In essence, the goal of value clarification is to help individuals feel better about themselves, and to help them improve their self-concept" (5, p. 4).

Piaget places much emphasis on the role of parents and significant others in the development of moral judgment in the young child. Parents, with their authority and their rules, become for the young child the focus through which he interacts with his environment. A constraining parent
will retard the development of moral judgment, while
process-oriented parents will enhance the development of
mature judgments (38, p. 23).

Piaget states that "The relationship between the
child and his parents, significant others, and his environ-
ment influences his specific moral feelings" (39, p. 4).
Piaget was especially interested in children's concepts of
rules, the impact of adult constraint, and the development
of the idea of justice. Piaget postulates that "In an
environment where a moral education depends more upon the
contagion of example than upon constant parental super-
vision, the idea of equality will be able to develop much earlier" (39, p. 4).

For Piaget, the ideas of equality and cooperation are
the highest level of moral judgment and indicate mature
levels of functioning. The psychologists concerned with
self-concept hold similar views. Generally, high-achieving
children are more optimistic, self-confident and hold a
higher opinion of themselves. Should a student feel his
self-esteem threatened by school experiences he may attempt
to protect himself by adopting certain attitudes. By taking
a negative attitude towards school a student can rationalize
that he does not achieve not because he lacks ability, but
rather because he is not interested enough to attend (38,
p. 7).
Paddy states that a student may develop a defensive attitude toward school as a way of protection. Negative experiences in school can be anxiety producing and painful to self-esteem. Such a student may have the defensive attitude that school is unimportant. Students who have such attitudes, it could be speculated, are the students whose self-systems feel vulnerable to attack with regard to academic evaluation. Weakened by feelings of vulnerability these students then fiercely defend themselves. The teacher and her evaluations would then also be defensively dealt with in an attempt to protect self-esteem. This would result in a defensive self-concept of ability which would have little relationship to achievement (36, p. 4).

Paddy reports on a study concerning eighth grade students. The following scales were administered: (1) A School Attitude Scale (Lewis, 1973), (2) the Self-Concept of Academic Ability Scales (to determine a student's general and specific concept of his ability), and (3) the Perceived Teacher Evaluation Scales (to determine a student's perceptions of his teachers (Brookover, 1962; Lewis, 1973). Students with negative attitudes towards school were found for the most part to consider themselves at least average with regard to academic ability. The findings suggest "that self-concept will affect achievement only when the self-concept is a somewhat non-defensive one" (36, p. 7).
Paddy's findings further imply the responsibility both teachers and parents have in promoting healthy self-images in students. The results of this study further suggest that the attitude toward school is an important variable in affecting the self-concept achievement model. "Since attitudes change when they are no longer necessary to the individual, the implication is an encouraging one. Given a sympathetic and encouraging school environment, attitudes towards school can be enabled to change" (36, p. 8).

Yeager reports on a study on some educational aspects of the black child's self-concept. The data support a view that there is a statistically significant correlation between the child's self-concept and the teacher's view of him.

The term self-concept denotes the extent to which an individual believes himself capable, worthy, significant and successful. A child's self-concept results from his treatment as an object in his interactions with other individuals. The child must select and perform acts congruent with the other's views in order to maintain an on-going interaction. Two factors influence the significant other's effect on the child: his authority over and his affective bond with the child. If for no other reason than to maintain the on-going interaction, the child attempts to conform to the expectations of those with whom he feels a strong affective bond. As with a person who is in authority over him, the child is encouraged to conform, at least outwardly, in order to minimize conflict (48, p. 3).

According to Rehberg, "The more positive the adolescent's self-esteem, the more likely would he be to set high
academic and career standards for himself" (40, p. 21). He continues by making the point that "to the extent that competence in sports elicits positive appraisals from significant others, participation in sports may well serve to enhance the self-esteem of the participant adolescent and therefore, raise his scholastic performance and educational experience" (40, p. 21).

Yarworth implies that despite some recognition of the student's desire to participate such as the desire to accommodate the performance expectations of his parents as well as his classmates, research has been guided by other beliefs. Researchers who have examined student activity programs have failed to examine the psychological basis for adolescent participation. He believes that "research in this field has been guided by a belief that sociological reasons have been the only ones which have influenced students' extra- and co-curricular activities" (47, p. 4).

Fogelman contends that there is now a sizeable body of evidence on attendance and truancy levels and their relationship with personal, social, and school variables. Whatever the primary cause or causal relationships, in any argument on non-attendance the assumption is made that children who are frequently absent from school show poor attainment and adjustment to school (16, p. 148).

In a paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Yarworth describes
his study as one of the first in the field of school activities to combine psychological variables with previously researched personal variables to attempt to answer questions raised by Rehberg in 1969. According to Yarworth, this study

(1) produces psychological profiles of students who participate in school activities, (2) dispelled the myth that school activities appeal equally to every student and (3) school activities are used by large number of students to complete their high school life experience (47, p. 1).

Yarworth states that information provided by this study can be used by researchers to explore the area of student involvement in school life and by administrators to assess who participates in their programs as they try to measure the success or failure of tax dollars spent yearly to develop extra- and co-curricular programs (47, p. 1).

Galloway states that student absences cause them to appear educationally backward and socially poorly adjusted. "On return to school he could hardly fail to notice, and be affected by his poor attainment and lack of friends; a vicious circle easily established" (20, p. 22).

During the 1950s and 1960s researchers suggested that participation in school activity programs was correlated with academic achievement as reflected by the student's grade point average. Frederick in his text, The Third Curriculum, reviewed the literature in this area back to studies of the 1920s and 1930s which showed that students
who were most active in the activity programs tended to receive the highest grades in academic studies. Studies also showed that participation in activities had no negative effects on academic achievement (18).

In this tradition, Eidsmore (1963) and Burgon and Wertz (1967) conducted a limited sample study to assess the hypothesized relationship between academic achievement and activity (athletic as well as non-athletic) participation. These studies showed that students who fared better academically were also the most frequent participants in various aspects of the school activity programs. Results also indicated that participants did better academically than did non-participants (44). The findings from these studies demonstrate the impact of school activity on student achievement.

Karweit found that the amount of variance in achievement which may be attributed to schools is small in comparison to what is accounted for by characteristics of individual students within schools. It is her opinion that little attention in recent years has been focused on the consequences of school absence on achievement. Perhaps some of this neglect is due to the fact that school attendance in the United States has increased steadily since 1869. In 1869 the average school term of 132.2 days was attended on the average of 59.3 percent of the time. In 1969 the mean school term was 178.9 days and was attended, on the average
of 90.4 percent of the time. However, since 1964, a slight
downturn in attendance has been noticed (24, p. 7).

Yarworth states that in the early 1970s researchers
continued to turn away from the child himself and to con-
centrate on background areas which were believed to
influence participation in school activities. Eventually,
however, some researchers began to seek psychological
reasons for participation in the school activity programs
(47, p. 7).

Hazell believes that absenteeism has personal as well
as institutional causes. It is increasingly impossible for
schools to function as custodians of their students, given
changing social attitudes toward both youth and authority
(23, p. 1).

Fotinos compiled a list of existing problems concerning
the student, school, and community which appear to cause a
high rate of absenteeism.

2. Lowering teacher efficiency by necessitating much
repetition of explanation of subject matter for
returning absentees.
3. Lessening of the effectiveness of the examinations
as a learning instrument, since results often
can't be discussed until absentees have made up
the test.
4. Lowering student morale, since many students re-
ceive the same number of credits for far less
time in class.
5. Increasing teacher frustration, since many types
of classroom work, such as lectures, film, panels
and classroom work cannot be made up.
6. Lowering of educational standards as work tends to be geared to the rate of absenteeism.

7. Wasting of valuable class time with traditional attendance practices which are not effective.

8. Students have a responsibility to contribute to the class.

9. Financial support of the educational program.

10. Student falsification of absence excuses to cover their absences (17, p. 6).

The public is demanding nothing short of quality education on the part of all schools. Educators entrusted with providing educational experiences for students know that in order for the school to be in command of the experiences pupils have in school it is necessary for the pupils to be in attendance. The national concern being expressed by taxpayers concerns attainment of basic skills. Many of the pupils who are not in school are the very ones lacking in the basic skills. In Fogelman's study examining the relationship between attendance and adjustment to school, he attempted to assess the relative importance of poor attendance whether it be early or late in the child's school career. These findings detected a clear straightforward relationship between school attendance and attainment and behavior (16, 156). It is, therefore, imperative that ways are found to motivate students back to the classroom.

Role of School Personnel

Increasingly, student discontent as evidenced in classroom absence and even illness has become a significant
area to be explored. Studies of absenteeism probe attitudinal and emotional factors, student protest, the role of counseling, the role of the school staff, the role of the administrators and other psychological and sociological aspects of the school-student relationship (27, p. 3).

High school absenteeism has been increasing in recent years and it has become a matter that is of serious concern to many school administrators, teachers, parents, and communities. This becomes apparent whenever high school absenteeism becomes a topic of discussion. Indications are that efforts by school officials to restrain the rate of absenteeism and to enforce the compulsory attendance structure have proven to be ineffective. Also, a considerable and costly amount of time and effort are expended by many high school administrative and staff personnel in an attempt to maintain a "control" of the absentee problem and to prevent a complete breakdown of the school's regulated attendance structure (28, p. 2).

Presently, an inordinate amount of time is spent by administrators and other personnel in managing the attendance situation when one considers other worthy tasks and obligations of equal or greater importance. The question finally arises as to what educators can do to develop better attendance habits? Levanto suggests a three-step program to increase attendance.
First, and probably most important, a firm, fair, and well publicized attendance policy must be adopted. Every student and parent should know exactly what is required for earning a credit for a course of study. Second, effective reporting procedures must be developed to keep the home informed. A main line to parents at the end of each week in which absence has been recorded could help. The responsibility of attendance must be shifted to the student and his home. Third, schools should explore the implementation of an "alternative curricula" for the chronic absentee. If and when absenteeism returns to normal there will always be those few who will continue to stay away (28, p. 5).

With teachers, counselors, and administrators pushed into spending increased time just to manage the attendance situation, less opportunity remains for more constructive tasks. The quality of teaching, counseling, and administering can easily be affected by the massive amounts of attendance details.

An important concern discovered by the attendance study in the Albermarle School District in Albemarle County, Virginia, was the effect absenteeism had on teachers and administrators. The three assistant principals were spending about half of their working hours with attendance problems. The discouraging factor here was not the amount of time spent, but the lack of success achieved in improving the attendance of students (30, p. 6).

A report by Gaetz on a study which evaluated group counseling suggested that attendance and achievement of students identified as truants and underachievers are significantly improved by both individual and group
counseling (19, p. 1). Morris suggests that teachers and counselors should play a major role with students concerning absenteeism. He advised that teachers should make every possible effort to build personal relationships with students. When teachers notice vague sickness reports or feeble excuses, they should refer students who use such devices to counselors (32, p. 41).

In Ontario, the truant officer has been replaced by the attendance counselor who works with students, parents, the educational system, and the community. Truancy is a symptom of many social and psychological problems; economic deprivation, social and family problems, and emotional disturbances. The attendance counselor must refer those students whose problems are symptomatic of larger problems to the proper treatment and diagnostic facilities (19, p. 1).

Campbell observed that the child welfare and attendance specialist and school staff should examine curriculum and general school policy changes that are thought to affect student attendance. He stated that they should

Work with teachers to effect attitudinal change toward their responsibility relative to school attendance, consult with the school staff and other support personnel as to new programs that would have greater holding power for certain groups of students, develop with the community and parents more positive attitudes toward public education (30, p. 14).
Gamsky reported that in a Wisconsin pupil services program, he found that a team approach was more effective in reducing absenteeism than the isolated pupil service worker approach. Children improved significantly in achievement, personal adjustment, and attendance with the amount of improvement contingent on length of time the child was receiving pupil services. Pupils in experimental schools demonstrated a significant reduction in absences as compared with pupils in control schools over a period of the three-year duration of the program (21, p. 4).

New York's School-Home Contact Program sent para-professionals familiar with the community into the homes of students who showed problems in attendance, adjustment, or achievement. The resultant findings by Erickson and others allowed them to infer tentatively that, over a four-month period of time, the program positively affected absenteeism (12, p. 6).

Fisher and Edwards reported in the Edison Project in Philadelphia that contact with the homes was an important factor in raising the Average Daily Attendance. Whenever the student was absent three days a staff member would call or visit the home. This led to a feeling that the staff cared about the student and was probably a factor in increasing the Average Daily Attendance (12, p. iv).

Casual and unsystematic handling of the problem has made ineffective many activities and services aimed towards
reducing absenteeism. Department chairmen and teachers must not be reluctant to report a loss of student achievement resulting from absenteeism even though they may be held accountable for students over whom administration and parents have given them little control. Such factors lead to pyramiding costs to the school district. Some of these costs are

Overstaffing to offset absenteeism, lost student achievements, fluctuations in quality, idle equipment and unused investment, disrupted schedules, shifting of teaching and clerical staff plus time spent by principals, counselors, and deans and attendance workers to maintain records and deal with factors causing absenteeism and to provide solutions for the problem (27, p. 3).

Fotinos believes that as yet no school staff feels that it has the final word on attendance. Certain common themes, however, are present in most of the successful policies.

1. The policies are strong. When little or nothing is done about attendance the problem gets worse. Schools making headway on attendance are schools which expend considerable thought and effort to solving the problem.

2. Participation in the formulation of attendance policy is broadly based. Administrators, teachers, students, and parents frequently are involved in policy making.

3. Policies clearly specify in writing attendance expectations and delineate the outcomes of good and poor attendance.

4. Policies are consistently enforced. At each level of enforcement teacher, counselor, dean, principal, compliance with the policy is expected.

5. Policies are well publicized. Each parent and student repeatedly has been informed of attendance requirements.

6. Immediate follow-up on absences is made by a letter, a telephone call, or some other means of communication (17, p. 4).
Special training should be given to staff members on absenteeism problems and methods of handling them. The principal and the assigned attendance personnel should be given authority to work closely with this problem. Absenteeism is a problem extending into adulthood. Dependability is a trait admired and rewarded in society and thus is a value that schools should nourish for the benefit of all. As a student learns to assume more responsibility for his actions he develops the capacity for wise decisions in the use of his time and in his educational development (3, p. 41).

Programs to Treat Absenteeism

A survey of present practices and a review of the literature revealed that in spite of the thrust to improve attendance through innovation in curriculum and school organization, non-illness absenteeism remains a growing problem. Bauer sent letters of inquiry concerning an early intervention system for the reduction of unexcused absences. Of those districts responding, none had comprehensive plans for attacking absenteeism; further, several of these districts were looking for such plans. In those districts where efforts have been made to attack the problem, total school personnel efforts, home visitations, and change in curriculum appeared to be important (4, p. 17).
Balinsky describes a program which proved to be successful in Brooklyn, New York. Students who had been absent from school for thirty to fifty days during the first five months of school were provided individualized and group instruction in reading and mathematics. In addition to academic instructions, supportive and follow-up services were provided for 230 ninth grade students at their home schools. The program consisted of two six-week cycles followed by the students' re-entry into the mainstream of their home schools. The absentee program was implemented at the Community Satellite Center located near the students' neighborhoods (2, p. 1).

Ellis reports on a program designed to involve parents in the educational process of their children, improve parental knowledge and participation in school, and improve parental influence on student attendance. The parents participating in the Student Parent Activities Center all had children who were truant or whose attendance records were poor. As a result of participation in the program it was believed that parents would attain familiarity with pupil requirements for attendance, discipline, and academic subjects such as reading and mathematics. In addition to this, parents should have been able to assist their children in acquiring the basic skills of reading and mathematics. It was believed that the attendance of pupils serviced by the program would improve. According to the author, the
program was designed to involve parents more fully in the educational process and these objectives were accomplished (11, p. 5).

The importance of parental cooperation in combating school absenteeism has been recognized by many researchers. Primary causes for non-school attendance were listed by Campbell as "Ineffective parenting, disintegrating family units, challenging of the schools as a viable social institution by adults and young people, earlier emancipation by society of young people and a lack of community interest" (8, p. 14). Morris supported this view when he observed that the student who tends to unexcused absences is "less inclined to accept parental order or explanation and more inclined to accept the tenets of his youth culture" (32, p. 41).

With each succeeding class age, absenteeism increases. Fotinos states that students who live with both parents generally have a lower rate of absenteeism than those who live with one parent or guardian. Students who participate in school-sponsored athletic and non-athletic activities generally have lower rates of absenteeism than those who participate in but one or more of these activities. Finally, the poorer the student's personality rating by teachers, generally the higher the rate of absenteeism (17, p. 4).

In a longitudinal study spanning five years, Fotinos arrived at the following conclusions:
1. Second semester absenteeism is higher than first semester absenteeism.
2. Days of important tests experience a low rate of absenteeism.
3. The first and last days of the week have the highest rates of absenteeism.
4. Boys in the first three years of high school generally have lower rates of absenteeism than girls at the same grade level (17, p. 4).

A study of absenteeism was conducted at Albemarle High School in Albemarle County, Virginia, during the 1975-1976 school year. Eighty-seven percent of the students had absence rates in excess of 20 percent. An important consideration of this study was the relationship between absence and success in school. The policy set up by the Albemarle County School District called for mandatory grade reduction for students with large numbers of unexcused absences. It was learned from this study that some students can miss a considerable amount of time and still pass their work, but many students cannot and few students can achieve their highest potential unless they are present in class (30, p. 6).

McCullock reports on a "no excuse necessary" policy. Students were encouraged to help themselves in this program which was implemented in Michigan. Students watch their own attendance, cannot exceed twelve absences without losing course credit and do not need to bring a written excuse for absence. Before this procedure went into effect, official attendance was taken only once a day. Now each teacher fills out a form letter upon a student's third,
seventh, and twelfth absences, with copies mailed to parents. Absenteeism has been reduced by half (31, p. 28).

In a paper presented at the National Association of Secondary School Principals Annual Convention at Las Vegas, Nevada, in February, 1975, Levanto briefly discusses major findings and implications of the Connecticut study and recommends three specific steps to combat rising absenteeism: (1) adoption of a firm and well-publicized attendance policy based on the no-work—no-pay concept, (2) development of an effective reporting system to regularly inform parents of student absences, and (3) implementation of an alternative curriculum for chronic absentee (28, p. 1).

Sending a truant officer or a principal to tell parents what they must do is a more aggressive procedure than sending a note to them about a situation or asking them to come to the school to discuss it. The personal contact gives the family much less option to alter its behavior on its own decision, but it does provide the formal authority with much more opportunity to observe what is going on. Unfortunately, it may place the family in the difficult position of feeling spied on and coerced, thereby discouraging cooperation (4, p. 15).

Potinos describes an experimental school attendance policy that was implemented in Napa High School, Napa, California, in 1975. The policy designated a maximum of
twelve absences per semester (the maximum allowable for each student under normal circumstances). After thirteen absences from any class, students risk forfeiture of credit and can be dropped from class enrollment. The policy also provides that after a student's fourth, eighth, and twelfth absences from any class, his parents will be sent a written form indicating the dates of the student's absences. During the first year under the new attendance policy, absenteeism was reduced approximately 50 percent (17, p. 1).

Sandercock reported on an Open Campus Program Implementation at Harriton High School of Lower Merion, Pennsylvania. Within a period of three years from its inception, the open campus arrangement began to show evidence of shortcomings in areas of class and school attendance, tardiness, and general campus discipline including human relations. Students involved in activities simply were tardy or opted to cut a class rather than return to school and be tardy (42, p. 1).

According to Oden, the public is now demanding nothing short of quality education on the part of all schools. Those associated with providing educational experiences for pupils know that in order for the school to be in command of the experiences pupils have in school, it is necessary for the students to be in attendance. Many of the pupils who are not in school are the ones lacking in basic skills, therefore, it is imperative that a way be
found to motivate these pupils to return to school (35, p. 2).

Summary

In reviewing the literature, it was discovered that compulsory education has been recognized since 170 B.C. There appears to be little disagreement concerning compulsory school attendance through the elementary school years. The questions concerning school exit age are addressed to students at the high school level. Compulsory education may be one of the few major issues in contemporary education to be widely discussed before rather than after a major judicial decision.

The factors which influence absenteeism range from institutional problems such as discipline and inadequate curriculum to personal and social problems involving family and friends. Researchers in this area agree that the factors contributing to absenteeism must be identified and approached individually for lasting success. The future demands of society are such that excessive absenteeism cannot be tolerated.

The effects of absenteeism are felt in all segments of our society. Employers express continued concern about high rates of employee absenteeism. Many feel that this is a result of poor habits formed as students. School districts lose not only man hours that could be put to more
constructive use, but they also lose financially in terms of reimbursement for the average daily attendance. Notwithstanding the aforementioned reasons, the primary concern must be for the student.

Participation and cooperation of school personnel is crucial to any successful attendance program. The importance of parental cooperation is also of considerable consequence in developing conscientious student attendance. Frequent absences of pupils from regular classroom learning experiences disrupt the continuity of the instructional process. It is important for school personnel and community leaders to share in a cooperative effort to assist students in maintaining continuity in the educational process.

The importance of programs to treat absenteeism are pertinent to any discussion of student absenteeism. In light of declining test scores and the demonstrated lack of communication and computational skills of many of today's high school students, it is of the utmost importance for students to establish regular attendance patterns. The entire process of education requires regular continuity of instruction, classroom participation, learning experiences, and study in order to reach the goal of maximum educational benefits for each individual student. Research shows that because of lack of regular classroom instruction many pupils are able to achieve only mediocre success in their academic programs. Whether a school district employs
direct and aggressive measures such as truant officers, implementation of an alternative curriculum, or an open campus, the importance of consistent attendance programs and policies is undeniable.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


25. __________, "Rainy Days and Mondays: An Analysis of Factors Related to Absence from School, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, Center for the Study of Social Organization of Schools, November, 1973, ED 086927.


34. Neal, Pamela, "Compulsory Education: Keep, Change or Abolish?" April, 1975, ED 106914.


CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING DATA

The problem of this study was to determine the effect of academic self-concept, student aspiration, intellectual achievement responsibility and certain other personal factors on the attendance patterns of selected ninth grade students. The subjects of this study were ninth grade students who enrolled in an urban inner-city high school in North Central Texas during the school year of 1978-1979.

More detailed information regarding the methods and procedures of this study follows under these captions: description of the subjects, description of the instruments, collection of the data, and analysis of the data.

Description of the Subjects

Sixty subjects participated in this study. All of the subjects were ninth grade students in an urban inner-city school. All subjects qualified for the government subsidized free lunch program. Because of the ethnic population of the selected school, all subjects of this study were black.

Thirty subjects were randomly selected from school attenders and thirty from school non-attenders. School attenders are defined as those ninth grade students on the
government subsidized free lunch program who were absent no more than four days during the first two quarters of the 1978-1979 academic school year. School non-attenders were chosen using the same criteria with the exception that they had been absent thirty days or more during the same time period. A table of random numbers was used in the selection of the subjects of each of the two major groups in the sample. Participants were chosen until an equal number of male and female students were selected for each group. The following table provides a description of the subjects in the study.

**TABLE I**

**NUMBER OF SUBJECTS: ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Groups were identified and maintained intact throughout the study. Data were collected on all participants in small group meetings and in individual interview sessions.

**Description of the Instruments**

Four instruments were used in this study. They were the *Academic Self-Concept Scale*, the *Intellectual Achievement*
Responsibility Scale, Student Aspirations Scale, and the Structured Interview.

**Academic Self-Concept Scale**

This scale was developed and validated in an urban area school district during the 1973-1974 school year. It consists of one set of eleven Likert-type statements (to which students indicate agreement or disagreement) in an alternating sequence within a finished test form. The items composing each scale are based upon "item formats," derived from a more theoretical analysis of the behavioral referents of self- (academic) concept as extrapolated from the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale upon which the validity of the scale was founded. The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale was standardized on 1,183 children in grades four through twelve. The internal consistency of the scale ranges from .78 to .93, with retest reliability being .71 to .77. Additional supporting data for the validity of the scale was based upon the relationships between the two sets of items as revealed by principal component factor analysis of the item responses elicited from students, followed by a varimax rotation. The factor structure resulting from this analysis illustrates that the items tended to cluster as expected about the self-concept vector. Other factor analyses of similar scales based upon the same underlying formats have been
found to yield similar item relationships. The reliabilities for the scale were .91 and .94. This validity and reliability suggests that the Academic Self-Concept Scale is adequate for the purposes of this study (3).

The Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale (IAR)

There has been intense research interest in perceptions of internal-external control. This scale was first published in 1965 by Crandall, Katkovsky, and Preston (1). Over the period since its original publication over 500 requests have been made for permission to use the scale. The requests have come from researchers throughout the United States and from abroad, from public school systems, colleges and universities, learning centers, educational research laboratories, school districts, mental health clinics, and probation departments. It has been translated into nine foreign languages and into Braille (2, p. 60).

The IAR was devised to sample I-E (internal, external) perceptions concerning intellectual and academic outcomes. Within the behavioral domain the items are intended to sample I-E perceptions fairly evenly across. Thus, various IAR items pose outcomes from different and specific situations within the intellectual and academic areas. Slightly over half the items are concerned with various outcomes that occur in school contexts. The remaining items deal with non-school related matters (2, p. 61).
Because the items refer to specific events and sample across various aspects of the intellectual-academic domain, it is not expected that a very large general factor would appear which accounts for a high proportion of the scale variance. A number of small factors are expected, each accounting for a small percentage of the total variance (2, p. 61).

It was reasoned by the developers of the instrument that I-E perceptions might not be equivalent for positively and negatively valenced events, for it is more difficult to assume responsibility for failures than for successes. Thus, the IAR items were constructed to pose an equal number of positive and negative outcomes, with item content otherwise controlled across pairs of positive and negative items (2, p. 62).

The total scale, then, contains 17 pairs of items. The 17 positive items are summed to yield a I+ subscore; the 17 negative items yield a I- subscore. I+ and I- scores have repeatedly been shown to be relatively independent. In various studies correlations between the subscale scores generally range between .10 and .40 (Mean r approximately .20) depending in part on the age of the sample. The total IAR score is the sum of the I+ and the I- subscores. The retest reliabilities were .69 for the total I, .66 for I+, and .74 for I-. The correlations were .54 for I+ and .57 for I-. Based on this background
information, this scale is well suited for this study (2, p. 63).

Student Aspirations Scale

The Student Aspirations Scale was adapted from the 1971 work of Rosenberg and Simmons. It was designed to measure aspirations in the areas of wealth, fame, occupational status, and educational goals. The scale consists of eleven questions with two or three alternatives per question. This scale's alpha reliabilities were .62 for the eighth-grade sample. The Student Aspirations Scale appears to be a useful instrument in achieving the purposes of this study (3).

Structured Interview

A questionnaire was used as a structured interview instrument to collect additional data for the study in the areas of suspension, family situation, extra-curricular activities, school factors, use of time, employment, and general non-attendance factors. Instruments used in other studies were examined in addition to published texts on the subject. Items were developed and submitted to a jury panel to determine validity of the questionnaire. Responses from the panel were studied and all suggestions were implemented in the final questionnaire. The panel included the director of the Department of Research and Evaluation of a large metropolitan school district in North Central Texas.
and a member of the Office of Research and Evaluation of the College of Education at North Texas State University.

The revised questionnaire was administered to all subjects in the study. The researcher read the instrument to each subject to maintain subject consistency. The final questionnaire contained sixty-four responses.

Procedures for Collecting Data

The succeeding paragraphs contain a description of the steps that were followed in conducting this study. A list of ninth grade students enrolled in the free lunch program was obtained from the food services department. Names of students not meeting the attendance criteria described in the definition of terms were eliminated from the list. Students who were absent frequently for documented medical reasons were removed from the list.

The names of the remaining students were separated according to attendance to form a list of school attenders and school non-attenders as defined earlier. Separate lists by sex were then made from each of the attenders and non-attenders lists. Numbers were assigned each name on the list and names were drawn according to the table of random numbers. Fifteen names were selected from each list. The sample consisted of a total of thirty school attenders (fifteen girls and fifteen boys), and thirty non-attenders (fifteen girls and fifteen boys).
Each measuring instrument was read to the students in small group sittings of not more than fifteen students. These small groups allowed students the freedom to ask questions for clarification when necessary. The **Structured Interview** was administered individually to each student by the researcher.

**Analysis of the Data**

After completion of all scales and interviews, the responses were transferred to Fortran sheets for key-punching into computer cards at the computer center at North Texas State University for data analysis.

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were tested by the use of comparison techniques. The simple analysis of variance was used to compute the required comparisons. The .05 probability level was the accepted criterion for rejection of the null hypotheses.

Items on the structured interview relate to each of the sub-hypotheses under hypothesis four. The simple analysis of variance was used to compute the required comparisons on sub-hypothesis 4a. The responses on each item of sub-hypotheses 4b through 4j were subjected to the chi-square analysis to determine if the group distribution of responses varied significantly. The .05 probability level was accepted as the criterion level for rejection of the null hypotheses.


CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This study was concerned with the effects of academic self-concept, student aspiration, intellectual achievement responsibility and certain other personal factors on the attendance patterns of selected ninth grade students. Chapter IV includes the presentation and interpretation of the analyzed data accumulated for the purposes of this study. The first section of the chapter deals with the comparisons computed by using the simple analysis of variance on responses to the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale (IAR), the Academic Self-Concept Scale (ASCS), and the Student Aspirations Scale (SAS). The second part reports the responses and chi square analysis of the Structured Interview. The third section discusses the findings in relation to previous literature.

Presentation and Analysis of IAR, ASCS, and SAS

The first stated purpose of this study was to determine the academic self-concept, intellectual achievement responsibility and aspirations of selected groups of school attenders and non-attenders. In this section the data connected to this purpose are presented within the context of their related hypotheses.
Null Hypothesis 1—There will be no significant difference in the mean measures of academic self-concept between school attenders and school non-attenders. Table II is a presentation of student responses to the Academic Self-Concept Scale. Although the probability level of .07 did not reach the .05 level of significance, the application of the analysis of variance in this case may be considered a trend level difference. The information illustrated in this table indicates that attenders tend (though at a less than statistically significant level) to experience a higher academic self-concept than do non-attenders. However, the .05 criterion for significance requires that the null hypothesis be accepted.

### TABLE II

**VARIATIONS IN THE MEAN SCORES OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS ON THE ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>16.06</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>15.06</td>
<td>4.41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Null Hypothesis 2—there will be no significant difference in the mean measures of the belief in one's control over academic and intellectual accomplishments and failures between school attenders and school non-attenders.
Tables III, IV, and V represent the findings concerning the positive, negative, and total Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale.

Table III depicts the degree to which a student was willing to accept responsibility for positive events in which he was an active participant. The probability level of .66 does not approach significance. Therefore, school attenders and non-attenders do not differ in their willingness to accept responsibility for positive events.

**TABLE III**

VARIATIONS IN THE MEAN SCORES OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS OF POSITIVE RESPONSES TO THE INTELLECTUAL ACHIEVEMENT RESPONSIBILITY SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>12.23</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data indicated on Table IV represents the degree to which students were willing to accept responsibility for negative events in which they were an active participant. The probability level of .37 does not approach a significant difference.
TABLE IV

VARIATIONS IN THE MEAN SCORES OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS OF NEGATIVE RESPONSES TO THE INTELLECTUAL ACHIEVEMENT RESPONSIBILITY SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>10.06</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>10.73</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total IAR score as depicted in Table V was obtained by summing all positive events for which students assumed credit with all negative events for which students assumed credit. The resulting probability level of .62 does not approach a significant difference.

School attenders and school non-attenders do not differ on the mean measures of the IAR scales. School attenders and school non-attenders do not differ in their willingness to accept responsibility for positive or negative events. Since no significant difference was found between school attenders and school non-attenders, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Null Hypothesis 3—There will be no significant difference in the mean measures of student aspirations between school attenders and school non-attenders as measured in the sub-areas of (a) student desire for wealth, (b) student desire for fame, (c) occupational goals of student, and
(d) educational goals of student. Tables VI, VII, VIII, and IX represent the findings of the Student Aspirations Scale.

**TABLE V**

**VARIATIONS IN THE MEAN SCORES OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS OF TOTAL RESPONSES TO THE INTELLECTUAL ACHIEVEMENT RESPONSIBILITY SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>22.56</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>23.16</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table VI indicates student desire for wealth. Ninth grade school attenders evidenced no greater desire for wealth than did ninth grade school non-attenders. The mean score comparison resulted in an F ratio of .08 and a probability of .76 which is not significant.

**TABLE VI**

**VARIATIONS IN THE MEAN SCORES OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS OF STUDENT DESIRE FOR WEALTH RESPONSES TO THE STUDENT ASPIRATIONS SCALE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>6.30</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>6.20</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table VII portrays student responses concerning the desire for fame. There was no significant difference in desire for fame between ninth grade student attenders and non-attenders as shown by the probability level of .34.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>.59</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table VIII depicts responses of students' occupational goals. The probability level of .34 is not indicative of a statistically significant difference between ninth grade student attenders and ninth grade student non-attenders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>6.53</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>6.23</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table IX shows that minimal differences were found in the mean scores of student attenders and non-attenders concerning educational goal responses. As in the previous tables concerning the Student Aspirations Scale, the F ratio led to a probability level that does not approach the .05 level of significance.

School attenders and school non-attenders do not differ on the mean measures of the Student Aspirations Scale. School attenders and school non-attenders do not differ in their desire for wealth, fame, occupational goals, or educational goals. No significant differences were found between school attenders and school non-attenders and the null hypothesis is accepted.

TABLE IX

VARIATIONS IN THE MEAN SCORES OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS OF STUDENT EDUCATIONAL GOAL RESPONSES TO THE STUDENT ASPIRATIONS SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in the preceding section, no substantial differences existed between ninth grade student attenders' and ninth grade student non-attenders' responses to the Academic Self-Concept Scale, the Intellectual Achievement
Responsibility Scale, and the Student Aspirations Scale. The probability level of .05 was not reached on any of the scales. It appears that the preceding factors do not substantially account for variance in school attendance. Therefore, no statistically significant differences existed between ninth grade student attenders and ninth grade student non-attenders.

Presentation and Analysis of Student Responses to the Structured Interview

The following section of this chapter treats student responses to the Structured Interview. The first Hypothesis 4a was treated using the simple analysis of variance. Each subsequent hypothesis and item was subjected to the chi square analysis to determine if the group distribution of responses varied significantly. The .05 level was accepted as the criterion level for rejection of the null hypotheses.

Null Hypothesis 4a--There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the personal-social factor of age of students in the study.

In Table X the mean age of ninth grade attenders and non-attenders is delineated. The mean score resulted in an F ratio of 3.85, which led to the probability level of .05. The .05 probability level obtained by using analysis
of variance indicates that attenders have a significantly lower average age than non-attenders. The null hypothesis is rejected.

TABLE X

VARIATIONS IN THE MEAN AGE OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Age In Months</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>182.83</td>
<td>5.20</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>186.20</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Null Hypothesis 4b—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the personal-social factor of educational level of parents. Tables XI and XII illustrate the educational level attained by the mothers and fathers, respectively, of the students interviewed. Apparently, twenty-seven of thirty attenders were aware of the educational level attained by their mothers, whereas, eighteen of thirty non-attenders were aware of their mothers' educational attainment.

While the data do not reveal significance in the difference of attenders' and non-attenders' mothers' level of education, it might be pointed out that at least two-thirds of the attenders' mothers had attained twelve grades of
schooling. Only eight non-attenders indicated that their mothers had attained an equivalent level. It is also notable, in this same context, that twelve non-attenders did not know their mothers' level of schooling.

**TABLE XI**

**CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS REGARDING MOTHERS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mothers' Educational Level Expressed in Years</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 9.38 \quad P = .15 \]

Table XI, depicting the largest number of responses, alerts the researcher to the fact that the students in the study are more informed as to the educational level of their mothers than their fathers. Few students of either group were aware of their fathers' educational attainment. Since no significant differences were found in the educational level of the parents, the null hypothesis is accepted.
TABLE XII

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS REGARDING FATHERS' LEVEL OF EDUCATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fathers' Educational Level Expressed in Years</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>14</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 1.43 \quad p = .69 \]

**Null Hypothesis 4c**—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the personal-social factor of the number of student suspensions. A statistical significance at the .04 probability level resulted from the chi square analysis of the number of student suspensions. The data in Table XIII reflects the larger number of non-attending students who were suspended. Absences due to suspension were not tabulated as part of the total days absent during the first two quarters of the year under study. The results, as depicted in Table XIII, show that students who attend regularly receive fewer school suspensions. The possibility seems evident that suspension could produce indifference to school attendance. Community workers employed by the local school districts to help bring youngsters back to public school complain that the number of expelled students is both
astronomical and unjustifiable. Inasmuch as the probability level exceeds the requirements for statistical significance of .05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**TABLE XIII**

**CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS REGARDING SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive*</th>
<th>Negative*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[x^2 = 4.17; P = .04.\]

*Positive responses denote students stating "yes" to the question, "I have been suspended from school at some time." Negative responses denote a "no" answer to the same question.

Null Hypothesis 4d—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the personal-social factors of extracurricular activities in which students participate. A significant difference was found between students who attend regularly and are members of student organizations, and students who do not attend regularly and do not belong to student organizations. The information contained in Table XIV reflects responses to question number five. The question asked students was to determine if they were active in any school clubs or organizations. The data indicate
that students who are involved in school activities tend to be more regular in school attendance. Since a level of acceptable statistical significance was reached, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**TABLE XIV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS REGARDING CLUB MEMBERSHIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="chart.png" alt="Table" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$X^2 = 9.07; P = .002$.

**Null Hypothesis 4e**—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the school factors of friendship, teacher acceptance, scheduling of lunch period, treatment by classmates, and preferences in classes. Chi square analysis of student interview responses to questions nineteen through twenty-four reflected no statistically significant difference. These data are not presented in tabular form, since none approach significance and no patterns were noted. Since no significant difference was discovered, the null hypothesis is accepted.
Null Hypothesis 4f—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and non-attenders regarding student use of time. The data in Table XV represents question sixteen which states, "Do you spend most of your free time where you stay?" (The term "where you stay" was used rather than "where you live," because this is a colloquialism of the population in the study.) When compared, the resulting chi square scores was .002. The probability of any difference is very slight between the two groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE XV</th>
<th>CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS REGARDING TIME SPENT AT HOME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(x^2 = .002; \ p = 1.0.\)

On question fifteen, represented in Table XVI, the interviewer asked students if they stayed out late on school nights (at least 12:00 midnight). Question eighteen, as reflected in Table XVII, "Do you watch TV late at night? (at least until 12:00 midnight)," also was concerned with the use of time by the student participants.
TABLE XVI

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS REGARDING WHERE FREE TIME WAS SPENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$x^2=.002; P=.96.$

Since no significant differences were discovered between the student responses regarding use of time, the null hypothesis is accepted.

TABLE XVII

CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS REGARDING HOW FREE TIME WAS SPENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$x^2=.075; P=.78.$

Null Hypothesis 4g—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding student employment. Table XVIII
presents data on interview question nine concerning part-time employment. No difference was found between attenders who are employed part-time and non-attenders who are employed part-time, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

**TABLE XVIII**

**CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS REGARDING PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(x^2 = .000; P = 1.00\).

**Null Hypothesis 4h**—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding general attendance factors including transportation, clothing, friends, illness, weather, and encouragement from home. Table XIX reflects data collected on interview question seventeen. The null hypothesis is accepted.

**Null Hypothesis 4i**—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the household member(s) the student lives with. No missing observations were recorded; therefore
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors</th>
<th>Attenders</th>
<th>Non-Attenders</th>
<th>$x^2$</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Which of the following cause problems in attending school regularly?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble getting up in the morning</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble getting transportation to school</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't want to go</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody at home cares if you go to school</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No clothes to wear</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No friends at school</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.71</td>
<td>.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'm sick a lot</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't like bad weather</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have to help out at home</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the data presented in Table XX reflect responses from all student participants. There were no significant differences discovered between the groups compared. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**TABLE XX**

**CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS CONCERNING THE HOUSEHOLD MEMBER THE STUDENT LIVES WITH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Household Member</th>
<th>Single Parent</th>
<th>Natural Parent</th>
<th>Natural Parents</th>
<th>Guardian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 = 5.04; \ P = .168. \]

**Null Hypothesis 4j**—There will be no significant difference in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the siblings in the family. Table XXI presents data from question one, in which subjects were asked the number of brothers and sisters in the household. A heavy distribution of siblings is shown in families of two to six siblings for school attenders. The number of siblings in families of school attenders totals 122, whereas the number of siblings in families of non-attenders totals 94.
The significant probability level of .04 differentiates between school attenders and non-attenders. Since a significant level of difference was discovered, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**TABLE XXI**

**CHI SQUARE ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES OF THE STRUCTURED INTERVIEW OF NINTH GRADE SCHOOL ATTENDERS AND NON-ATTENDERS CONCERNING SIBLINGS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Siblings in Family</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attenders</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Attenders</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$x^2 = 16.12; P = .04$.

**Summary**

An examination of the mean scores of the responses to the Academic Self-Concept Scale, the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale, and the Student Aspirations Scale showed that no statistically significant differences existed between ninth grade student attenders and ninth grade student non-attenders. There were, however, several significantly different distributions discovered by using Chi Square analysis on the responses to the Structured Interview.

There was a significant difference discovered between the responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding school suspensions. Over 33 percent of school
non-attenders had been suspended, whereas less than 8 percent of school attenders had been suspended.

One of the significant findings of this study concerns the number of siblings in the family. Student responses indicated that school attenders had more siblings than did school non-attenders.

Finally, a significant difference was found regarding the factor of age. School non-attenders were found to be older than school attenders. The mean age for school non-attenders expressed in months was 16.06; that for attenders was 15.06. The age range for school attenders is from 176 months to 194 months.

Based on this study and, in fact, the entire accumulation of research reviewed, it would be difficult to sketch a profile of the student who is likely to be a non-attender. However, a cautiously derived and somewhat hazy image can be discerned. The student who is more likely to be a chronic absentee might

1. Be somewhat older than his classmates,
2. Have a slightly lower academic self-concept,
3. Not participate in school organizations or extracurricular activities,
4. Justify absenteeism with complaints about lack of clothes to wear, not wanting to go, and recurring illness,
5. Receive limited support from home and family.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


3. Neal, Pamela, "Compulsory Education: Keep, Change or Abolish?" April, 1975, ED 106914.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS,
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The problem of this study has been to determine the effect of academic self-concept, student aspiration, intellectual achievement responsibility, and certain other personal factors on the attendance patterns of selected ninth grade students. The specific purposes of this study were (1) to determine the academic self-concept, intellectual achievement responsibility, and aspirations of selected groups of school attenders and non-attenders, (2) to describe the personal-social characteristics of school attenders and non-attenders, and (3) to develop from data on all factors, a typical profile of conditions likely to result in high absenteeism and make recommendations for initial steps in remediation.

This study involved a review of the literature consisting of five sections. The sections were (1) Compulsory laws, (2) Factors influencing absenteeism, (3) Effect on the student, school, and community, (4) Role of school personnel, and (5) Programs to treat absenteeism. The
material reviewed in the search of literature included books, periodicals, reports, and microfiche.

The population of the study was sixty ninth grade students who were enrolled in a selected urban inner-city high school in North Central Texas during the first two quarters of the 1978-1979 academic school year. These ninth grade students were selected, based on certain attendance criteria, from all ninth grade students (in the school under study) who participated in the government subsidized free lunch program.

Thirty subjects were randomly selected from school attenders and thirty from school non-attenders. School attenders are defined as those ninth grade students on the government subsidized free lunch program who were absent no more than four days during the first two quarters of the 1978-1979 academic school year. School non-attenders were chosen using the same criteria with the exception that they had been absent thirty days or more during the same time period.

Four instruments were used in this study. They were the Academic Self-Concept Scale, the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale, and the Student Aspirations Scale. The fourth instrument, a Structured Interview, was a questionnaire developed with the advice of the director of the Department of Research and Evaluation of the school district under study and a member of the Office
of Research and Evaluation of the College of Education at North Texas State University.

After completion of all scales and interviews, the responses were transferred to Fortran sheets for key-punching into computer cards at the computer center at North Texas State University for data analysis. Hypotheses relative to basic comparisons were tested by the use of the analysis of variance. The responses on the hypotheses relating to the Structured Interview were subjected to the chi square analysis to determine if the group distribution of responses varied significantly.

Discussion of Findings

Statistical treatment of the data presented in Chapter IV comprised the bases for the rejection or retention of the null hypotheses. A null hypothesis was rejected when the probability level computed by the analysis of variance or the analysis of chi square was .05 or lower. In contrast, probability levels greater than .05 were considered insignificant, thereby precipitating the retention of the null hypotheses.

There were no significant differences concerning the Intellectual Achievement Responsibility Scale and the Student Aspirations Scale. Although no significant difference was found in the mean measures of the Academic Self-Concept Scale between school attenders and school
non-attenders, the probability level of .07 may be considered a trend level difference. The information gathered suggests the possibility that attenders experience a higher academic self-concept than do non-attenders.

The possibility is supported by Piaget (6) in his writings on mature levels of functioning. It is his belief that by taking a negative attitude towards school a student can rationalize that he does not achieve, not because he lacks ability, but rather because he is not interested enough to attend.

Bennings (1) suggests that a resurgence of interest in value clarification techniques exists in classrooms today. "In essence, the goal of value clarification is to help individuals feel better about themselves and to help them improve their self-concept" (1, p. 4). Paddy's (5) findings imply that attitude toward school is an important variable in affecting the self-concept achievement model.

Statistically significant findings were found in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the number of student suspensions. The responses obtained in this study reflect more suspensions evident in non-attending students. Neal (4) writes of complaints lodged against unjustified suspensions which lead to continued absenteeism. Kohler (3) suggests more effective direction and supervision as well as improved grievance procedures would decrease the number of suspensions.
Statistically significant differences were found in responses of participants concerning extracurricular activities. The pattern for sociologically-based research into school activities was established in the late 1940s with the publication of Havinghurst and Taba's (7) text on adolescent behavior. The authors indicated that "To achieve success in adolescent peer culture, a boy or girl must stay in school, be a reasonably good student, and take part in school activities. ... . In the process of adjusting in those ways, he would be nearing middle-class morality" (7, p. 36).

American schools have stressed extra and co-curricular activities as an integral part of the school program. Graham (2) points out that these activities were devised to make school interesting to youngsters. Results of this study are consistent with stated findings regarding student participation in extracurricular activities. A significant difference was found which favored students who attend regularly and are members of student organizations. Students who do not attend regularly tend not to belong to student organizations.

Finally, a significant difference was found in responses of school attenders and school non-attenders regarding the siblings in the family. Student responses show that families of student attenders have more siblings than do non-attenders. It seems possible that several
siblings in the household may influence regular attendance based on findings in this study.

As a result of the statistical analysis and subsequent retention or rejection of the null hypotheses, the findings of this study may, therefore, be summarized as follows.

1. Ninth grade school attenders are significantly younger than ninth grade non-attenders.

2. Based on the instruments used, students exhibited no significant differences in the areas of academic self-concept, student aspirations for wealth, fame, occupation and education, and of the belief in one's control over academic and intellectual accomplishments.

3. Ninth grade school attenders had significantly higher numbers of siblings than did non-attenders.

4. School attenders are significantly more involved in school organizations than are students who do not attend regularly.

5. There is a significantly higher frequency in the number of student suspensions among ninth grade non-attenders.

6. No significant differences were found in student use of time, student employment, and general attendance factors.

7. No significant differences were found in the school factors of friendship, teacher acceptance, scheduling of
lunch period, treatment by classmates and preferences in classes between ninth grade attenders and non-attenders.

Conclusions

Based on analysis of the findings of this study and within the limitations of the population described in the procedure section, the following conclusions were formulated.

1. Students who have been retained, started school later, or for some reason are older than their classmates, are more likely to attend school irregularly.

2. Educators cannot expect to find the major causes of student absenteeism to be academic self-concept, intellectual achievement responsibility, or student aspiration.

3. Family size may be an important consideration for educators to investigate when working with school non-attenders.

4. School attenders can be expected to be actively involved in the co-curricular elements of the school program.

5. Higher rates of student suspensions are more likely to increase attendance problems rather than reduce them.

6. How students use their time outside the school day is not likely to be the crucial factor in school attendance.

7. While students often complain about schedules, teacher selection, and proximity of friends, it is not
likely that changes in these factors would influence student attendance.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based upon the limitations, summary, findings, and conclusions of the study.

1. In all matters of promotion, retention, or late school beginnings for students, it is recommended that educators take into consideration the possible effect on school attendance of disparate age with classmates.

2. It is recommended that a strong and varied school activity program be offered to students, and that school communication be developed to acquaint the entire population with available activities.

3. It is recommended that special classroom situations with controlled environment be endorsed as a substitute for suspension from the school premises.

4. It is recommended that attempts be made by school personnel to learn the true reasons for student discontent with class assignments before making scheduling changes.

5. It is recommended that school personnel develop a screening program designed to detect students who (1) are older than their classmates, (2) have small families, and (3) do not participate in school activities. Special programs should be developed and designated school personnel be assigned to follow progress and offer assistance.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


4. Neal, Pamela, "Compulsory Education: Keep, Change or Abolish?" April, 1975, ED 106914.


ACADEMIC SELF-CONCEPT SCALE

Directions: You will answer questions 1 to 11. The questions you will be asked are to find out what you think about school. If your answer to a question is yes, mark the letter A on your answer sheet. If your answer is no, mark the letter B on your answer sheet. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. Just give the answer which seems to tell how you generally feel.

Below is an example. Do not mark the example on your answer sheet.

**Example**

Do you like school?
A. Yes  B. No

If you like school, you would answer yes, and you would mark the letter A on your answer sheet.

A  B

If you do not like school, you would answer no, and you would mark the letter B on your answer sheet.

A  B

1. Is school work fairly easy for you?
A. Yes  B. No

2. Do you often get discouraged in school?
A. Yes  B. No

3. Do you often have trouble doing assignments?
A. Yes  B. No

4. Can you give a good report in front of the class?
A. Yes  B. No

5. Can you get good grades if you want to?
A. Yes  B. No

6. Are you proud of your schoolwork?
A. Yes  B. No
7. Do you forget most of what you learn in school?  
   A. Yes  B. No

8. Do your teachers usually like your schoolwork?  
   A. Yes  B. No

9. Does your schoolwork make you feel that you are not smart enough?  
   A. Yes  B. No

10. Are you good in your schoolwork?  
    A. Yes  B. No

11. Is it hard for you to talk in front of the class?  
    A. Yes  B. No
THE INTELLECTUAL ACHIEVEMENT RESPONSIBILITY SCALE

Directions: Below are some situations in which you commonly find yourself. We are interested in how you would usually respond to these situations. For each situation there are two choices. For each situation, make one choice (either a or b) that expresses the way you would usually feel.

1. If a teacher passes you to the next grade, would it probably be
   ___ a. because she liked you, or
   ___ b. because of the work you did?

2. When you do well on a test at school, is it more likely to be
   ___ a. because you studied for it, or
   ___ b. because the test was especially easy?

3. When you have trouble understanding something at school, is it usually
   ___ a. because the teacher didn't explain it clearly, or
   ___ b. because you didn't listen carefully?

4. When you read a story and can't remember much of it, is it usually
   ___ a. because the story wasn't well written, or
   ___ b. because you weren't interested in the story?

5. Suppose your parents say you are doing well in school. Is this likely to happen
   ___ a. because your school work is good, or
   ___ b. because they are in a good mood?

6. Suppose you did better than usual in a subject at school. Would it probably happen
   ___ a. because you tried harder, or
   ___ b. because someone helped you?
7. When you lose at a game of cards or checkers, does it usually happen
___a. because the other player is good at the game, or
___b. because you don't play well?

8. Suppose a person doesn't think you are very bright or clever
___a. can you make him change his mind if you try, or
___b. are there some people who will think you're not very bright no matter what you do?

9. If you solved a puzzle quickly, is it
___a. because it wasn't a very hard puzzle, or
___b. because you worked on it carefully?

10. If a boy or girl tells you that you are dumb, is it more likely they say that
___a. because they are mad at you, or
___b. because what you did really wasn't very bright?

11. Suppose you study to become a teacher, scientist, or doctor, and you fail. Do you think this would happen
___a. because you didn't work hard enough, or
___b. because you needed some help, and other people didn't give it to you?

12. When you learn something quickly in school, is it usually
___a. because you paid close attention, or
___b. because the teacher explained it clearly?

13. If a teacher says to you, "your work is fine," is it
___a. something teachers usually say to encourage pupils, or
___b. because you did a good job?

14. When you find it hard to work arithmetic or math problems at school, is it
___a. because you didn't study well enough before you tried them,
___b. because the teacher gave problems that were too hard?
15. When you forget something you heard in class, is it
   a. because the teacher didn't explain it very well, or
   b. because you didn't try very hard to remember?

16. Suppose you weren't sure about the answer to a question your teacher asked you, but your answer turned out to be right. Is it likely to happen
   a. because she wasn't as particular as usual, or
   b. because you gave the best answer you could think of?

17. When you read a story and remember most of it, is it usually
   a. because you were interested in the story, or
   b. because the story was well written

18. If your parents tell you you're acting silly and not thinking clearly, is it more likely to be
   a. because of something you did, or
   b. because they happen to be feeling cranky?

19. When you don't do well on a test at school, is it
   a. because the test was especially hard, or
   b. because you didn't study for it?

20. When you win at a game of cards or checkers, does it happen
   a. because you play real well, or
   b. because the other person doesn't play well?

21. If people think you're bright or clever, is it
   a. because they happen to like you, or
   b. because you usually act that way?

22. If a teacher didn't pass you to the next grade, would it probably be
   a. because she "had it in for you," or
   b. because your school work wasn't good enough?
23. Suppose you don't do as well as usual in a subject at school. Would this probably happen

___ a. because you weren't as careful as usual, or
___ b. because somebody bothered you and kept you from working?

24. If a boy or girl tells you that you are bright, is it usually

___ a. because you thought up a good idea, or
___ b. because they like you?

25. Suppose you become a famous teacher, scientist or doctor. Do you think this would happen

___ a. because other people helped you when you needed it, or
___ b. because you worked very hard?

26. Suppose your parents say you aren't doing well in your school work. Is this likely to happen more

___ a. because your work isn't very good, or
___ b. because you are feeling cranky?

27. Suppose you are showing a friend how to play a game and he has trouble with it. Would that happen

___ a. because he wasn't able to understand how to play, or
___ b. because you couldn't explain it well?

28. When you find it easy to work arithmetic or math problems at school, is it usually

___ a. because the teacher gave you especially easy problems, or
___ b. because you studied your book well before you tried them?

29. When you remember something you heard in class, is it usually

___ a. because you tried hard to remember, or
___ b. because the teacher explained it well?
30. If you can't work a puzzle, is it more likely to happen
   ____a. because you are not especially good at working
   puzzles, or
   ____b. because the instructions weren't written clearly?

31. If your parents tell you that you are bright and
    clever, is it more likely
   ____a. because they are feeling good, or
   ____b. because of something you did?

32. Suppose you are explaining how to play a game to a
    friend and he learns quickly. Would that happen more
    often
   ____a. because you explained it well, or
   ____b. because he was able to understand it?

33. Suppose you're not sure about the answer to a question
    your teacher asks you and the answer you give turns out
    to be wrong. Is it likely to happen
   ____a. because she was more particular than usual, or
   ____b. because you answered too quickly?

34. If a teacher says to you "Try to do better," would
    it be
   ____a. because this is something she might say to get
    pupils to try harder, or
   ____b. because your work wasn't as good as usual?
STUDENT ASPIRATIONS SCALE

The questions you will be asked are to find out what you would like to happen in the future. Listen to each question carefully and then mark the letter on your sheet which is the same as the letter in front of the answer you choose. Remember that for some questions there are two choices; A or B. For other questions there are three choices; A, B, or C.

1. When you grow up, how rich would you like to be?
   A. Not very rich  B. Rich  C. Very rich

2. Do you wish you were richer than you are now?
   A. Yes  B. No

3. How much do you care about being richer?
   A. A little  B. A lot

4. When you grow up, do you think that you will be richer than your parents?
   A. Yes  B. No

5. When you grow up, how famous or well-known would you like to be?
   A. Not very famous  B. Famous  C. Very famous

6. When you grow up, would you like to be a doctor, lawyer, professor, scientist, or head of a company?
   A. Yes  B. No

7. When you grow up, do you want to have a better job than your father or mother has?
   A. Yes  B. No
8. When you get a job, how good a worker do you **want** to be?
   A. As good a worker as most
   B. A better worker than most

9. When you get a job, how good a worker do you **think** you will be?
   A. As good a worker as most
   B. A better worker than most

10. When you grow up, do you **want** to go to college?
    A. Yes                B. No

11. Do you **think** that you will go to college?
    A. Yes                B. No                C. Maybe
STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

ID# __________________________ Name __________________________

Age __________________________

1. You live in a household with ________ brothers and ________ sisters.
   (number) (number)

2. You stay with:
   ___ a. single parent
   ___ b. natural parent and step-parent
   ___ c. natural parents
   ___ d. guardian

3. Last year of school completed by adults in household.
   ________ mother
   ________ father
   ________ guardian

4. I have been suspended from school at some time.
   Yes ________ No ________

   If the answer to the above question is yes, how many times have you been suspended?

5. Are you active in any school clubs or organizations?
   Yes ________ No ________

6. Are you a member of any of the following?
   Yes ________ No ________
Please check the groups you belong to.

_____Band  _____Cheerleaders  _____Loyal Parrot Club
_____ROTC  _____Science Club  _____Health Career
_____Chorus  _____Spanish Club  _____Charm Club
_____Drill Team  _____Homemaking Club  _____Math Club

7. Do you participate on any school athletic teams?

   Yes  No

8. Place a check by the school athletic teams on which you participate.

   _____Football  _____Volleyball
   _____Basketball  _____Baseball
   _____Tennis  _____Track

9. Do you work on a part-time job?  Yes  No

10. How many hours per week do you work?

    _____Less than 5  _____5-10  _____10-20
    _____20-30  _____30-40  _____over 40

11. If you did not work, would you be able to get enough money to go to school?

    Yes  No

12. Do you give part of the money you earn to support your family?

    Yes  No

13. Do you work as late as 11:00 P.M. on school nights?

    Yes  No

14. Could your family get by without you working?

    Yes  No
15. Do you stay out late on school nights? (At least 12:00 midnight)
   Yes No

16. Do you spend most of your free time where you stay?
   Yes No

17. Which of the following cause problems in attending school regularly?
   Trouble getting up in the morning Yes No
   Trouble getting transportation to school Yes No
   Don't want to go Yes No
   Nobody at home cares if you go to school Yes No
   No clothes to wear Yes No
   No friends at school Yes No
   I'm sick a lot Yes No
   I don't like bad weather Yes No
   I have to help out at home Yes No
   Please explain

18. Do you watch TV late at night? (At least until 12:00 midnight) Yes No

19. Does your best friend go to this school? Yes No

20. Is your best friend absent from school as often as one day a week? Yes No

21. I like the teachers I have in class. Yes No

22. I like my lunch period. Yes No

23. Everyone at school treats me well. Yes No

24. I like all the classes I am taking. Yes No
   If the answer is no, which classes do you like?
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


Articles


Davis, Dick, "One Solution to the Inner-City Attendance Problem," Phi Delta Kappan, 56 (April, 1975), 560.


Musa, Kathleen E. and Mary Ellen Roach, "Adolescent Appearance and Self-Concept," Adolescence, 8 (Fall, 1973), 385-393.


Sparks, Dennis, "Optional Programs: A Personal View of ALPHA," Educational Leadership, 32 (November, 1974), 120-123.


Reports


ERIC Documents


______________ , "Rainy Days and Mondays: An Analysis of Factors Related to Absence From School," Center for the Study of Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland, November, 1973, ED 086927.


Neal, Pamela, "Compulsory Education: Keep, Change or Abolish?" April, 1975, ED 106914.


Unpublished Materials