

A CASE STUDY OF THREE STATES IDENTIFIED  
AS HAVING A HIGH-QUALITY STATE  
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

By

ROY VIRGIL PETERS, JR.

Bachelor of Science  
University of Oklahoma  
Norman, Oklahoma  
1964

Master of Science  
Oklahoma State University  
Stillwater, Oklahoma  
1972

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College  
of the Oklahoma State University  
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Thesis Approved:

*Melvin D. Miller*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Thesis Adviser

*Ernie W. Suggs*  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Ann Benson*  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Kenneth St. Clair*  
\_\_\_\_\_

*Norman N. Durham*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dean of the Graduate College

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Several influences have combined to draw attention to state systems of vocational education. The release of the report A Nation at Risk (1983) focused attention upon public education throughout the country. Calls for educational reform have prompted governors, legislatures, and educators to hold forums and conferences to discuss the specific methods that can be used to improve the quality of secondary and post-secondary education. In turn, selected scholars have focused new attention upon the vocational education component in the educational system (Sherman, 1983; Silberman, 1984).

The Vocational Education Act of 1963 (P.L. 83-210) called for the creation of a single state agency to administer vocational education. However, while Congress specified that the states shall designate a State Board for Vocational Education, it did not specify the governance structure that should carry out the Board's policies.

Gentry (1976) found that a wide variety of methods of compliance are employed among the states. This variety of institutional arrangements makes the reform of vocational education somewhat difficult because no single set of recommendations will apply to all states' systems. In addition, diversification of state governance structures may be an aspect of the variability in quality among state systems of vocational education.



A second factor believed to influence the quality of state systems of vocational education is state leadership. Benson (1978) states that the state agency plays ". . . a decisive role in shaping the course of future events by providing the professional competence and leadership essential to the continuous growth and development of vocational education" (p. 1). More specifically, each state has a designated state director of vocational education who is responsible for oversight of vocational education in that state together with the administration of the federal funds allocated for vocational education. Leadership abilities of the state directors could be a variable which could serve to explain variations in the quality of state systems of vocational education.

Although the importance of governance structures and state leadership in vocational education has been recognized in the literature, there are few studies that describe the additional elements of a quality state system. A case study analysis could identify factors that are associated with quality state-level systems of vocational education.

#### Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study is that there are no nationally accepted criteria for assessing the quality of state-level systems of vocational education. A number of studies have identified aspects of quality in specific state systems; however, contemporary vocational education researchers have not attempted to identify aspects of quality that are shared between or among state systems.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to develop a description of states having high quality vocational systems. The three states studied were selected on the basis of the perceptions of the state directors of vocational education. The case study method was utilized because it allowed for the collection and the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data, and was better suited for the task of investigation and discovery than conventional quantitative methods alone.

### Research Questions

The research questions answered were:

1. What are the identifiable factors at the state level that influence the quality of a state's vocational education system?
2. How do these factors interact with each other to influence the quality of a state's vocational education system?
3. What factors have dominant influences in determining the quality of a state's vocational system?
4. What influencing factors are unique to a particular state in determining the quality of a state's vocational system?

### Assumptions

The following assumptions were made regarding the study:

1. In lieu of formal criteria, collectively the state directors of vocational education are able to identify high-quality, state-level systems.

2. Selected administrators in each state are, by virtue of their experience and responsibility, able to assess reliably the overall quality of their respective systems.

3. Case study interviews provide adequate information for purposes of description.

#### Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the terms "vocational education" and "vocational-technical education" are used interchangeably.

#### Limitations

Limitations of this study were both the number of state systems investigated and the focus of the investigations. Case study methodologies were applied to only three states. In each instance, the state system investigated was rated as exemplifying highest quality. No attempt was made to study those state systems of lesser quality, and no data are available to compare and contrast highest quality with lesser quality.

Furthermore, state directors of vocational education asked to nominate quality state systems of vocational education were given no criteria to do so. Their judgments were made subjectively and do not represent a formal consensus on the definition of high quality state systems. A last limitation was that only three administrators in each of the three most frequently nominated state systems were selected for detailed interviews. The interview dialogue with nine individuals and the statistical reports from their respective states define the total body of data relevant to this investigation.

### Significance of the Study

There is limited vocational education research that investigates the factors that account for high quality state systems of vocational education. The present study is the only investigation of its type based on research literature of vocational education. This study will answer questions about factors that determine the quality of state-level operations and will provide a much-needed addition to the professional literature.

In addition, state directors should gain a clearer understanding of those factors that might be manipulated to improve system quality. As a result, all vocational educators and clients might eventually benefit as the findings of this study are incorporated into state-level operations.

### Organization of the Study

Chapter I is an introduction to the study. The remainder of the study is presented in four chapters. Chapter II is a review of the literature relevant to the study. The procedures of the study are presented in Chapter III. In Chapter IV, the findings are presented. Chapter V includes the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this review was to present an overview of the literature pertinent to this study. The review of the literature consists of two primary parts: the review relative to the case study approach and the review relative to the quality factors for state vocational education systems.

#### Case Study Methodology

This section of the literature review addresses the rationale, the procedures, and the limitations of case study methodology.

#### Rationale

There are several definitions for case study methodology (Anderson, 1975; Franklin and Osborne, 1971; Spierer, 1980; Stake, 1978; and Wilson, 1979). Spierer (1980) defines case study methodology as follows:

. . . an intensive, detailed analysis and description of a single organism, institution, or phenomena in the context of its environment. In other words, it is a way to describe and analyze, for example, some vocational education program, school, or policy in comprehensive terms with its idiosyncracies and in its complexity, often as it unfolds over time (p. 1).

Wilson (1979) and Stake (1978) suggest case study methodology can be used to describe and analyze any entity in its entirety and

complexity and does not limit application to a program, school, or policy. Consequently, case study methodology provides the means by which more insight can be had into vocational programs or vocational education systems. This, in turn, results in policy development which ultimately provides improved delivery of services (Spirer, 1980).

According to McKinney (1985), case study methodology

. . . is underutilized in vocational education research. Case studies offer so much potential for explaining the 'why' in addition to the 'what' usually reported from using methodologies congruent with the dominate vocational education research and evaluation paradigm.

Spirer (1980) also writes in support of the recent and rapid change in the status of case study methodology.

While the case study has been used extensively in the medical, legal, and journalistic fields, the social sciences (except anthropology and branches of sociology) have relegated it to a lower status than other research designs primarily because of the lack of control groups and perceived limits in generalizability. Now, however, the case study is being viewed as a way to understand the complexity of a program and its parts. It deals with information about a particular program in a complex, holistic way that reflects the life of that program (p. 13).

Additional support for case study methodology can be gleaned from McCaslin (1978). The author cautions against those individuals stating the need for "hard" data and discrediting "soft" data. He warns that ". . . people often fail to realize there is bad hard data as well as good soft data. Measurement through numbers alone is not the only way to extend or solidify our understanding of vocational education" (p. 6).

#### Case Study Methodology Procedures

A number of alternative procedures for conducting case study research are suggested (Borg and Gall, 1983; Issac and Michael, 1971;

Fehrenbacher, Owens, and Huenn, 1978; and Van Dalen, 1962). However, Spirer (1980) provides the most detailed suggestions. She proposes that the case study method advances through three distinct stages. Within each stage there are from three to six steps. Spirer's (1980) stages and steps in case study methodology are as follows:

#### Pre-Fieldwork Stage

Six steps must be taken prior to data collection. Spirer's (1980) six steps are:

Step One	Setting Boundaries
Step Two	Determining the Unit of Analysis
Step Three	Selecting a Site(s)
Step Four	Establishing Initial Contacts
Step Five	Developing Data Collection Systems
Step Six	Organizing Data (p. 27)

In step one, the broad research question(s) is identified and limited. One or more questions may be studied in great depth or several questions in less depth. During this stage several "experts" should be involved as there will be several tradeoffs dealing with breadth versus depth. Determining the unit of analysis, step two, involves the selection of the "thing" being studied, such as school districts, individuals, or state systems of vocational education. (Spirer, 1980).

The third step, selecting a site(s), involves the decision of the sampling method to be used. According to Spirer (1980) a variation of random or purposive generally will serve the purpose of the researcher. Once the site(s) has been selected, the initial contact must be established. During this fourth step, approval must be gained to conduct the research, and the purpose of the research should be explained to the participants of the study. During the fifth step,

data collection procedures are finalized. In addition to selecting the actual procedures, decisions are made regarding the situations or persons on which data will be collected. It is recommended that three systematic observation methods be used in a case study, i.e., observing, interviewing, and unobtrusive data gathering. Through these methods one can confirm or contradict other findings (triangulation). Often this will lead the study to other areas of inquiry (Spirer, 1980).

Step six of the pre-fieldwork stage is data organization. The system of organization should be practical, accessible, cost-effective, easy to implement, and time efficient (Spirer, 1980).

#### Fieldwork Stage

Spirer's (1980) stage two for case study methodology is the fieldwork consisting of three steps. These are:

Step Seven	Staff Training
Step Eight	Logistics of Field Operations
Step Nine	Data Collection (p. 47)

Case study methods generally require that staff be trained in the background and purpose of the study, qualitative methods, and the procedures to be used in the research. In addition, staff should be given the opportunity to participate in interview sessions so each session will be consistent among interviewers. During step eight, the logistics of fieldwork operations, such details as scheduling, selection of interviewees, recording responses, and supply acquisition are managed. Data collection will often occur through systematic observation methods--interviewing, observing, and gathering data unobtrusively. During this step, it is important to listen well, to



record and keep track of the information provided, and to probe for additional information (Spirer, 1980).

### Analysis, Verification, and Synthesis Stage

The final stage of the case study method involves the analysis, verification, and synthesis of the data collected (Spirer, 1980).

Three steps are involved in this stage:

Step Ten	Analyzing Data
Step Eleven	Reporting the Findings
Step Twelve	Utilizing the Case Study Findings (p. 61)

Data analysis in case study methodology is an ongoing activity. Data are continuously triangulated to accurately reflect what is actually going on at the site. The findings may be tested for their accuracy by asking interviewees to review case study narratives. After the data analysis has been completed, the findings of the research are reported. The report must contain several key points such as site descriptions, limitations, and conclusions and/or recommendations (Spirer, 1980).

Step twelve, utilizing the case study findings, is an aspect of the research that should be considered throughout the study. The researcher must have decided for whom the findings are intended, how the material will be presented, and the most appropriate methods for dissemination of the study results (Spirer, 1980).

### Limitations of Case Study Methodology

Case study methodology does have limitations (Spirer, 1980). Although they appear to be simple to conduct, case studies must be logical and relevant. The interviewer must know how to interview and

must also be able to retrieve the data and organize it objectively. The methodology is only as good as the researcher who applies it (Schwandt, 1982).

A second limitation of case study methodology is length. The case study narrative is generally long as a result of the researcher attempting to capture the entirety and complexity of the entity being studied. Consequently, case studies require a long time to read and are often given a low priority among other demands on a reader's time (Spirer, 1980). Associated with the length of a case study is the difficulty in matching information to readers:

The logic of writing a case study may not match the logic of usefulness to the reader. Any given reader will want more detail about perspectives and actions of particular kinds of actors (usually people in his/her own role) that would make sense in the overall case study. An inevitable lack of detail comes from the difficulty of having a balanced case study focus sufficiently on the reader's role (Wilson, 1979, p. 452).

Issac and Michael (1971) document two additional limitations of case study research. These are vulnerability to subjective bias and limitation in representability. Subjective interpretation is influencing the outcome to the extent that ". . . selective judgments rule certain data in or out, or assign a high or low value to their significance, or place them in one context rather than another" (p. 20). Limitation of representability, or lack of generalizability, is the result of the focus on only a few units. Issac and Michael (1971) further suggest that case study methodology does not ". . . allow valid generalizations to the population from which their units came until the appropriate follow-up research is accomplished focusing on specific hypotheses and using proper sampling methods" (p. 20).

governments, and the agencies of the executive branch; (b) state councils on vocational-technical education; (c) state governors and legislatures; (d) state boards of education and vocational-technical education; (e) state agencies administering or providing comprehensive education, higher education, and teacher education; (f) chief state school officers; (g) informal advisory committees, local advisory committees, organized social/political groups, and the public at large; and (h) administrators' and teachers' professional associations.

Internal influences are a second component in the state systems model of vocational education. State directors' analyses of internal influence focused upon the individuals who had worked within their respective systems and events that they had participated in over time. Much less influence was attributed to other groups or organized activities (Burchinal, Galloway, Fletcher, and Athen, 1986). The common elements that tied this component together centered around leadership and management characteristics (Bennis and Nanus, 1985; Peters and Waterman, 1982). Internal influence includes (a) management styles of past and present directors; (b) independent or personal priorities of directors and supervisors; (c) the rate of turnover among directors and manager/administrators; and (d) characteristics of state agency management teams (Burchinal, Galloway, Fletcher, and Athen, 1986).

The operations of the state agency play an important part in the directors' informal model of state systems' operations. Agency operations coordinate the functions of divisions and units within state agencies of vocational education and have important effects upon

the other major components in state systems. Reciprocally, the other major components in state systems have an extremely powerful impact upon state agency operations (Burchinal, Galloway, Fletcher, and Athen, 1986). Once again, however, there is very little literature in vocational education that describes this feedback relationship, and some of the most appropriate studies come from fields outside of vocational education (Tannenbaum, Margulies, Massarik, and Associates, 1985). The directors attributed significance to such agency operations or among events as (a) the methods by which program supervisors are organized (by occupational area or by level of institution for example); (b) the role played by program evaluation within the system (compliance or program improvement for example); (c) directors' and managers' authority over hiring, firing, salaries, purchasing, in and out of state travel, and employees' duties; (d) the role of the state agency, managers, and supervisors in the delivery of in-service training to teachers and/or administrators; and (e) the agency's time, manpower, and money commitment to student organizations.

The last major component of the directors' informal systems model consisted of state and local programs. These may be produced and sustained by interactions among the other three components, but their feedback has enormous power within a state system. Tuttle (1987) singled-out Oklahoma's area vo-tech schools as a major source of influence upon Oklahoma's state agency and external factors. He also mentioned other programs having the potential for similar influence. These were (a) comprehensive high school vocational-technical programs; (b) post-secondary vocational-technical programs;

agency for higher education; (c) an agency for elementary and secondary schools, an agency for vocational education, and a state coordinating or governing agency for higher education; and (d) an agency for elementary and secondary schools and for individual institutions of higher education with no statewide governing body (p. 2).

This apparent order is complicated by a study by Faddis, Struck, and Newton (1986). They found that 39 states were governed by the state board of education with nine states having a separate board especially for vocational education. One state was governed by a university board of regents and one state was in transition to a state board of education governance structure.

Many educators refer to "systems" of education. However, few would agree on a substantive definition when using that term. A simple definition drawn from the theory of management suggests that "a system may be defined as an array of components designed to achieve an objective according to plan" (Johnson and Rosenzweg, 1963, p. 14). Informal discussions with incumbent and past state directors regarding systems of vocational education disclosed general agreement on a four-component state system model. The four components are external influences, internal influences, state agency operations, and state and local program influences (Burchinal, Galloway, Fletcher, and Athen, 1986).

The most significant of the components in the state system model of vocational technical education appears to be external influences. These are described by Evans and Herr (1978). Elements of external influence include (a) the three branches of the state and federal

1985). First, the specific indicators of quality associated with this definition vary with school unit and program and are likely to change over time. This is because specific indicators of quality ". . . are relative, judgmental, and subject to change as the scope of the individual provider's responsibility changes" (p. 23). The second shortcoming is that this definition only addresses specific school units or programs of instruction rather than state systems of vocational education.

A study by Woodruff (1978) of the organization and governance of state and local agencies and delivery systems for vocational education concluded that the United States did not have a vocational education system. Instead, vocational education is fragmented into individual systems serving individual states and territories.

Each of these systems is characterized by a relatively unique mix of legislative provisions, state and local agency governance structures, funding policies, and institutional types which constitute the 'interacting and interdependent' components of each state and territorial vocational education system.

Federal legislation and policy is the major interacting and interdependent component of the nation's vocational education programs that is common to all state and territorial vocational education systems (page xxv).

Gentry (1976) referenced earlier studies which suggest that vocational education may not be as fragmented as one might fear. He reported that four different administrative organization structures were employed by states to meet the federal mandate to designate or create a sole state agency responsible for the administration of vocational education. The four were (a) one agency for all levels of education; (b) an agency for elementary and secondary schools, including vocational education and a state coordinating or governing

Spirer (1980) adopts another interpretation of generalizability. She proposes that the limitation can be overcome if the case study provides enough detail and description about the uniqueness of the case site so that the user can determine the differences and similarities between the case study and his/her own site.

In review, five factors may be limitations on case study methodology. These are an assumption that case studies require little or no methodological rigor and relevance; the length of case study narrative; a discrepancy between the written case study and information deemed useful by the reader; the vulnerability to subjective bias; and the limitations in representability and generalization.

#### Quality Factors in Systems of Vocational Education

Most of the literature that addresses the quality of vocational education does so regarding the quality of instructional programs versus that of state-level vocational systems (World-Wide Education and Research Institute, 1982; Hobson, 1983; Southern Regional Education Board, 1983; and Wentling, 1985). Program quality in vocational education has traditionally been defined (a) in terms of the products or outputs of a program (e.g., training-related jobs obtained by former students or satisfied employers); and (b) in terms of the process employed within a program (e.g., time spent on learning tasks or skill contents addressed) (Campbell and Panzano, 1985). Although this definition has gained acceptance in vocational education, it has at least two shortcomings (Campbell and Panzano,

(c) industry-specific training, and (d) state agency-sponsored in-service training for teachers and administrators.

In summary, the state director's model of a system of vocational technical education consists of four components with numerous linkages and interactions between and among the components. McNett (1984) stated that vocational technical systems are ". . . highly decentralized and decisions are made at many different points in state and local committees . . . (making) vocational education a confusing mixture of programs and governance . . ." (page 33). This decentralization and potential confusion demand a powerful intellectual framework if only to avoid the fragmentation of perspectives that has injured investigations into the quality of education and educational reform in the past (Feldman, 1985).

#### Chapter Summary

This chapter presented a review of literature relevant to this study. The rationale, procedures, and limitations of case study methodology were first presented. Case study methodology was viewed by several researchers as a means of capturing and understanding the complexity of the entity under investigation. A 3-stage, 12-step procedure was presented as a method for conducting case studies from beginning to end. As a caveat, five limiting factors of case study methodology were reviewed in detail.

The other primary part of this chapter addressed quality factors in systems of vocational education. Most of the literature dealt with the quality of vocational education in terms of programs rather than state-level systems. Selected references suggest that organization



and governance of state systems of vocational education influence system quality or the lack thereof. A theoretical model informally developed among state directors further suggested a framework for studying quality in a state-system context. In summary, those factors that accounted for quality in state systems of vocational education were open to speculation.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURES

#### Introduction

The purpose of the study was to develop a description of states having high quality vocational systems. The three states studied were selected on the basis of the perceptions of the state directors of vocational education. The research questions which guided the study were:

1. What are the identifiable factors at the state level that influence the quality of a state's vocational education system?
2. How do these factors interact with each other to influence the quality of a state's vocational education system?
3. What factors have dominant influence in determining the quality of a state's vocational system?
4. What influencing factors are unique to a particular state in determining the quality of a state's vocational system?

This chapter describes the procedures for conducting the study. The specific sections are the research methodology; development of the case studies; implementation of the case studies; and analysis, verification, and synthesis of the case studies.

## Research Methodology

Case study methods were employed in this study. Factors associated with high quality state systems of vocational education are widely speculated upon but conspicuously undocumented. Intensive, in-depth analyses of quality state systems of vocational education afforded through case study methods offered a promising means for pioneering new ground.

### Development of the Case Study

Procedures followed incorporate several of the steps in the pre-fieldwork stage of case study methodology (Spirer, 1980). These include setting boundaries, determining the unit of analysis, selecting the states to be studied, establishing initial contacts, developing data collection procedures, and organizing data.

#### Setting Boundaries

Four major questions were established in setting the boundaries for this study. Each question served as a focal point for issues to be raised and information sought in completing the case study interviews. In keeping with the purposes of this study, the research questions focused on determining state-level factors which influence vocational education.

#### Determining the Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis in this study is the state system of vocational education. With quality vocational systems the focus of the study, the unit of analysis logically must be the state system

itself. The state system of vocational education lends itself well to specific data collection and analysis techniques and is a rich source of data in direct relation to the research questions.

#### Selection of States

Selection of the states to be studied began with a memorandum which was sent to the State Director of Vocational Education in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and 5 trust territories by the Executive Director of the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Education to eliminate any bias regarding the researcher's own state. Each state director was asked to list the three states or territories other than their own which have the "best" vocational education systems. The memorandum clearly stated that the list was to be based solely on the perception of the state director. No criteria were specified to guide the directors in making their decisions. In essence, the reputational method (Hunter, 1953; Freeman, 1968) was used in the determination of the states to be included in the study. Instrumentation used to determine which states to include in the study is found in Appendix A.

#### Establishing Initial Contacts

Initial contacts were made directly by the researcher with the state directors in two of the three states identified as having quality systems of vocational education. These contacts were made by telephone in February of 1987. In regard to the third state to be included in the study, the researcher and the state director are one and the same. The decision was made that the deputy director in this

state would act as director for the purposes of the study. That deputy director was asked to take the role in February of 1987.

In each instance, the researcher reviewed how the particular state was selected, explained the purpose of the study, and solicited participation of the director, director emeritus, and occupational program supervisor. In addition, assurances were made to protect the confidentiality of individual participants; however, it was emphasized that the data would be synthesized and reported on a state-by-state basis. Throughout the initial contacts, the researcher repeatedly entertained questions regarding the study and experienced no reluctance by state directors to participate.

All individuals participating in the study were contacted by telephone or in person. The previously discussed points were reviewed for the director, director emeritus, and occupational program supervisor in each state. Follow-up letters were sent to confirm the purpose of the study, the format of the interview, and the details of arrangements for the interview, except in the researcher's own state where contacts were made personally. A list of the individuals interviewed is provided in Appendix B.

#### Developing Data Collection Procedures

The primary data collection procedure was an interview. Kerlinger (1973) states the interview ". . . is perhaps the most ubiquitous method of obtaining information from people" and ". . . probably man's oldest and most often used device for obtaining information" (pp. 479-480). Three separate interview schedules were prepared. The first was used with the director emeritus and contained

18 questions. The second was used with the incumbent state director (the deputy director in the researcher's own state) and contained 38 questions. The third interview schedule was used for the occupational program supervisor and had 28 questions. Additional follow-up questions were often asked during all nine interviews. Considerable additional information was obtained by the utilization of follow-up or probing questions. Each interview schedule contained one common question for all individuals (Question One). The state director and director emeritus were asked nine overlapping questions--questions which would provide information from two sources. The state director and the occupational program supervisor were asked 28 overlapping questions. This procedure provided a method to obtain two viewpoints to the same question.

The essence of the interview is the development of the questions. Question development was accomplished through a literature review, an informal focus group, and a suggested conceptual framework for studying quality systems of vocational education.

Overall, the literature review was of limited value in identifying quality factors in state systems of vocational education. However, the diversity and change in governance literature provided a basis for a series of questions on governance.

The second method of developing questions for the interview schedule was through a series of discussions with senior management staff in the researcher's own state. These individuals were asked the question, "What constitutes a quality system of vocational education?" The responses and resulting discussion were used to formulate several of the questions in the final interview schedule (Beaty, Metcalf, and Friedemann; 1987).

Lastly, the researcher developed a limited number of questions through application of the four-component model suggested for studying quality systems of vocational education. As mentioned in the preceding chapter, this framework is based on experience of the researcher.

Guidelines and criteria for writing questions were reviewed (Cannell and Kahn, 1969; Dillman, 1978). Kerlinger's (1973) criteria for writing questions were followed in developing the interview schedules. These criteria are:

1. Is the question related to the research problem and the research objectives?
  2. Is the type of question right and appropriate?
  3. Is the item clear and unambiguous?
  4. Is the question a leading question?
  5. Does the question demand knowledge and information that the respondent does not have?
  6. Does the question demand personal or delicate material that the respondent may resist?
  7. Is the question loaded with social desirability?
- (p. 51)

The draft interview schedule was circulated to peers for review and comment. Appropriate revisions were incorporated based on peer critiques. As suggested in the Interviewer's Manual (Cannell and Kahn, 1969), the interview schedule was pretested. Upper management in the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education participated in the pretest. This was done to identify ambiguous questions and determine the time needed for the interview. In addition, pretesting afforded the researcher an opportunity to analyze and improve personal interview techniques. The interview schedules used in the study are found in Appendix C.

### Organizing Data

A coding system for organizing the data was developed prior to data collection. Coding is used to translate question responses and respondent information to specific categories for purposes of analyses (Kerlinger, 1973). The major aspects of the system were name of the site, interviewee or document, category of classification, and the specific datum. The categories of classification were leadership, administrative structure, quality factors, and funding.

The alternatives for physically working with the data are variable (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). Sorting the data into piles, folders, or on cards is essential to post-fieldwork write-up. Since the number of coding categories in this study was limited, a physical sorting system was used to sort and organize the data.

### Implementation of the Case Study

This section of the procedures describes how the case studies were implemented. Staff training, logistics of the implementation, and data collection are discussed in detail.

### Staff Training

Since this research was conducted by a single investigator, the need for staff training per se was nonexistent. As primary investigator, the researcher had developed extensive background on the purpose of the study and a clear understanding of the terms and concepts used therein. Procedures to follow prior to entering and when on site were thoroughly internalized. However, certain preparations were made that paralleled staff training in an attempt to



insure valid and reliable outcomes, primarily in regard to conducting the interview.

Considerable effort was expended in reviewing proper interview techniques. The following guidelines were followed during the interview (Cannell and Kahn, 1969; Dillman, 1978):

1. Ask the questions exactly as they are worded in the interview instrument.
2. Read each question very slowly and in a conversational manner.
3. Ask the questions in the order in which they are presented in the interview schedule.
4. Repeat questions which are misunderstood or misinterpreted.
5. Do not inject opinions about the interview schedule topics, either verbally or nonverbally.
6. Reinforce the respondent by giving positive feedback in the form of neutral comments.
7. Ask this question frequently, "Is the respondent answering clearly, completely, and relevantly?"
8. Provide smooth transitions between topics.

Probing, another important aspect of interview technique, was done as a part of the conversation connected with the interview. As all interviews were tape-recorded, a protocol was developed for using the tape recorder in the interview setting. The pretesting of the instrument also served as a training session for the researcher.

#### Logistics of the Implementation

During the logistics step, interview arrangements were finalized by telephone, schedules coordinated, and travel plans developed. A

minimum of two hours was scheduled for each of the three interviews in each state. Upon arrival at the site, arrangements were made to conduct the interview in a quiet, private room.

Supplies needed to implement the case studies were determined prior to data collection. Appropriate note pads, pens, audio tapes, and tape-recording equipment were procured. Special emphasis was placed on insuring an operable, dependable tape recorder as well as on being completely familiar with operational procedures of the same.

Although the logistics of implementation were less formal regarding the state in which the researcher is director, the same careful attention was given the particulars and circumstances of each interview.

#### Data Collection

The systematic methods used to collect data were observing, interviewing, and gathering data unobtrusively. Observations were made from generally available sources, i.e., questions of other state directors about the reasons for quality in each of the three states were asked. Several state staff members from the researcher's own state were also asked to suggest reasons for quality being present in the three states.

Interviewing was the second means of data collection in this study. Questions were developed which would allow data related to quality systems of vocational technical education to be collected in four contexts: external influences, internal influences, state agency operations, and state and local program influences. Each of the interview questions was asked of two people from each state.

Interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis and verification.

The interviews took place in private settings and were preceded by a review of the purpose of the study, the process of selection, and the format of the interview. Guidelines developed under staff training were fully employed during the interviews. Time allotments for the interviews proved to be tight but adequate. Following the interviews, each participant was sent a thank-you letter.

Lastly, data were collected unobtrusively. Each state was asked to provide the following background information prior to the interviews: state plan, annual reports, organizational charts, and financial statements regarding sources of income and expenditures.

#### Analysis, Verification, and Synthesis of the Case Studies

The final section of procedures presents the analysis, verification, and synthesis stage of the case studies.

#### Analyzing Data

As suggested in the literature, data were collected and simultaneously analyzed. Analysis of the data was an ongoing process. This researcher was unable to separate collection and analysis into discrete activities. Instead, themes developed and new questions were raised during the course of each of the interviews. Probing, additional questions were needed in almost every interview. Background data obtained unobtrusively and through observation were

triangulated with interview data, both during and following the interview.

An in-depth analysis of the data followed the data collection as soon as possible. The coding system devised by this researcher and previously discussed was relevant to the analysis. However, it was necessary to do some recoding through the addition of new subcategory codes under each of the primary classification codes. Data cards were reviewed several times to establish the validity of the themes and patterns presented in the following chapter.

In addition, the reliability of the data was ascertained through the following verification procedure. Case study drafts were provided to participants at each of the sites for review and comment. After allowing time for participants to react to the drafts, the researcher solicited their views by telephone. With a few exceptions, participants were in agreement with the case study drafts. Revisions based on input from participants were incorporated into the final version of each case study.

#### Reporting and Utilizing the Case Study Findings

The case studies are reported in Chapter IV. In addition, the study will be summarized and reported to the state directors of vocational education.

The case studies provided a basis for identifying specific factors from which criteria to assess the quality of state-level systems of vocational education can be developed. Additionally,

conclusions and recommendation related to the study are provided to guide the improvement of state-level systems of vocational education.

## CHAPTER IV

### THREE CASE STUDIES

The purpose of this study was to develop a description of states having quality vocational education systems.

This chapter is organized into four parts: (1) states in the study; (2) the Ohio case study; (3) the Florida case study; and (4) the Oklahoma case study. Each case study is presented along the following themes: general description, continuity of leadership, administrative structure, mission of the state agency, leadership style, delivery systems, quality factors, and reputation.

#### States in the Study

Through a consensus of perception, three states were selected by the state directors of vocational education. A memorandum was sent to each of the state directors of vocational education in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the five trust territories. To prevent bias, the memorandum was sent by and returned to the Executive Director of the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Education in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. The memorandum did not indicate how or by whom the responses would be tabulated.

The total number of memorandums returned was 51 (91 percent). Five state directors did not respond. The three states that received the highest number of votes were Oklahoma, Ohio, and Florida.

Oklahoma received 38 votes, Ohio 21 votes, and Florida 20 votes. Only two other states received a substantial number of votes. Wisconsin and New York each received ten votes. Since the five potential votes from nonrespondents would not have altered the final selection of states in the study, no further contacts were made with those state directors who did not respond.

### Ohio: Case Study

#### General Description

The Ohio governance structure has remained unchanged since 1956. The State Superintendent of Instruction, with board approval, hires the State Director of Vocational Education. The 21-member State Board of Education is composed of an elected member from each of the congressional districts. The State Board of Education hires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Vocational education in Ohio is administered through the State Department of Education. The State Director, Parks (1987), is head of the Division of Vocational and Career Education. The Division of Vocational Education is one of 15 major divisions within the State Department of Education. The State Board of Education governs vocational education.

There were approximately 202,000 secondary students, 30,692 full-time adult students, and 288,075 part-time adult students enrolled in vocational education courses during fiscal year 1987. In 1984-85, 373,000 adults were provided training by the vocational education delivery system.

In fiscal year 1987, Ohio's vocational education budget was \$540,000,000 which included \$270,000,000 state funds, \$38,000,000 federal funds, and \$234,000,000 local funds. During fiscal year 1987, Ohio allocated 78.5 percent of its vocational education budget for secondary programs, 16.2 percent for postsecondary programs, and 5.3 percent for adult programs.

Vocational education programs are provided through 48 technical and community colleges and 103 comprehensive planning districts comprised of 49 area vo-tech schools, with the balance being in comprehensive schools. The area vo-tech school districts are administered through local boards of education.

Continuity of Leadership. This topic was identified as the most significant factor for establishing and maintaining quality vocational education. Parks (1987), State Director of Vocational Education in Ohio, described the significance of continuity of vocational education leadership since 1963.

The Governor, who was serving when the Vocational Education Act of 1963 was passed, was very excited about vocational education. He allocated resources to demonstrate his commitment to creating a quality vocational education system. Ohio has had a state superintendent who served for 12 consecutive years and a state director of vocational education who served for twenty consecutive years. When the state superintendent retired, his deputy assumed the leadership position (n.p.).

Leadership Style. Shoemaker (1987), Director Emeritus, also explained how the relationship of the State Director had evolved over the years:

During the period of time when we were creating vocational planning districts, I appeared before the intergovernmental committee and I explained the purposes



of vocational education and what the area vocational centers could accomplish.

Governor Rhodes was committed to building a state in which industry could grow and a state that had jobs for its people. Providing job training was the best policy that could have been presented at that time. They wanted to build industry and they needed vocational education to train people for the industrial jobs. Vocational education was an issue that both Democrats and Republicans supported in 1967.

Shoemaker stated that his relationship with other state directors during his and their long tenures was also an important factor. The fact that the directors became close friends helped establish positive professional relationships.

Parks (1987) attributed more importance to the State Superintendent's leadership abilities, his credibility with the general assembly, and his commitment to vocational education than to the administrative structure within the State Department of Education.

Parks (1987) described his own leadership style as "democratic." He explained that policy decisions are developed through consensus.

Parks (1987) has an open-door policy, to provide his associate directors the opportunity to visit with him on an "as-needed basis." Price confirmed that the Director's open-door policy created efficiency in administration and created a good public relations program.

The importance of continuity of leadership was reinforced by Associate Director Price (1987):

The fact that Ohio has only had two State Directors in recent times has contributed to creating a better image for Ohio. Byrl Shoemaker and Darrell Parks are well-known throughout the state, with legislative leaders, and recognized nationally. I would say that this has strengthened our reputation for having quality vocational education programs (n.p.).

Shoemaker (1987) became the leader of the Ohio vocational education system in 1962. Prior to 1962, there had only been two other state directors of vocational education. Shoemaker said:

We've had a history in Ohio of long tenures for state directors. Each State Director has served approximately nine or ten years. In 40 years, we've had very little turnover in state directors and I think that is important (n.p.).

Administrative Structure. Shoemaker (1987) felt that the administrative structure within the State Department of Education encouraged continuity of leadership and quality vocational education programs. He indicated that the administrative structure supported the State Director of Vocational Education and enabled him to survive legislative confrontations.

Shoemaker (1987) also indicated that the administrative structure provided "appropriate avenues for making the general assembly aware of issues affecting vocational education."

Parks (1987) indicated that the administrative structure is workable only because the State Superintendent of Instruction is committed to integrating vocational education into the total educational system:

The State Superintendent of Instruction believes that vocational education is a very essential element in the total education system in Ohio. He believes that high school juniors and seniors should be equally divided between vocational education and college preparation. He feels vocational education should be on an equal status with college-preparatory education and that policies should be analyzed to assure vocational education is not negatively impacted (n.p.).

Mission of the State Agency. Parks (1987) provided a concise mission statement for the Division of Vocational Education:

The Division of Vocational Education administers and enforces standards, provides technical assistance and

leadership, encourages educational improvement, and evaluates programs and management practices (n.p.).

There appeared to be general agreement about the mission. Price indicated that the "primary role of the Division of Vocational Education is leadership through technical assistance." Shoemaker (1987) indicated that the mission of the Vocational Education Division is "leadership":

We realized that quality programs are built by providing the type of leadership at the state level that will encourage teachers to do those things that make vocational education effective. As State Director, I tried to create a state vocational education leadership team that was more than paper-shuffling managers and finance officers. We implemented program standards and concentrated our efforts on helping teachers meet those standards (n.p.).

Delivery System. The delivery system for vocational education consists of three types of common schools and 49 area vo-tech schools. There are vocational education programs in area vo-tech schools, city school districts, exempted village districts, and local education agencies.

Parks (1987) described the relationship that the Division of Vocational Education has with the common schools as being "the same as with the area vo-tech schools." Price (1987) explained:

Decisions which will impact elementary and secondary vocational education programs are made by the Division of Vocational Education by working with other divisions in the State Department of Education and individuals from various types of schools (n.p.).

Area vo-tech schools are funded in part by the Division of Vocational Education and also have "acting authority." Parks (1987) explained that "acting authority means that each area vo-tech school has the capability to generate revenue through taxation." The revenue is based on a millage approved by the vote of the people.

Ohio also has technical colleges, community colleges, and four-year higher education institutions. These higher education institutions are under a different jurisdiction than the common schools and area vo-tech schools. Higher education institutions are governed by the Board of Regents.

Cooperation between the Division of Vocational Education and technical/community colleges has been primarily limited to fiscal agreements.

Twelve percent of the Carl Perkins (P.L. 98-524) funds are allocated for postsecondary education.

Forty-one percent of the postsecondary vocational education funds are allocated to two-year technical colleges and community colleges.

The two-year technical colleges are also eligible for vocational education "Educational Equity" funds and "Disadvantaged/Handicapped" funds. Some of Ohio's technical and community colleges have also received a small amount of program improvement, administrative, and guidance funds.

The higher education institutions are autonomous entities which have the authority to offer any type of postsecondary education, including vocational education, without the approval of the State Department of Education. Some of the two-year technical colleges have had vocational education programs, both funded and nonfunded, in adjoining classrooms. Parks (1987) explained that these funding inconsistencies are due to changes that have been made in the way community colleges are funded.

The Ohio vocational education system has identified business and industry training as a top priority. Business and industry training is viewed as an effective way to meet the needs of individuals who are displaced homemakers, dislocated workers, or for those who desire to upgrade their skills.

The funding for vocational education has continually increased as the number of programs has grown. Programs have been changed to meet the needs of industry, and many lower-cost, full-time programs have been phased out of the old vo-tech schools and comprehensive schools as new, high-technology programs have been implemented. The number of students has not significantly increased, but increased funding has allowed significant improvements in program quality to be implemented.

The program evaluation system consists of a self-review with instruments that have been designed by the Division of Vocational Education and is used for program improvement. This step is followed by a state staff, on-site review.

Parks (1987) believes that involving program supervisors in evaluation has contributed a great deal to the quality of programs.

Ohio has taken great pains to keep a program orientation, rather than organizing according to functional areas. We believe that a person who is knowledgeable in the area of business education can conduct more critical program evaluations than a person who does not have a background in business education. The person that has a background in the occupational area can also be more helpful in helping make suggestions that can be used to improve the program.

We do not want an evaluation system that is merely a check-off system where an evaluator says, "Do you have a curriculum?" and the instructor responds, "Yes." The purpose of evaluation, program improvement, could not be accomplished if suggestions for improvement were not readily available (n.p.).

Ohio has administrative standards and program eligibility standards, in addition to program standards. Program standards are used in program evaluation. Administrative and program eligibility standards assure the availability of quality programs and compliance with federal and state regulations.

National Reputation. Price (1987) believes that Ohio has a reputation for providing quality educational programs because vocational education programs must meet high standards. The evaluation system that is used in Ohio was implemented in 1968 and has been continually refined and improved.

Visibility is essential if a state desires to earn a reputation for providing quality educational programs. Ohio has established a state and national reputation for quality vocational education programs. Parks (1987) believes that "the area vo-tech schools provide the greatest visibility. The area vo-tech schools are the most easily identifiable providers of quality vocational education programs." He also believes that their reputation as a quality vocational education system has been enhanced by their relationship with business and industry firms.

Quality Factors. There is general agreement between the State Director and the State Director Emeritus that a commitment to vocational education is essential if a quality program is to be established and maintained. Shoemaker (1987) indicated that:

A commitment must be made to the total program of vocational education and this commitment must be based on sound educational principles. The quality of the Ohio vocational education system was built by emphasizing

learning and curriculum organizational principles, while heeding the lessons in research of successful educational programs. The guiding principle of Ohio's vocational education programs is this: Vocational education is there to benefit the student, the total student.

Some state directors of vocational education have adopted the philosophy that vocational education has a singular purpose--to train secondary vocational education students for jobs. This is a very narrow concept of vocational education. Vocational education provides students more experience in critical thinking than any other educational system. Vocational education provides students more opportunities for personal growth than any other form of education. When you are in a situation where all students are doing the same thing, they have less opportunity for growth. Vocational education provides students the greatest laboratory for education in the whole educational system (n.p.).

Parks (1987) identified factors that other states need to consider as they strive to improve the quality of their vocational education programs.

They have to have a vision of where they want to go. Continuity of leadership will move them in the right direction on a consistent basis, if they have the resources to make it happen.

They must also have a significant period of time within the school day to let students develop an appreciation of the trade--the students must be able to develop a level of proficiency that allows them to compete in the job market.

When I look at the three states that were selected as the "best" I notice that Ohio, Florida, and Oklahoma all have one thing in common: They have been fortunate to have a significant investment in time. You can have vision, resources, and leadership, but if you don't have the investment of time you will not get where you want to go (n.p.).

Price (1987) identified quality factors which she felt were most important. "Our success is due to good leadership and good support, all the way down from the governor to the superintendents in our schools."

Program evaluation is a priority in Ohio. Each program supervisor spends about 40 percent of his/her time conducting and analyzing program evaluations. Each program supervisor in Ohio assists the full-time evaluation coordinator with program evaluation. Parks (1987) explained the purpose of program evaluation.

We see program evaluation as a vehicle to program improvement. Although program evaluation assures programs are operating according to the law, the main purposes of evaluation are to assure students are receiving quality instruction and to identify ways to improve the quality of programs (n.p.).

Providing relevant and motivational vocational student organization activities, without letting vocational student organization activities become the primary focus of vocational programs, seems to have been achieved through constant program monitoring by the Division of Vocational Education. Parks stressed that "the big challenge is keeping vocational student organizations in perspective with the rest of the program."

Vocational student organizations are an integral part of the Ohio vocational education system. Parks (1987) believes that the visibility of the vocational student organizations has contributed to Ohio's recognition as an outstanding vocational education system.

#### Florida: Case Study

##### General Description

The Florida Division of Vocational, Adult, and Community Education is governed by the State Board of Education. The members of the State Board are the Governor, Commissioner of Education, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Treasurer, Comptroller,



and Commissioner of Agriculture. The Division of Vocational, Adult, and Community Education is one of eight divisions under the State Board of Education.

Florida has 67 county school districts, which served 1,604,695 elementary and secondary students in fiscal year 1986. Florida also has 93 vocational schools. Thirty-three of these vocational schools are vocational-technical centers operated by school districts and community colleges. Sixty are independent school districts. Florida has approximately 89,000 full-time classroom teachers and 5,000 full-time vocational programs. About seven percent (6,200 teachers) are full-time vocational teachers in county school districts or area vocational-technical centers. In fiscal year 1986, these schools served 48,435 adults enrolled in full-time vocational programs. Vocational education includes secondary and postsecondary programs, as well as quick-start (new industry, pre-employment) training. Florida has a total of approximately 10,000 vocational teachers if full-time, part-time, and industry training teachers are grouped together.

Florida has 28 community colleges. Some serve areas as large as six counties and have as many as five campuses. Community colleges provide the first two years of collegiate work, vocational education programs, and non-credit courses. In fiscal year 1986, there were 47,539 adults enrolled in vocational programs offered by the community colleges. The adult vocational enrollment was 35 percent of the 132,614 adults enrolled in community college programs. A substantial number of adults enrolled in the community colleges' vocational programs are over 30.

Continuity of Leadership. The State Director of Florida is appointed by the governor's cabinet, based on the recommendation of the Commissioner of Education. The state director's position is a political appointment; yet, state directors do not change as often as governors change, since the cabinet consists of elected officials. Howell (1987) is the current State Director in Florida.

Howell stated that dealing with the cabinet, as the state board, had the advantage of "dealing with one entity."

Howell explained the employment process which was used when he was hired as the state director.

They advertised and used a selection committee of eight people, who were educators and non-educators. They screened 50 applicants down to six. They interviewed and then made a recommendation to the Commissioner. The Commissioner hired the person recommended and presented the recommendation to the governor's cabinet (n.p.).

Mills (1987), State Director Emeritus, believes that Florida benefited by having the same leadership between 1972 and 1986. During the fifteen years that he was state director, there were only two Commissioners of Education.

Agee (1987), Chief of Vocational Program and Staff Development, indicated that having the same leaders for a long period of time enabled people, nationally and within the state, to develop working relationships with the Commissioner and the State Director. Agee felt that these relationships were beneficial for creating quality programs and implementing program changes.

Continuity in state leadership seemed to have become more important during the past few years as federal legislation has become more prescriptive and placed less emphasis on program improvement. Mills indicated that experience is needed if state directors are to

react appropriately when changes in the federal legislation are proposed. He expressed concern about the direction of the new congressional leadership in Congress and the effect that some of their programs have had on vocational education in Florida.

The federal legislation sharply defines how funds are to be spent. In Florida we've spent a great deal of money to get state-of-the-art equipment, to provide curriculum materials, and to offer in-service education.

There has been a gradual erosion in the leadership at the federal level, and less funds have been provided for program improvement activities like curriculum development. This has decreased our ability to do some of those things which were priorities in our state. This has hurt us because we can't go to the state legislature and get funds for those areas. You can get funds from the Florida legislature for a building, but not for an in-service training program.

We spent a great deal of money to get state-of-the-art equipment, to provide curriculum materials, and to offer in-service education (n.p.).

Mills felt that his relationship with Congressional delegates had helped to get approval of continuation of some program improvement funds.

Administrative Structure. When Mills (1987) became state director, he reported directly to the Commissioner of Education. During Mills' tenure as state director, the Commissioner reorganized, created two deputy positions, and he reported to one of these deputies. Mills indicated that the two deputy commissioners "let you run your own division as long as everything was going fine."

Mills provided the state legislature information about vocational education. Mills said he was the "vocational education lobbyist."

Howell (1987) explained that when the Commissioner of Education took office, she deleted one layer of management within the department and that had benefited vocational education.

Some studies had suggested that the position of state director of vocational education should be raised to deputy commissioner--to put it on par with the public schools. Doing away with one layer of management put vocational education on an equal basis with the public schools (n.p.).

Howell (1987) explained that the Commissioner of Education controls the "number of positions authorized for the division of vocational education" and oversees the total education program. He explained that the Commissioner had adopted department goals and each division had developed strategies to accomplish those goals. Howell indicated that "once the Commissioner had accepted those strategies, the divisions were delegated the responsibility for operating and striving to meet those goals."

Howell (1987) clarified his scope of authority:

I have a pretty wide range of authority. I'm responsible for more information-approval than decision-approval. Hiring decisions are mine, but I need the concurrence of the Commissioner. I don't feel that my decisions will be overturned.

When we want to start new initiatives, the Commissioner and I have a proactive dialogue and she will quietly object or fine tune. Out-of-state travel requires a sign-off by the Commissioner, but my requests have never been questioned or turned down (n.p.).

Howell (1987) indicated that he meets with the Assistant Commissioner about one hour every two weeks and also participates in a senior management staff meeting weekly with the Commissioner. He explained that the Commissioner integrated vocational education into the department by "identifying those divisions that should cooperate more with other divisions and vocational education was one of those divisions."

Mills (1987) described the scope of the state director's responsibility by explaining the process for requesting funds from the legislature.

Our budget is approved by the Commissioner of Education before it is presented to the legislature. The biggest problem we have had is with federal funds. All federal funds used to go into the lump sum budget and legislative staff would identify ways to use the federal money--for purposes different than it was designated (n.p.).

Howell (1987) described his role with the legislature.

The legislature in recent years has dictated project priorities and assumed some of the responsibility for program planning. Some of the responsibilities that were traditionally vocational responsibilities, such as filling certain positions and coordinating with the regional councils, were stripped away. We are now trying to regain those responsibilities (n.p.).

Howell (1987) explained how the State Director interacts with the Governor.

The Governor sits at the head of the cabinet. The cabinet sits as the State Board of Education or as the State Board of Vocational Education. I have made two presentations to the cabinet and had the occasion to meet with the governor, some other department heads, and the Commissioner to discuss a joint project (n.p.).

Mills (1987) said that he did not interact with the Governor of Florida on very many occasions, but he did work with the Governor's staff on vocational education issues.

Mission of the State Agency. Howell indicated that the agency is "responsible for vocational, adult, and community education programs statewide. This includes secondary and postsecondary programs." Howell classified these responsibilities as "planning and compliance."

Howell (1987) distinguished the state agency's responsibility from local schools' responsibility. "The community colleges and the school districts, individually, have local responsibility, but the

State Director is responsible for the state plan and state agency staff."

Howell (1987) said the agency had one singular mission.

. . . to be a partner in the economic development. I believe that all of our strategies for serving the disadvantaged and providing occupational training, adult literacy, and adult basic education go under that one goal. If people are educated and occupationally prepared, they are going to be productive citizens (n.p.).

Howell (1987) went on to describe the agency's responsibility "to be a proactive leader in causing the state to adapt to change. The state vocational education system must change to meet Florida's growth needs and to meet their changing diversity."

Mills (1987) also described the role of the state agency as leadership. "I think it has a leadership role in keeping the system up with the state of the art. The state agency is responsible for the quality of the programs." Mills indicated that leadership is provided through the development of curriculum, dissemination of curriculum materials, distribution of funds, and representation at the national level.

Leadership Style. Howell described his leadership style as participatory. "I believe that the only thing that makes our agency work is people. We have to have the right people and I've got to be able to motivate them to adopt the philosophy of the department."

Howell (1987) also indicated that he was performance-oriented, rather than process-oriented.

When Mills (1987) became state director, he said that he did not attend legislative hearings unless he was asked to make a presentation. During that period, he spent approximately two days a

week making presentations to the legislative committees. During the last ten years of his tenure, Mills found it necessary to spend more time interacting with the legislature. Mills also mentioned "a tremendous growth in the number of legislative staff members that have been hired." Mills felt that creating large legislative staffs had damaged his rapport with legislators.

It used to be, that when the House and the Senate discussed our budget request, I went to the committee meeting and presented the budget request and explained why the funds were needed. They understood the budget and relied on the division to provide the information that they now get from their legislative staff (n.p.).

Delivery System. Mills (1987) indicated:

During the 1950s, the Sputnik era, Florida's industries got involved with the whole space movement. This created a demand for certain types of technologies that had not previously been offered (n.p.).

Mills explained that area vo-tech schools were established in Florida prior to the 1963 Vocational Education Act, which provided each state funding for creation of area vo-tech schools. The creation of area vo-tech schools in Florida was a result of comprehensive school administrators needing financial assistance to offer quality vocational education programs. They were unable to secure adequate funding through the comprehensive schools funding formula.

Mills (1987) said, "Although community colleges in Florida now offer vocational education, in 1963 the community colleges were primarily interested in pre-collegiate technical courses."

Mills (1987) explained that the community colleges "later became interested in vocational education. They managed to remove themselves from the governance of the local school boards." Mills indicated that in 1963:

Fourteen community colleges were classified under the Vocational Education Act as area vocational schools. In addition to these thirteen community college/area vo-tech schools, several other area vo-tech schools had also been established. Florida now has 33 area vo-tech schools. These schools were built with funds from the Florida Gross Utilities Receipts Tax (n.p.).

Mills (1987) indicated that a philosophical change had occurred during the 1960s that had affected the type of programs that were offered through vocational education.

We had a tremendous increase in the number of students in Florida's schools. But, we weren't teaching some students the basic skills they needed, so students did not have adequate math and science skills. Since there was room in the vocational education classes for students who did not have the basic skills, they were placed in vocational education. About 50 percent of our funds were going to junior high exploratory programs in the 1960s.

In the past four or five years, due to publications like "A Nation At Risk," a greater emphasis is being placed on basic skills and students are being forced to take more academics. This is beginning to hurt secondary vocational education in some areas (n.p.).

Howell (1987) explained that the relationship between the comprehensive schools and vocational education was closer than in the past. He referred to the Southern Regional Education Board in stating: "The literacy requirements of jobs are increasing faster than the literacy rate of adults. Employers need people who can adapt to change and can be retrained." He continued by explaining:

In the past many people ended up in vocational education because they did not have an academic background. We now have a partnership with the public schools to redo the vocational curriculum and to create an integrated curriculum within the school environment.

The Florida Raise Bill increased academic standards, so we now have a joint focus on applied math, science, and communication to build that integrated curriculum. We are also working together on the dropout problem. Florida has one of the highest dropout rates in the nation. Everyone



is beginning to recognize that the key to lowering the dropout rate is vocational education.

We also have articulation agreements, upward and downward, so that students enrolled in a subject will not have to take the same subject class again. This was brought about legislatively to create a lifelong learning system.

Agee (1987) explained the linkage between postsecondary and secondary education in Florida.

The school districts operate the area vocational-technical centers. Those centers offer postsecondary, non-college credit courses for adults. The 28 community colleges offer associate of science degrees for vocational students. The associate degree is referred to as a terminal degree.

The Postsecondary Planning Commission, which oversees all postsecondary education, has done an extensive study of vocational education.

They determined that Florida had a problem because we had the same instruction being offered in the area vocational-technical centers and the community colleges, but collegiate credit was awarded only for community college courses (n.p.).

Howell (1987) indicated that supplemental services (the short-term adult programs) are not readily accessible. Howell is now encouraging the development of industry-specific, short-term programs; but, he is encountering resistance from the schools who recognize the difficulties involved in delivering these programs.

Howell (1987) explained that Florida is changing:

Florida is changing its economy from agriculture and tourism to a more diverse economy based on manufacturing, banking, and services. We're becoming more international and more aware of demographics. The students are changing. We have had a large influx of immigrants and adults who want an education.

Agee (1987) listed the four types of programs supervised by the agency as "exploration, job preparation, supplemental, and practical arts." She explained that practical arts programs were added in 1984

to describe "instruction related to skills, but generic in nature. Practical arts skills may be used in a job situation, but the instruction is not designed for a specific job."

All vocational discipline areas are included in practical arts.

Agee (1987) explained:

Industrial arts could be either exploratory or practical, depending on the purpose of the program. Exploratory programs are for grades seven through nine. Practical arts courses are for grades nine through twelve. Job preparatory programs are for grades ten, eleven, twelve, and postsecondary. If the program teaches something that could be used in any setting, it's practical arts. We've seen a tremendous growth in the number of practical arts courses. We identified courses in each discipline area that taught generic skills.

At about the same time, the legislature decided that job preparatory, vocational education programs needed a placement standard. School administrators had to determine if their secondary vocational programs were job preparatory or practical arts. If the vocational programs were job preparatory, schools had to meet a 70 percent placement standard to maintain state funding.

To maintain funding, several administrators decided to change the focus of their vocational programs to practical arts. In many cases their programs were actually practical arts, anyway. It meant that we achieved a higher degree of truth in advertising.

We currently spend almost 40 percent of our funds on exploratory and practical arts high school programs. This may not seem appropriate to some people, but I think it's good. Students are learning things they need to know, regardless of the occupation they choose (n.p.).

Quality Factors. Mills believes that state staff should travel to other states, see what other vocational education systems are doing, and bring the good things back to Florida. He indicated that adopting effective programs from other states had improved the quality of vocational education in Florida. Agee identified program evaluation as one of Florida's priorities during the past ten years.

She also indicated that to improve the quality of programs "in the past three years, an increased emphasis has been placed on instructors' in-service and on vocational student organizations."

Agee (1987) explained that "with the influx of different types of people into the state, we have had to pay attention to their needs and try to determine the best ways to meet them."

Agee (1987) also reported that a legislative change occurred in 1984 which impacted the quality of vocational education programs.

Legislation was passed which raised the number of credits needed for high school graduation. This caused us to reexamine the content of the secondary programs.

We looked at the job titles for which students were preparing. The determination was made that students would be better served if more flexibility was provided. Some job preparatory programs were shortened.

The traditional auto mechanics program, whether it was in the high school or in the area vo-tech school, was the same program. It was organized around many job titles within the auto mechanics cluster. Competencies were identified for each job title and certain competencies were identified for the Basic Auto Mechanic. By using job titles, rather than the cluster, students acquired competencies for one of the many jobs within the auto mechanics cluster (n.p.).

Mills (1987) indicated that the state agency used follow-up data to assure quality programs were being provided at the local level.

The evaluation system monitors programs and it is much different than it was when I first came on board as state director. Then, regional staff would throw out money and then go around to ask how things were going. We gradually developed the evaluation system--a system of checks and balances--to evaluate the quality of programs and to monitor how funds were being spent (n.p.).

Mills (1987) said that evaluation was a compliance responsibility of the state agency, but "program evaluation should be a constant process which assures instructors are meeting industry standards."

When I became State Director, we had 204 staff members, as compared to the 140 that they have today. We had two or three people in each occupational area. We had two or three people in vocational agriculture and two or three in home economics. These individuals were stationed around the state, close to the programs. A generalist can't help improve the quality of programs. You have to have the specialized expertise to get quality programs (n.p.).

Agee (1987) emphasized that program evaluation was a federal and a state requirement, "but that program evaluation is also a funding issue. If a program is not meeting the program standards, that program will lose its state funding." Agee indicated that placement is one of the program standards used to evaluate job preparatory programs. Job preparatory programs must maintain a 70 percent placement rate. Placement includes employment, entering the military, or continuing in an educational program.

National Reputation. Howell (1987) believes that Florida has a national reputation for excellence.

Florida has elevated education to a state priority and taken steps to define its standards.

I think that the real key in Florida is that we made a very clear and conscious move statewide. We didn't move in just one district. Program standards were implemented statewide, throughout all types of educational institutions (n.p.).

Agee (1987) believes that Florida developed a reputation for quality vocational education programs, through "the tremendous legislation that has supported vocational education for many, many years. Also, we have had the dollars to enable us to have a very consistent program throughout the state."

Agee (1987) attributes the development of a national reputation to a quality staff.

Having a quality state staff--a relatively large state staff--contributed a great deal to the quality of our programs. We had a large field staff and were able to have a program specialist in each vocational discipline in each of the five regional offices. Those people had the appropriate background and provided teachers technical assistance. Our programs were high-quality programs.

The non-financial legislation was important, too. It gave us the framework for program development. In 1970 a legislative committee did an extensive study on vocational education. They supported vocational education because they knew the importance of vocational education to Florida's economy. They developed the laws

under which we have operated all these years. We have consistently had legislation that enabled us to do the kinds of things that were important for quality programs.

For example, we are one of the few states that had a complete set of program standards for local school administrators. These standards were adopted statewide and were tied to state funding (n.p.).

Mills (1987) indicated that "strong legislative support" had contributed to Florida's national reputation for providing quality vocational programs.

Mills (1987) believes that each state that strives for quality vocational education programs must:

Look at their role in developing statewide curricula and keep up to date. They should depend on business and industry to advise them and to help them keep their programs current (n.p.).

Mills (1987) also indicated that participation in professional organizations is important if teachers and administrators are to be effective. "We have always encouraged the vocational educators in Florida to participate in professional organizations. This has provided a strong, continual in-service program."

Agee (1987) agreed. "Professional organizations, the American Vocational Association and Florida Vocational Association, are where

our people get so much of the information that they need." Agee also indicated that participation in the professional organizations encouraged teachers "to exhibit a professional attitude." Agee said that many vocational instructors and administrators in Florida are members of the Florida Vocational Association and the American Vocational Association.

Howell (1987) gave advice to states that want to create a high-quality vocational education system.

They need to know what their objectives are. They need to plan, and that plan has got to be measurable. One of the keys to improving the quality of instruction in Florida is the statewide curriculum framework. If programs don't meet the program standard they are not funded.

I believe that business and industry must have a greater role in vocational education. They need to tell education what the requirements are for various occupations. Also, they need to help us keep our programs current. We are now starting to integrate business and industry into our vocational student organizations by creating sponsors and alumni associations that will reinforce the advisory committees in program development at the local schools (n.p.).

Mills (1987) offers advice to states that want to create one of the best vocational education systems in the nation:

You need to get secondary and postsecondary together. You need to talk about vocational education, not secondary education and postsecondary education. A high school electronics program should be the same as a postsecondary electronics program. The program should cover a specific scope of learning, regardless of the age of the student.

#### Oklahoma: Case Study

##### General Description

Oklahoma is a state of small schools. Three-fourths of the 613 school districts have less than 1000 in average daily attendance, and

two-thirds of the districts have less than 500 in average daily attendance. During fiscal year 1987, Oklahoma had 173,302 students in grades nine through twelve.

The elementary and secondary school districts are governed by the State Board of Education. The State Board of Education consists of seven appointed members, with the elected State Superintendent of Instruction serving as president of the Board. The remaining six members are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate. The State Board of Education members serve six-year terms. The Board meets monthly to establish policy, which is administered by the staff of the State Department of Education.

Oklahoma offers some form of vocational education in all 77 counties. Sixty-four of the 77 counties are served by one of the 26 area vo-tech school districts which are locally operated through 42 campuses. Eighty-seven percent of Oklahoma's high school students have access to the area vo-tech school programs by living in one of the 26 area vo-tech school districts. Vocational education courses are also offered at 486 comprehensive school sites. During fiscal year 1987, 43 percent of the students enrolled in grades nine through twelve were enrolled in a vocational education course. The total secondary enrollment for fiscal year 1987, including grades seven through twelve, was 79,925.

During fiscal year 1987, Oklahoma served 212,193 adults through vocational education courses at the comprehensive and area vo-tech schools. Only 10,451 of these adults were full-time students. The remaining number were enrolled in short-term adult programs; industry training; dislocated worker retraining; specialized on-site, short

courses for civilian employees at Tinker Air Force Base; inmate training programs; displaced homemaker/single parent programs; and in nontraditional career programs.

Approximately 26,000 of these individuals were enrolled in industry-specific training programs for 310 firms. Of the 26,000, only 1,979 were in new and expanding industry programs (quick-start training programs).

Oklahoma also provides vocational education through the seven vo-tech training centers that are located on the premises of correctional facilities. In fiscal 1987, 2,176 prisoners were trained.

Vocational-technical education is governed by the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education, which meets monthly to establish policy. The State Board of Vocational and Technical Education oversees the operation of the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education and creates policies for operation of all vocational education programs in the comprehensive schools and area vo-tech schools. The State Board of Vocational and Technical Education consists of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the six appointed members of the State Board of Education, six members appointed by the governor, and the State Director of Vocational and Technical Education. The six, governor-appointed members represent the six congressional districts. Five of these appointments require senate confirmation. Members of the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education serve six-year terms. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction serves as the board chair. The State Director is the executive board officer and an ex officio nonvoting member of the board.



The State Director is hired by and serves at the pleasure of the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education in accordance with the board's personnel policies and practices which are generic for all State Department of Vocational and Technical Education employees.

Oklahoma has two comprehensive universities, ten four-year colleges/universities, and thirteen junior colleges. Currently, thirteen two-year colleges and two technical branches of one university offer 631 technical education programs for approximately 60,000 full-time students. These technical education programs allow students to earn an associate degree or certificate of completion. Approximately 3,000 associate degrees in technical fields are awarded annually and the collegiate technical enrollment comprises 55 percent of Oklahoma's lower division collegiate enrollment. In 19 Oklahoma communities, both area vo-tech schools and higher education institutions exist.

The State Regents for Higher Education govern the universities, colleges, and junior colleges. The State Regents are appointed by the governor and confirmed by the senate for six-year terms. They are responsible for overseeing all programs, including vocational-technical programs, that are offered in degree-granting institutions.

Continuity of Leadership. Tuttle (1987) was State Director of Vocational and Technical Education from July, 1967 through December, 1985. From 1971 through 1984, Leslie Fisher was State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Upon Fisher's retirement on July 1, 1984, John Folks became State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Tuttle, State Director Emeritus, credits continuity of leadership for the

tremendous growth that occurred in vocational during this 18-year period.

Dr. Fisher and I were committed to providing Oklahomans the highest quality of education and recognized that vocational education was an integral part of the total education system. We worked together, as a team, to establish vocational education programs in the high schools and to create an area vo-tech school network. It was a tremendous benefit to have someone like Dr. Fisher to support the concept of vocational education and to work with the board, the legislature, and our department to create one of the best vocational education delivery systems in the nation.

If Oklahoma were organized like some states, where a new Superintendent of Public Instruction is appointed each time a new governor is elected, we would not have the solid foundation on which to build.

During the 18 years I was state director, we created 24 area vo-tech schools, increased the number of vocational programs in the comprehensive schools, initiated quick-start training, and implemented the first short-term adult education division, the first productivity division, and the first human resources development division in the nation. This tremendous growth and innovativeness would not have been possible if we would have had to stop and orient a new superintendent of public instruction every four years.

Since we had worked together for so many years and interacted on a regular basis, Dr. Fisher and I understood each other's special interests. Although we both were committed to serving Oklahoma's young people, he realized that industry training and adult education were just as important to vocational education. He provided input as we expanded and, over the years, he developed a commitment to the goals of vocational education (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987), Deputy State Director, said "Having one state director for 18 years and another for 24 years is a major factor in the overall strength of vocational education in our state."

Tuttle (1987) indicated that:

Longevity is important to the position of state director. J. B. Perky provided the leadership for vocational education in Oklahoma for 26 years, 1941-1967. During that period of time, Perky was recognized as a national

leader in vocational education and he was recognized within the state as one of our most powerful and aggressive leaders. Perky had the opportunity to mold and shape vocational education. Creating an education system or making changes in an existing system takes time (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) said that the reason Oklahoma was selected as one of the top three states in the nation was "stability in many key leadership positions, combined with low turnover and an adequate staff to do the job." He further stressed the importance of orderly transitions between outgoing and incoming state directors.

Administrative Structure. Vocational education in Oklahoma was a regular division of the State Department of Education between 1929 and 1940. In 1941 the State Board of Education began serving in a dual role and assumed the identity of the State Board of Vocational Education. In 1968, due to the growth of the vocational education system and the importance that vocational education had to the state of Oklahoma, a separate State Board of Vocational and Technical Education was created in an effort to increase efficiency of administration. Close coordination continued between the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education and the State Board of Education because the State Superintendent of Public Instruction was designated as chairman of the vocational education board. Tuttle (1987) believes that the administrative structure benefited vocational education.

Vocational education is very complex. Although some issues are of equal importance to both academic and vocational education, vocational education has unique areas of interest. Vocational education uses a different type of instruction than that normally used in academic classrooms, so different instructional issues surface.

Also, unlike academic programs that remain relatively constant in terms of content, vocational education changes as technology changes.

Also, vocational education must address the needs of unique populations which are usually not served in K-12 educational systems. Due to these differences, even vocational education administration is quite different from traditional education.

Vocational education in Oklahoma could not thrive within the confines of the traditional educational structure as the number of programs grew and the diversity of programs and services evolved. One of the key ingredients for effective administration of vocational education is flexibility. Having a separate vocational board that devoted itself totally to vocational issues increased our ability to respond quickly to the needs of the economy, business, industry, and students (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) indicated that:

Structure had very little to do with the relationship that vocational education has with the legislature. Establishing a good rapport with the legislature is dependent upon the state director's ability to relate to those issues in which the legislature is interested (n.p.).

Tuttle (1987) also stressed the importance of coordination between the various educational administrative entities.

The unique advantage that Oklahoma has, that other states do not have, is the separate state board with a well qualified, vocational education staff. This advantage would be a liability if the actions of the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education were not coordinated with the actions of the State Board of Education.

The vocational education system in Oklahoma relies on the State Board of Education to manage accreditation and teacher certification for both academic and vocational teachers. To assure that the policies in these areas enhance the delivery of vocational education, the appointed members of the State Board of Education serve on the State Board of Vocational Education. This assures continuity of philosophy in policy making (n.p.).

Benson (1987), Assistant State Director for Occupational Programs, added:

Our deputy director serves on the Professional Standards Board. This entity establishes teacher certification standards for vocational and academic instructors. By having representation on the board, vocational education is assured the opportunity to discuss the unique qualities

needed by vocational educators and to voice concern if policies are being discussed which, if passed, could damage the quality of programs by requiring additional qualifications that are not needed by vocational instructors (n.p.).

Tuttle (1987) explained:

Ideally, there should be close coordination with higher education and vocational education. At one time, we did have a close working relationship, but due to a change in the philosophy of the State Regents for Higher Education, that close working relationship was discontinued (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) explained that although there is little coordination between the State Regents for Higher Education and the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education in program planning, there is a close relationship between vocational education and some of the higher education institutions that train vocational teachers.

The State Department of Vocational and Technical Education has a very close working relationship with two major higher education institutions. In fact, two of the heads of teacher education departments in these major universities sit on our departmental management team. We also integrate individual teacher educators into planning of in-service activities for vocational education teachers. Teacher education is an integral part of each of the vocational program areas and they work very closely together to improve the quality of instruction that is provided to potential vocational instructors (n.p.).

Benson (1987) said:

There is more coordination and cooperation going on in an informal basis between higher education and vocational education than on a formal basis. Teacher educators serve on the advisory committees of the vocational programmatic divisions, participate in planning professional development workshops, and assist new teachers on an as-needed basis. The communication and cooperation between vocational and higher education is probably better today than it has been for several years (n.p.).

The State Department of Vocational and Technical Education and the State Department of Education are two autonomous entities. Each

submits its own budget request to the legislature and meets with legislative staff to discuss their unique needs and areas of responsibility.

Tuttle (1987) indicated:

The vocational budget request is approved by the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education, which includes members of the education board. This assures that both departments are headed in the same general direction, rather than pursuing conflicting strategies (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) described the state director's authority as complete. "The state board sets policy and gives guidelines. The state director is responsible for implementation."

When asked to describe the scope of authority of the state director, Tuttle said:

It was my job to run the Department of Vocational and Technical Education, which included making hiring recommendations for professional staff to the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education, directing staff, implementing and funding programs that were consistent with the goals of the department--which included monitoring programs, and at times, withdrawing or not funding projects/programs that were requested by schools.

Making commitments on quick-start training programs, without seeking gubernatorial or legislative approval, was essential for full participation in economic development activities.

The legislature and the governor expected the state director to organize a staff that would get results, supervise area vo-tech schools and vocational programs, and implement programs that would benefit the citizens of Oklahoma. And, that is what is what I tried to do.

Unlike some state directors, I did not have to secure permission from anyone to take an out-of-state trip; and, I had the flexibility to reorganize my staff and establish new priorities without securing approval from the State Board of Vocational and Technical Education, even though the board did approve initial employment and terminations, based on my recommendations.

Mission of the State Agency. Tuttle (1987) provided a clear and simple mission statement for the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education: "To provide vocational and technical education services to anyone who wants it or needs it, to business and industry, and to the general public."

The mission statement that Van Hook (1987) provided was similar in content.

To develop, implement, and improve vocational education programs in a diversity of institutional settings, so as to make vocational education available to all who want, need, and can profit from it.

Benson (1987) agreed with the thoughts of the others by stating:

The mission of the State Department of Vocational and Technical Education is to provide leadership, allocate funds, assure compliance, provide technical assistance, and monitor the quality of programs (n.p.).

Leadership Style. Tuttle (1987) described his leadership style as "participatory."

Based on input from the staff that worked with programs in the field and from interaction with business, industry, the legislature, and the board, we established departmental goals. Each division was responsible for carrying out those programs and providing those services that would assure our goals were accomplished.

I felt that my responsibility was leadership for all vocational educators in Oklahoma, not just for the state agency. I spent a great deal of my time interacting with school administrators, teachers, legislators, business, and industry. My deputy director managed supervision of state agency staff on a daily basis (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) stressed how important it is to have a state director who involves his staff in the operation of the department.

The management team is an asset that the state director has at his disposal, that he can use in the manner he feels is most appropriate. He described the management

team as "experienced, knowledgeable, dedicated, and gregarious" (n.p.).

Tuttle (1987) explained the value of his management team for providing effective departmental leadership and for strategic planning.

I utilized my management team to develop direction and to recommend policy, but I also tried to delegate decision making to the division heads as often as possible. Since our staff kept in touch with the field, we were able to recognize needs as they emerged and able to implement programs to meet those needs. A state director cannot keep in touch with all aspects of vocational education, so he must depend on his staff to recognize programmatic and administrative needs (n.p.).

Benson (1987) added to the comments made:

The state director utilizes participatory management, but due to the fact that each of us is involved in more innovative projects than ever before, we have more autonomy than ever before to make decisions about the area that we supervise. Not all decisions must be made by the entire management team (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) indicated that Tuttle used "participatory management" and indicated that the current director had made some operational changes, which "should have been expected. Each leader must design the type of organization and methods of operation that fit his preferred style of operation."

Tuttle (1987) stressed how important it is to have qualified, dedicated staff to create and maintain an effective, highly visible vocational education system.

Having a separate staff, that devotes its entire attention to vocational education, assures adequate time and expertise for new projects and to resolving deficiencies in existing programs. The vocational education specialists have the opportunity to develop the expertise and experience that is needed to deal with the complex issues of industry training; productivity improvement; government contracting; industry-specific, short-term training programs; and employment of disadvantaged adults,



handicapped youth and adults, high school dropouts, dislocated workers, and inmates. Without the support of a separate board and the availability of skilled vocational specialists, these areas would not be adequately addressed and as much progress would not have been made (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) reinforced the importance of having well qualified staff by stating:

The ratio of state staff program specialists to number of programs is probably about 80 to one. This allows time for staff to supervise programs and provide technical assistance to teachers and administrators. Technical assistance is essential, especially since the vocational education curricula are regularly updated and new technologies are integrated into the vocational education classroom (n.p.).

Tuttle (1987) indicated that legislative support and local taxing ability were essential for developing quality programs.

This strong legislative support is the reason that our area vo-tech schools have the ability to raise local taxes to support their secondary, adult, and business and industry programs. This local taxing ability has provided financial resources that would otherwise not have been available, if the area vo-tech schools had to depend on only federal and state dollars (n.p.).

Delivery System. Van Hook (1987) explained "that vocational education is a necessary component in any definition of comprehensive education. Vocational education validates the need for education."

Van Hook (1987) explained that vocational education programs are offered for various populations, in various types of settings and institutions, for students enrolled in grades seven through twelve. Van Hook indicated that vocational education in Oklahoma was designed for secondary students "as well as to meet the needs of adults, business and industry, and special populations as those needs were identified."

Van Hook (1987) stressed:

The State Department of Vocational and Technical Education believes in quality programs and makes every effort to work with the comprehensive schools and the area

vo-tech school. Both types of institutions are of equal priority (n.p.).

Benson (1987) addressed the issue of program quality by adding:

Administering vocational education programs in the comprehensive schools requires a different set of administrative skills than those usually used to oversee academic programs--to help school administrators acquire additional knowledge about the unique features of vocational education administration. This program has been one of the best methods we have found to increase the cooperation between the SDVTE and the local schools. These administrators want quality vocational education programs and they appreciate the time and effort we are putting into this program to provide them the technical assistance that we have never had before. They want to know more about vocational education program funding, program evaluation, and the expectations that the state agency has of vocational teachers (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) indicated:

The legislature has increased the personnel authorization for vocational education state agency staff three times in the past ten years. Although we have more staff than we did ten years ago, we also have more responsibilities and we offer a greater diversity of programs in various types of settings (n.p.).

Tuttle (1987) indicated that the value of his staff could be seen in the quality of programs that were offered and the comprehensiveness of the vocational education system in Oklahoma. "I was fortunate to have innovative, aggressive, and hard-working staff. They provided the ideas that created some of the most unique and effective vocational education programs in the nation."

Van Hook (1987) indicated the role of federal legislation since 1960, had made:

. . . a tremendous impact on vocational education in Oklahoma. It has been the catalyst that provided new emphases which have resulted in substantial increases in state and local funds as well. Building the area vo-tech schools is one example.

These were built as a result of the federal funds being provided. The federal funds started the area vo-tech

school network, and through local and state funds, the programs that these schools offer have been expanded and improved (n.p.).

Quality Factors. Tuttle (1987), in responding to the question, "What is the most significant factor in the development of Oklahoma's quality vocational education programs?" said:

There are several factors. But, probably the most critical factor is having a separate board with a large, well qualified state staff.

Having a separate board and separate staff has created visibility for vocational education achievements that would probably not have been noticed if vocational education were just another educational division within a larger, educational administrative unit. Traditional educators have the tendency to deal with academic disciplines and overlook the accomplishments of vocational education, which are not as lofty or theoretical (n.p.).

Tuttle (1987) indicated that program evaluation has led to many program improvements.

Program evaluation is more than a compliance activity in Oklahoma. Evaluations and supervisory observations are instrumental for making recommendations for program improvement. Evaluations are organized by the Evaluation and Testing Unit, but the program specialists actually evaluate the methods of instruction, facilities, equipment, and supplies. We believe that the strength of our evaluation system is using vocational specialists (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) credited program evaluation as an essential ingredient in strategic planning.

Although program evaluation is required, it is a necessary ingredient of any quality program thrust. If program evaluations had not been required, or conducted, then we would be not moving in basically the same direction.

The importance of program evaluation cannot be overemphasized. Program evaluations are conducted on every full-time vocational program in Oklahoma. The program vocational specialists make program visits and

note program strengths and deficiencies in between the official, five-year required program evaluations (n.p.).

Tuttle (1987) clarified the purpose of program evaluation by explaining the factors that are included and why these factors were identified as essential program elements for effective vocational education programs.

Within the program evaluation criteria there are items related to vocational student organizations. Oklahoma has a commitment to providing relevant vocational student organization activities to enhance the program instruction and each individual student's personal development.

The outstanding vocational students, who have received national and international recognition, are the showcase of Oklahoma and have made other states, business, and industry aware of our programs. We are proud of their accomplishments and their teachers' dedication. We make every effort to publicize vocational student organization accomplishments and appreciate the immense involvement that business and industry have had in making these activities relevant for the students.

Although we are proud of the "winners," we are most committed to providing each vocational student the opportunity to participate, to acquire leadership skills, develop interpersonal skills, and feel a sense of pride in his/her individual accomplishments and the accomplishments of his/her fellow students.

The evaluation criteria assures programs are providing vocational student organization activities, but that a balance exists between instruction and vocational student organizations (n.p.).

Van Hook (1987) reinforced the importance of vocational student organizations in vocational education programs when he stated:

Vocational student organizations are an integral part of a good vocational education program. Students benefit by developing leadership skills and by having the opportunity to apply what they have learned. The school benefits due to the universal goodwill and excellent public relations that are developed with the community, business, and industry.

Although only few students benefit from serving at the state and national level, all students are encouraged to assume an active role at all levels, thus becoming more

effective members of the total community upon leaving the educational system. In Oklahoma, the benefits of participating in a vocational student organization are so obvious that both adult and secondary students are encouraged to participate (n.p.).

Benson (1987) indicated that vocational student organizations are such an integral part of the vocational education instructional program, that state policies require that every vocational education program provide students the opportunity to participate in vocational student organization activities.

In Oklahoma, unlike some states, we coordinate the content of the vocational student organization with the instructional program to assure continuity between the instructional program and the vocational student organization activities. We believe this assures a quality instructional program and contributes to the personal development of each student (n.p.).

Tuttle (1987) explained that curriculum and instruction are essential elements in program evaluation.

Oklahoma has devoted an immense amount of dollars to development of curriculum and to in-servicing teachers to use the curriculum. Through program evaluation, methods for better utilization of the curriculum are identified. If the teacher needs assistance to improve his/her curriculum and methods of instruction, that is noted during the program evaluation and one of the vocational specialists makes it a priority to work with that teacher.

The evaluation criteria includes items related to advisory committees and business and industry involvement. Each full-time vocational education program in Oklahoma must have an advisory committee. The evaluation criteria is useful for determining how teachers can better use their advisory committees.

Programs which are below standard are cited. Program improvement plans are developed by the school with input from the vocational specialists. If the plan is not carried out and the program does not improve, then the program is not approved for vocational education funding (n.p.).

National Reputation. Tuttle (1987) attributed Oklahoma's national reputation to participation in AVA and OVA.

I also tried to devote as much of my time as I could to participating in the Oklahoma Vocational Association and the American Vocational Association. I still feel that the state director should spend as much of his time with those that he represents, to stay in tune with new developments in the field and to guard against the ivory-tower syndrome.

I felt that Oklahoma had unique needs that needed to be addressed in the federal legislation, so I tried to stay in touch with AVA and encouraged my staff to participate in AVA's professional activities. During the time that I was state director, we had three Oklahomans serve as president of AVA, and that is the office I now hold with

AVA. I believe that one reason that Oklahoma is so highly respected throughout the nation is due to the participation that we have had in AVA and other national policy-making activities (n.p.).

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter contains four parts. A summary of the study is followed by the findings in relation to the research questions. Conclusions are presented based on the findings of the study. Finally, recommendations are offered for present practice and future research.

#### Summary

The purpose of the study was to develop a description of states having high quality vocational education systems. Three states were selected on the basis of the perception of the state directors of vocational education in 51 of the 56 states and territories. The study was designed to answer the following questions:

1. What are the identifiable factors at the state level that influence the quality of a state's vocational education system?
2. How do these factors interact with each other to influence the quality of a state's vocational education system?
3. What factors have dominant influence in determining the quality of a state's vocational system?
4. What influencing factors are unique to a particular state in determining the quality of a state's vocational system?

These four questions served as a focal point for issues to be raised and information sought in completing the case study observations, interviews, and needed data.

Case studies were conducted in the three states through the methods of observation, interviewing, and unobtrusive data collection. Observations were made regarding the three states by means of discussions with state directors in states not involved in the study. Interviews were held with the director emeritus, the director in two of the states, the deputy director in the researcher's own state, and the occupational program supervisor in each of the three selected states. Data gathered unobtrusively included the state plan, annual report, organizational chart, and financial statements from each state.

Limitations of the study were the following: (1) only three states were involved; (2) the identification of the three states involved subjective judgment with no criteria being provided to the state directors who voted for the three states; (3) the interview dialogue, data gathered, and observations define the total body of data relevant to this investigation.

### Findings

The data from the case studies serve as a basis for the following findings:

1. There are seven factors that have a major influence on the quality of a state's vocational education system. They are (a) continuity of leadership, (b) administrative structure, (c) mission of



the state agency, (d) leadership, (e) delivery system, (f) quality factors, and (g) reputation.

2. Interactions among and between these seven factors in influencing the quality of state systems of vocational education are extremely complex.

3. There are four factors which have dominant influence in determining the quality of a state's vocational education system. They are continuity of leadership, mission statement, delivery system, and program standards.

4. Administrative structure as a factor was unique in each of the states in determining a quality state system of vocational education.

### Discussion of the Findings

#### Influencing Factors

In all three states the continuity of leadership involved long periods of tenure of the state superintendents or state commissioner, as well as state directors of vocational education through periods of rapid economic, social, and educational change. There were also orderly transitions from one state director to the new director following these long tenures, and there seemed to be a non-partisan tradition of educational policy-making. Additionally, the appointment of state directors in each of the three states was relatively free of political pressures. This continuity of leadership seemed to be especially important during periods of federal re-prioritization, state policy changes, and rapid changes in industrial policy in each state.

There were strong ties between these educational leaders of the state's vocational system, probably due in part to the long tenure of the three state directors emeriti.

The administrative structure in each state allowed strong support from a state superintendent or commissioner in the implementation of changes within the educational system and the institutions delivering vocational education. This support allowed the initiation of change which all nine interviewees stated were so important to the growth of the reputation of the state systems. There was an independent authority of the state director to make policy, allocate funds, initiate change, and evaluate programs within the system.

All three state directors, as well as the directors emeriti, had a very clear and consistent statement of the mission of the state agency in their respective state. They clearly stated that they must work with those within vocational education, the general education community, as well as business and industry for their state to develop a strong reputation for delivery of quality vocational education programs. They also recognized the importance of state legislators, governors, and other agencies within government to support the mission of the state agency. These mission statements and their widespread acceptance are most important during periods of rapid economic and social change.

There was general consensus that the leadership style of the director must be one which enhanced the credibility of the leader. The director must be capable of building consensus but must also be able to assume an autocratic style when rapid or unpopular decisions must be made. The directors emeriti interviewed sensed the importance

of having a quality staff of administrators with vocational backgrounds if their programs were to be of high quality.

Delivery systems in each of the three states were complex. There were mixtures of programs in the common schools, area vo-tech schools, and community and junior colleges, and other institutions. There were also programs for business and industry offered in a variety of settings, and there was a diverse array of funding systems for the programs offered. There were large numbers of schools offering vocational programs in each state, and all recognized that although specialized schools allowed visible institutions, the majority of their programs were still in the comprehensive schools and all vocational education is a part of a comprehensive educational system. The three states allowed local taxes to be collected to support the vocational schools in their state.

Several quality factors emerged in the case studies. The ability of the student to spend an appropriate amount of time in the vocational program was listed as one factor. The three state directors specifically mentioned the importance of having students for enough time to prepare them well. There were also significant amounts of in-service training activities for administrators and staff in the states, and the staff qualifications called for professionals in the occupational program management areas. Program standards were used as a vehicle for improvement rather than just compliance. Significant amounts of staff time were spent in program supervision and evaluation in all three states. Federal standards played a supportive role and were used for compliance evaluations rather than improvement of programs. There were sufficient funds provided for vocational

education programs and state staffs during the periods of growth in the states. There seemed to be flexibility in funding which allowed each state system to reallocate funds for changing priorities and new demands from business and industry. There were controls over programs and institutions applied through funding policies. Funds could be withheld if program standards were not met.

The states with high-quality systems obviously had a reputation among the state directors of vocational education and that reputation came from a number of factors. There were high-visibility schools, programs for business and industry, and highly visible students. There was a strong emphasis in each state for vocational student organizations. Each state had a relatively large staff and they were allowed to travel to other states for new ideas. Staff and teachers belong and are active in professional organizations which allow the state reputation to spread. The development of curriculum material and their dissemination outside the state lead to the strong reputation in two of the three states.

#### Interactions

In each state there were relationships which seemed to be supportive of each other. The effectiveness of leadership at the state agency level supported strong legislative support, which in turn brought about better funding levels for each of the state's vocational education systems. The long tenure of the directors emeriti and the fact that all three were former vocational teachers prior to assuming their role as state director lend themselves toward people who have a

clear vocational philosophy which leads to a clear mission statement of the state's vocational system.

The answer to this research question is made somewhat more complex by the fact that each of the seven general factors is itself a network of relationships. For example, continuity of leadership and leadership style connect the state system with national policymakers and other state directors. They also connect the system with other state agencies. The administrative structure, the mission of the state agency, the delivery systems, and program standards are also relationships that connect the state system with other governmental levels, business and industry, and political leaders. These interrelationships and the data collected from other state directors outside the three case studies revealed similar complex relationships exist in other states.

#### Dominant Factors

Four dominant factors emerged from the three case studies. The continuity of leadership through periods of rapid legislative, economic, social, and educational change was mentioned as the most significant influence by respondents in each of the three states. Formation of a mission statement and success in the accomplishment of its mission through the continuity of leadership was identified as a significant factor. The diversification of the delivery system and the delivery of innovative programs were also cited as important. Having program standards and the ability to enforce those standards through funding were significant in all three states studied.

### Unique Factors

Oklahoma was the only state with a distinct state board for vocational education and a separate state agency. The board also overlaps with the state board of education by having six members of the state board of education serve on the state board for vocational education. Additionally, it is the only state where the chief state school officer serves as president of the board in ex officio capacity. Florida's board arrangement was equally unique with the state board membership composed of elected state officials with the governor as chairman. The state board of vocational education and the state board of education are one and the same in both Florida and Ohio.

Oklahoma has the only separate state agency operation. In Florida and Ohio, the state agency operates within the state department of education and the directors report to the chief state school officer through deputy or associate superintendents.

An additional unique factor emerged in Florida, which had no management information system or public information vehicle specifically for vocational education. Such systems were present in both Ohio and Oklahoma.

Overall, while the administration structures were unique, there were few differences in the influencing factors identified among the three systems studied.

### Conclusions

The following conclusions are based on the findings of the case studies:

1. The factors identified are more important collectively than individually.

2. Single factors are less influential than groupings of factors in determining the quality of a state's vocational system.

3. Multiple subfactors constitute each of the factors in a quality vocational education system.

4. Clarity of the mission statement together with implementation of that mission statement leads to quality within the system.

#### Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the findings and conclusions of the study.

1. New state directors of vocational education should conduct studies of quality programs in other states at the time they take on responsibilities as the state director of vocational education.

2. State leaders such as governors, legislators, and chief state school officers should take advantage of similar case studies as they strive to develop overall quality educational systems.

3. State directors of vocational education, boards of vocational education, and other educational leaders should consider the importance of the quality factors identified in this study when developing a quality system. Emphasis should be given to a clear mission statement, a diversified delivery system, and the establishment and enforcement of program standards.

4. Further studies should be conducted in a variety of states to determine if similar factors of quality exist regardless of reputation.

5. Qualitative studies regarding state systems of vocational education should be expanded both in breadth and depth. Such studies should be expanded to include comparisons of states with a reputation of high quality and other states.



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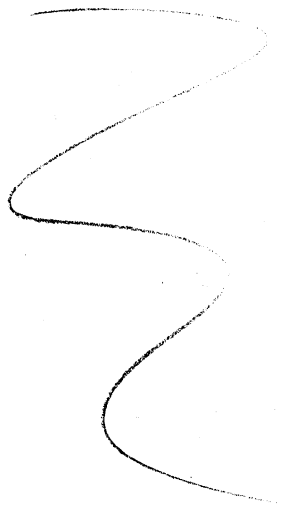
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APPENDIXES



APPENDIX A  
LETTERS TO DIRECTORS



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

ROY PETERS, DIRECTOR • 1500 WEST SEVENTH AVE., • STILLWATER, OKLAHOMA 74074-4364 • A.C. (405) 377-2000

July 14, 1986

Dr. Jack Struck  
Executive Director  
National Association of State  
Directors of Vocational Education  
200 Lamp Post Lane  
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17011

Dear Jack:

Last fall I requested your assistance in gathering the information about each state's governance structure and the impact that this structure has on the quality of vocational education that is provided. This information will be used for my dissertation.

I am now ready to start gathering information and I need your assistance. I would like to request that you ask each State Director in the fifty states and four trust territories to respond to the following question: "Which three states or territories, other than your own, do you think have the highest quality vocational education systems?" A recommended memo and return are enclosed.

After you receive responses from each state, I will tabulate the responses and through a consensus of opinion, identify the three "best" states/territories. I plan to visit each of these three locations and conduct an analysis to identify similarities which exist, if any. To assure that I receive honest, unbiased input, I'd prefer that you not indicate to the State Directors that I am the individual which is collecting this information. I've drafted and enclosed a possible inquiry for your use. Would you please review and let me know if you feel revisions are necessary.

Sincerely,

Roy Peters, Jr.  
State Director  
Vocational and Technical Education

Enclosures

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

July 21, 1986

TO: State Directors of Vocational Education  
FROM: Jack Struck, Executive Director, NASDVE

One of our directors is working on a dissertation and has requested your assistance.

As the State Director of Vocational and Technical Education and based solely on your perception, please identify on the form below the three states or territories, other than your own, which have the best vocational education systems. Please respond based on your perception only and without any criteria being specified.

Responding to this question is only step one in the dissertation but a consensus opinion is needed. Your response on the form below by August 8 is appreciated.

My State Is: \_\_\_\_\_

The "Best" Three States Are:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Dr. Jack Struck, Executive Director  
National Association of State Directors of Vocational Education  
200 Lamp Post Lane  
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17011



APPENDIX B

LIST OF INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

## INDIVIDUALS INTERVIEWED

## Ohio

Director Emeritus  
Director  
Associate Director

Byrl Shoemaker  
Darrell Parks  
Sonia Price

## Florida

Director Emeritus  
Director  
Chief of Vocational Program  
and Staff Development

Joe Mills  
Robert Howell  
Patsy Agee

## Oklahoma

Director Emeritus  
Deputy Director  
Assistant Director for  
Occupational Programs

Francis Tuttle  
Victor Van Hook  
Ann Benson

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

## DIRECTOR EMERITUS

Research questions to be answered are:

- A. What are the identifiable state level factors that influence the quality of a state's vocational-technical education programs?
- B. How do these factors interact with each other to influence the quality of a state's vocational-technical programs?
- C. Are there factors which seem to have dominant influence in determining the quality of a state's vocational-technical programs?

GOVERNANCE:

1. State directors in 50 states and four trust territories were asked to identify the three states (or territories) which he/she perceives to have the highest quality state vocational education delivery system. Your state was one of the three selected. If you could identify one single reason for having achieved this status, what would that reason be?
2. What is the role of the state director with:
  - the legislature?
  - the governor?
  - the chief state school officer?
3. What is the governance structure in your state? How does this governance structure impact the relationship of the state director with:
4. Describe the state director's scope of authority. (i.e., administrative process for approval of out-of-state travel, allocation of personnel, purchasing)
  - the governor?
  - the state board of education?
  - the state board of vocational and technical education?
  - the chief state school officer?
5. Has the governance structure been changed recently? If so, what was the previous structure(s)?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the existing governance structure and/or previous governance structures?
7. How are the members of the state board of vocational and technical education and/or state board of education selected?
8. How is the state director appointed? What process is used? Is the method used for employing a state director a stabilizing factor?

**Page Two**

9. How many state directors have there been in (state) during the past 25 years? Has this rate of state director turnover impacted the vocational education delivery system?
10. What is the primary role of the vocational education state agency?
11. What is the relationship between vocational education and comprehensive education?
12. What is the relationship between vocational education and higher education?
13. How many employees work for the vocational education state agency? Is this more or less employees than when you were state director?
14. What is the relationship between vocational education and higher education?
15. If one of the states (that was not selected as one of the top three states) asked you to recommend what could be done to improve the quality of vocational education in their state — what would you say?
16. What were the priorities for vocational education during the past 10 years?
17. Do you perceive program evaluation as "a compliance activity" or "an assessment tool for program improvement" or both?
18. Are all programs evaluated? If not, which programs are evaluated and how are these programs identified?

## DIRECTOR

Research questions to be answered are:

- A. What are the identifiable state level factors what influence the quality of a state's vocational and technical education programs?
- B. How do these factors interact with each other to influence the quality of a state's vocational-technical programs?
- C. Are there factors which seem to have dominant influence in determining the quality of a state's vocational-technical programs?

Questionnaire for the State Director

1. State directors in 50 states and four trust territories were asked to identify the three states (or territories) which he/she perceives to have the highest quality state vocational education delivery system. Your state has "one of the three" selected. If you could identify one single reason for having achieved this status, what would that reason be?
2. What is the role of the state director in:
  - coordinating with the legislature?
  - coordinating with the governor?
  - coordinating with the chief state school officer?
3. Describe the state director's scope of authority. (i.e., administrative process for approving of out-of-state travel, allocation of personnel, purchasing)
4. What is the governance structure in your state? How does this governance structure impact the relationship of the state director with:
  - the governor?
  - the state board of education?
  - the state board of vocational and technical education?
  - the chief state school officer?
5. Has the governance structure been changed recently? If so, what was the previous structure(s)?
6. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the existing governance structure and/or previous governance structures?
7. How are the members of the state board of vocational and technical education and/or state board of education selected?
8. Is the state director elected or appointed? What process is used? Is the method used for employing a state director a stabilizing factor?

## Page Two

9. How many state directors have there been in (state) during the past 25 years? How this rate of state director turnover impacted the vocational education delivery system?
10. What is the primary role of the vocational education state agency?
11. What is the relationship between vocational education and comprehensive education?
12. What is the relationship between vocational education and higher education?
13. How many employees work for the vocational education state agency? Is this more or less employees than when you were state director?
14. What is the relationship between vocational education and higher education?
15. If one of the states (that was not selected as one of the top three states) asked you to recommend what could be done to improve the quality of vocational education in their state — what would you say?
16. What were the priorities for vocational education during the past 10 years?
17. Do you perceive program evaluation as "a compliance activity" or "an assessment tool for program improvement" or both?
18. Are all programs evaluated? If not, which programs are evaluated and how are these programs identified?
19. What is the relationship between the state vo-tech agency and teacher education institutions?
20. What percentage of the state vo-tech staff belong to the American Vocational Association (AVA) and related vocational education associations?
21. Does the program supervisory staff actively encourage teachers to belong to AVA and participate in AVA activities? Does the program supervisory staff actively encourage teachers to belong to the state affiliate association of AVA and to participate in state association activities?
22. Does the state vo-tech agency have a public information staff? How many employees in the public information section? What is the role of public information?
23. When you receive a request for information from another state director or state staff in another state, how do you respond? What priority do you place on this type of request?
24. Are program supervisors organized by occupational area, by type of institution in which program/teacher is located, or a combination of both?
25. What is the approximate ratio of number of program supervisors to:
  - number of instructional programs?
  - number of teachers?

Page Three

26. Has state funding for vocational education increased or decreased during the past five years?
27. Where are the full-time secondary programs offered?
28. Where are the full-time adult programs offered?
29. What characteristics describe the top-level management team of the state vo-tech staff?
30. Compare or contrast the management styles of the last two (past and present) state directors?
31. What type of program standards have you implemented? How are programs monitored and standards enforced?
32. What program approval responsibility does the state vo-tech agency have for programs in the comprehensive schools? In the collegiate institutions?
33. Do you have area vo-tech schools? How many and how are they organized? Are the area vo-tech schools responsible for the outstanding reputation that your state has earned?
34. Are the comprehensive school vocational programs responsible for the outstanding reputation that your state has earned?
35. How much emphasis has been placed on short-term adult programs?
36. How much emphasis has been placed on industry-specific training? Does the state agency provide industry-specific training or assist the schools in providing training?
37. Has the state vo-tech staff emphasized in-service training for teachers?
38. How much emphasis has been placed on vocational student organizations? Are state vo-tech staff assigned vocational student organization coordination responsibilities?



## OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM SUPERVISOR

## Research questions to be answered are:

- A. What are the identifiable state level factors that influence the quality of a state's vocational-technical education programs?
- B. How do these factors interact with each other to influence the quality of a state's vocational-technical programs?
- C. Are there factors which seem to have dominant influence in determining the quality of a state's vocational-technical programs?

Questions for Program Supervisor

1. State directors in 50 states and four trust territories were asked to identify the three states (or territories) which he/she perceives to have the highest quality state vocational education delivery system. Your state was one of the three selected. If you could identify one single reason for having achieved this status, what would that reason be?
2. What is the primary role of the vocational education state agency?
3. What is the relationship between vocational education and comprehensive education?
4. What is the relationship between vocational education and higher education?
5. How many employees work for the vocational education state agency have? Is this more or less than when you were state director?
6. What were the priorities for vocational education during the past 10 years?
7. Do you perceive program evaluation as "a compliance activity" or "an assessment tool for program improvement" or both?
8. Are all programs evaluated? If not, which programs are evaluated and how are these programs identified?
9. What is the relationship between the state vo-tech agency and teacher education institutions?
10. What percentage of the state vo-tech staff belong to the American Vocational Association (AVA) and related vocational education associations?
11. Does the program supervisory staff actively encourage teachers to belong to AVA and participate in AVA activities? Does the program supervisory staff actively encourage teachers to belong to the state affiliate association of AVA and to participate in state association activities?
12. Does the state vo-tech agency have a public information staff? How many employees in the public information section? What is the role of public information?

## Page Two

15. When you receive a request for information from state staff in another state, how do you respond? What priority do you place on this type of request?
14. Are program supervisors organized by occupational area, by type of institution in which program/teacher is located, or a combination of both?
15. What is the approximate ratio of number of program supervisors to:
  - number of instructional programs?
  - number of teachers?
16. Has state funding for vocational education increased or decreased during the past five years?
17. Where are the full-time secondary programs offered?
18. Where are the full-time adult programs offered?
19. What characteristics describe the top-level management team of the state vo-tech staff?
20. Compare or contrast the management styles of the last two (past and present) state directors?
21. What type of program standards have you implemented? How are programs monitored and standards enforced?
22. What program approval responsibility does the state vo-tech agency have for programs in the comprehensive schools? In the collegiate institutions?
23. Do you have area vo-tech schools? How many and how are they organized? Are the area vo-tech schools responsible for the outstanding reputation that your state has earned?
24. Are the comprehensive school vocational programs responsible for the outstanding reputation that your state has earned?
25. How much emphasis has been placed on short-term adult programs?
26. How much emphasis has been placed on industry-specific training? Does the state agency provide industry-specific training or assist the schools in providing training?
27. Has the state vo-tech staff emphasized in-service training for teachers?
28. How much emphasis has been placed on vocational student organizations? Are state vo-tech staff assigned vocational student organization coordination responsibilities?

2  
VITA

Roy Virgil Peters, Jr.

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

**Thesis:** A CASE STUDY OF THREE STATES IDENTIFIED AS HAVING  
A HIGH-QUALITY STATE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM

**Major Field:** Occupational and Adult Education

**Biographical:**

**Personal Data:** Born in Chickasha, Oklahoma, on June 3, 1942, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy V. Peters, Sr.

**Education:** Graduated from Alex High School, Alex, Oklahoma, in May, 1959; received Bachelor of Science degree in Business Education from the University of Oklahoma in 1964; received Master of Science degree in Technical Education from Oklahoma State University in 1972; received Professional Certificate in School Administration from the University of Oklahoma in 1976; completed requirements for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in December, 1987.

**Professional Experience:** Distributive Education and Business Education teacher at U. S. Grant High School, 1964-71; teacher at Oklahoma City Adult Institute, 1964-71; Coordinator of Cooperative Vocational Education (CVE) Institutes, Central State University, summers of 1971, 1972, and 1973; Adult Education Specialist, Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, 1971-73; Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Moore-Norman Area Vocational-Technical School, 1973-79; Superintendent, Canadian Valley Area Vocational-Technical School, 1979-84; Associate State Director, State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, 1984-85; State Director, State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, 1986-present.