TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF BUSINESS CURRICULUM FOR ENTRY LEVEL WORD PROCESSING CONCEPTS

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TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF BUSINESS CURRICULUM

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Dramatic changes in office procedures in the field of business have occurred for the past several years. As business moved further in the age of automation it became increasingly important that business courses adapt to the change. Word processing and office automation has presented a challenge to business and office occupation teachers. Students must be produced who function efficiently in an office as well as adapting to new systems as they were implemented (Moody and Matthews, 1978).

In 1964 the International Business Machines (IBM) World Trade Corporation in Germany introduced the word processing concept (Rosen, 1977). At that time the Magnetic Tape Selectric Typewriter (MTST) was introduced into the business office to facilitate the preparation of reports. Utilizing the MTST, it was possible for office workers to type business correspondence, play back error-free copies, and store (or save) the typed information on magnetic tape for reuse (Rosen, 1977).

When the word processing (WP) concept was introduced, the primary emphasis was upon the production of written communication or the typing function. Today word processing is a systematic approach utilized to manage all the tasks performed by secretarial/clerical office workers--both typing and non-typing (Ellis, 1982).

As suggested by Rosen (1977) typists using automatic typewriters, can do all typing at rough draft speed. Corrections can be made quickly and easily, and a finished document can be typed out at 175 words per minute. This means there is never a need to manually retype any data that has been fed into a storage medium.

In his article in The Office, Shantz (1974), president of Word Process Innovators, Inc., writes:

> When management, supervisors, and operators are properly trained, word processing is the most productive force ever brought to bear on the handling of written communication in business (p. 10).

As progress comes to the business world, teachers must be prepared to redesign the curriculum, but it must be done from the foundation of careful assessment, accurate data, and planning. The challenge lies in meeting both the needs of the traditional office and the automated office, while preparing for continuous renovation of the curriculum to keep pace with the business world. All this must be done on public education budget which seldom allows for expensive word processing equipment (Moody and Matthews, 1978).

Problem

The new knowledge and technology of business offices forces constant renovation of the business curriculums with limited budgets and equipment. Therefore, there is a need to know if the current business curriculum could be used to teach entry level word processing skills.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if the business teachers in Pottawatomie County believe that the current business

curriculum and machines available can be used to prepare students for entry level word processing jobs.

Objectives

To accomplish this purpose, the following objectives had to be attained according to the perceptions of Pottawatomie County Teachers of Business Education to determine (1) if the high school business education curriculum is adequate to teach word processing skills and concepts, (2) the extent this basic curriculum is being used, (3) if more or less information should be included in order to teach the specific skills, (4) if this approach to curriculum development is taking any initiative away from the development of proficient word processing operators, (5) if this approach to word processing skills has been used by teachers in the local community, and (6) if a need exists for a curriculum dealing with these word processing skills in the business education curriculum.

Assumptions

1. The assumption was that word processing concepts can be taught in present business classrooms with appropriate teaching materials and the electric typewriter.

2. The assumption was made in this research that students with a knowledge of word processing concepts would be given operational instruction in word processing equipment by industries.

Scope and Limitations

1. This study dealt only with entry level skills and vocabulary for word processing. It did not include the operation of the equipment.

2. A survey was made of word processing skills taught in Pottawatomie County Public high school business education classrooms.

3. The questions asked were only in areas that were considered common to the students, and/or prospective students.

Definition of Terms

The following terms have been defined for use in this study:

Business Curriculum - Curriculum designated for Oklahoma High Schools in business education: Accounting, Business Communications, Business English, Business Law, Business Machines, Business Organization and Management, Careers, Consumer Economics, Data Processing, Computer Programming, Economics, General Business, Notehand, Office Procedures, Recordkeeping, Secretarial Procedures, Shorthand, Transcription, Typewriting, Word Processing.

Communications - Spelling, punctuation, grammar, vocabulary, word usage, reference book usage, reading and following directions, proofreading, editing and use of standard proofread typed copy.

Concepts - Theory, staffing pattern and ideology of the automated office.

Entry Level - Those who have zero months experience on word processing equipment. They must have adequate typing skills, good knowledge of grammar, punctuation, spelling, formatting and word processing concepts. The person who has been prepared for on the job training in word processing.

Formatting - Judgment placement from visualization of finished documents.

Keyboarding - Typing skill using the touch method on the electric typewriter.

Proofread - To read in order to make corrections.

Skills - Keyboarding on the electric typewriter at a rate of at least 50 words per minute and the proficient use of transcription machines.

Transcription Skills - Typing at a rate of 30 words per minute from recorded material.

Word Originator - The person responsible for the composition of a document.

Word Processing - Getting ideas into words, the words onto paper, and the paper communicated to the right person.

Organization of Study

Chapter I introduces the study, presenting the problem, purpose, objectives, assumptions, scope and limitation, definitions and the organization of the study. Chapter II includes the background and significance of the literature focusing on the word processing competencies; (1) typewriting, (2) communications, (3) word processing concepts and, (4) positive business attitudes and a summary. Chapter III details procedures used for collecting the data relevant to the purposes of the study, a description of the population, a description of the instrumentation used and a summary of the methodology. Chapter IV includes a presentation and analysis of the findings of the

study. Chapter V includes a summary of findings, conclusions, recommendations for practice and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Chapter II is organized as follows: background material, instructional competencies, and a summary. The instructional competencies were grouped according to a Minnesota State Department of Education Study (1974). They are typewriting (keyboarding), communications, word processing concepts and positive business attitudes.

Background Material

As progress comes to the business word, teachers must be prepared to redesign the curriculum. It must be done from the foundation of a careful assessment, both the needs of the traditional office and of the automated office must be considered, while preparing for continuous renovation of the curriculum to keep pace with the business world.

Expensive equipment was desirable in teaching word processing skills. It would have been advantageous for students to have the opportunity to train on automatic typewriters. The researcher, however, in reviewing literature found the system encompassed much more than automatic keyboards. Two South Carolina educators, Moody and Matthews (1978), established simulations with the use of the electric typewriters and dictating equipment. They demonstrated that much entry level word processing skills could be incorporated into the current

business classes without expensive equipment and a radical change in the business curriculum.

The main objective of business education is to prepare students to work in an office, but business education instructors must constantly ask what office. Haff (1982) commented:

> Ten years ago the office meant electric typewriters and shorthand dictation. Today it means electronic memory typewriters, machine dictation, text-editing machines, and micro-computers. Bridging the gap between what is actually being taught at the secondary level is not an easy task (p. 19).

Business and office educators should not let the present thrust of word processing frighten them or make them feel that their total program needs to be revised. Some changes needed to be made to facilitate a new vocabulary and new equipment as well as a new staffing pattern. Many professionals, as this researcher has noted, suggest that basic skills and advanced training are equally important to the entry level word processor.

Competencies

Moody and Matthews (1978) first identified the need for word processors, then the specific competencies needed by entry-level word processing personnel. Increased emphasis on important competencies was reflected in a great deal of the literature reviewed. The Minnesota State Department of Education in 1974 grouped these competencies in four instructional areas to be incorporated in presently existing classes. They were typewriting, communication, word processing concepts and, positive business attitudes.

The researcher found Sherwood and Arnold (1982) organized those

entry level word processing skills which were taught with only an electric typewriter and dictating equipment in five major teaching competencies. These competencies were; keyboarding, written communication, organizational, word processing concepts and business attitudes.

Ellis (1982) suggests the following theory in her strategies for incorporating word processing. After a review of the technical and affective skills needed by word processing workers she realized that such skills can be developed in business education course offerings. Both technical skills--English grammar, proofreading, spelling, typing, ability to punctuate correctly-and the personal traits needed to foster good human relations on the job were consistent with the skills currently being taught in typewriting, shorthand, business communications, office procedures and, numerous other course offerings, in the business education curriculum of public schools.

The actual machine processing does not take place until the data has been input by the worker. Office technology has changed, but the skills needed by those who work in the word processing environment still included the basic skills to be included in this research. This research incorporated the idea of all the literature and used the instructional competencies put forth by the Minnesota State Department of Education (1974).

Typewriting

The core of the electronic office communication systems was the typewriter keyboard. The possession of basic keyboarding skills was

the prime requirement for word processing operators in the executive typing function (Perkins, 1980).

The typewriting course was cited as an excellent place to introduce the word processing concept. To help students understand how their skills were used in the automated office Ellis (1952) suggested the use of films, slide-tape presentations, and equipment demonstration or other opportunities for students to see automated word processing equipment at work.

Boyce (1982) refers to this introduction of automated offices as the "keyboarding connection." The keyboarding skill was the connection to the automated office. The instructors attitude was cited as the key in the integrating of programs. Typewriting skills were translated readily to keyboarding skills. Some alterations in keyboarding were made when computers were used. The number pattern on the computer keyboard was that of the ten key adding machine. For this study the researcher was concentrating on the alpha/numeric keyboard of the typewriter.

Reconciling typewriting to the new automated office required a new emphasis. The typist at entry level word processing was required to type anything and everything from all dictators. Actual typing experiences or simulated projects were essential. Training and mastery were essential in a variety of office procedures. Students typed from rough draft copy at a rate of fifty to sixty words per minute.

The typewriting curriculum to make the connection included:

1. Keyboarding from long hand copy with revisions from proofread typed copy.

2. Figure/symbol typing at rapid speed with accuracy by touch.

3. Formatting--judgment placement from visualization of finished documents.

4. Speed and control on documents prepared while being timed.

5. Standardized procedures and formats with a six inch line on all letters and memos; full block letter style (Holley, 1982).

Keyboarding when applied to word processing must go far beyond the simple typewriting/keyboarding skill. Keyboarding or typewriting for the word processing operator would involve five typewriting competencies (Reigel and Perkins, 1980).

The first competency attained by all students of typewriting is copying or typing material from an accurate copy. The procedure next mastered by the typewriting student was to arrange copy properly when it was presented in unarranged copy. Editing material was the third step or competency. The third and fourth competencies require communication abilities as well as typewriting skills. The level of ability that followed creating or composing at the typewriter was very important to the word processing student. The ultimate typewriting competency and the one essential to the word processing operator was the problem solving (Reigel and Perkins, 1980).

Reigel and Perkins (1980) have developed from these competencies a hierarchy of typing competencies (Figure 1). In this hierarchy the word processing operator was on the top level (Problem solving) of this pyramid. These operators were trained to solve problems as well as possessing good keyboarding skills.

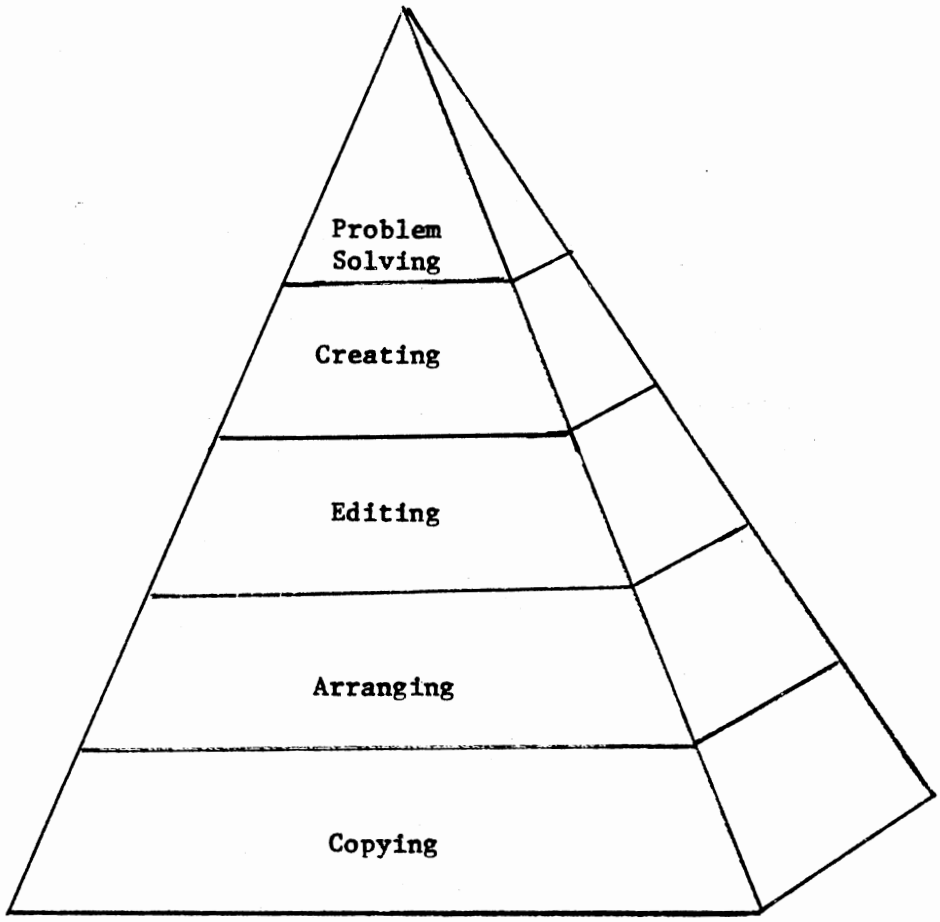

Figure 1. Hierarchy of Typing Competencies

Communication

A mail survey of more than 250 business organizations in Mississippi was conducted to determine the extent to which word processing was being used. Usable responses from 139 firms indicated that word processing equipment and systems were being used by many firms and that many more planned to add the equipment in the next five years. The survey revealed many changes in qualifications employers sought for current and future employees. Employers were not

looking for trained operators to magically appear but perceived a need for better communication skills as they related to the information processing system (Holley, 1982).

Perkins (1980, p. 3) lists superior language and decision making skills as being equally important to the electronic office system. Cecil (1976) has actually defined word processing as "an efficient system of communicating one person's ideas to another person in typewriter form."

The research indicates somewhere in our approach to adopting word processing as a way of life, the fact that the fallible nature of human ability and training is the basis for any efficient system of cummunication ideas. We have accepted that "Johnnie can't read" but, if that is true, Johnnie cannot write, spell, or punctuate. In short it must be accepted Johnnie can't communicate. If Johnnie was the originator or the receiver of communication in the automated office, the system failed (Kidwell, 1977).

Communication skills essential in the automated office were:

1. Spelling, punctuation, grammar, vocabulary, word usage
2. Using dictionaries, secretarial manuals, and other reference materials
3. Reading and following directions
4. Proofreading, editing and use of standard proofread typed copy
5. Composition, editing, revising and machine dictation and transcription techniques (Holley, 1982).

Options for providing communication in a separate course included emphasizing composition and English mechanics throughout typewriting

training. Kidwell (1977) advocated the typewriting-communication combination as providing a more practical and universal application in word processing.

The use of machine dictation and transcription have expanded as we move toward the automated office. In order to be prepared for word processing the student was given programs in machine dictation and transcription.

Dictation and composition may be learned as part of transcription or in an English course. The ability of word processing specialists to understand every word that is dictated, figured importantly in their productivity rate. The business letter was one project in this training but all kinds of materials were being used in developing these skills (Johnson, 1976).

The word originator had the responsibility of composition. It was necessary for students to have business letter writing skills at an employable level.

To compose an effective letter, planning and organization of materials was essential. Three steps were emphasized in this composition (1) determine the purpose, (2) gather references, (3) prepare an outline (Levitt, 1982).

Machine transcription is often the "forgotten" link in the word processing cycle. In order to utilize machine transcription the student must be trained to produce usable copy with original transcription. The efficient operator's transcription was free from error. Machine transcription training to the usable skill stage was essential for word processing operators (Kidwell, 1977).

The demand for word processing operators with transcription skills paralleled the growth of word processing; therefore, business education students must be given machine transcription skills beyond the acquaintanceship. A semester course in machine transcription was suggested to meet the demands of word processing employers (Wilkens, 1981).

To meet the objective, first-time, final, mailable copy from machine dictation, Wilkens (1981) had some specific teaching suggestions:

1. Introduce machine transcription and sell the importance of it to the students.
2. Demonstrate machine transcription carefully
3. Give individual performance tests
4. Teach listening
5. Differentiation between dictation and operational instructions
6. Typewriting exercises from transcription
7. Spelling
8. Review punctuation and grammar
9. Encourage proofreading skills
10. Teach the use of reference tools
11. Review letter, memorandum, and report formats
12. Review correction techniques and require all errors to be corrected.

Johnson (1976) advanced problems of all kinds in machine transcription. The students were expected to achieve 25 to 30 production words per minute from transcription machines.

Word Processing Concepts

The state of Minnesota has developed teacher training in word processing with 75 percent of the training done without machines. In the areas of concepts were listed theory, center responsibilities and the duties of word processing positions (Minnesota Department of Education, 1974).

The theory of word processing was integrated in already existing classrooms in some situations and taught as a one semester course in others. This researcher found an excellent text already published by South-Western Publishing Company, Word Processing Concepts, designed for a one semester course using only the dictating machine and the electric typewriter (Casady, 1980).

The student of word processing concepts must first realize word processing is essentially manipulation of words. In following this concept the original document is prepared containing the information and thoughts which are transmitted on a typewriter keyboard by the operator using text-editing machines or a display writer. The document is formatted and edited and then prepared for transmission. Word processing terminology was used and taught as part of the course work whether an integrated course or a concentrated course in word processing.

Field trips were found to be a visualization of the classroom concepts for students. The students were allowed to observe the word processing cycle (Input, output, revision, distribution and storage). An overview of the functions of word processing equipment along with the system integrated with data processing gave the students a better overview of the system (Haff, 1982).

The Cliffside Park High School applied for word processing equipment. Two years before the equipment was put in place they initiated word processing concepts in existing classrooms. The courses included word processing skills, terminology and concepts. After the two years with this curriculum, careful planning and much dedication the project was brought to fruition (Williams, 1982).

Cognitive learning skills were essential in learning the concepts of word processing. The student had to learn to think.

This researcher found reading word processing literature to be helpful to the student as well as to the instructor. Nardone (1982) suggests the use of word processing consultants monthly newsletters as excellent learning tools. In addition to business-oriented publications many weekly news magazines contained information about office automation.

Modern principles of records management and reprographics were included in the things to be taught. Even though much of the equipment used for records management was too expensive for schools to purchase; it was suggested procedures, terminology and techniques could be introduced. Word processing systems of the future, it was predicted, would have characteristics of random access storage and retrieval, complementary micropublishing systems, and decentralized input station. The business instructor was admonished to stay abreast of these future systems and introduce them to the student in the classroom.

Johnson (1976) describes the entry level word processor becoming familiar with the concepts and terminology of the process without the use of machines. In office simulations it was necessary to understand

systems planning, workflow and measurement. People, procedures and equipment properly organized and carefully selected, can improve communications in most businesses. Illustrations and field trips were used. Slides were made by the instructor to introduce students to the world of word processing and acquainting them with terminology and equipment.

A study by Holley (1982) emphasized classes incorporating concepts of word and information processing. This involved what word processing meant, why it had developed, and where it fit in the information system. She further concluded the courses should include such information processing as electronic mail, micrographics, video-conferencing, micro-computers and other optional character recognition equipment.

Learning the concepts of the word processors for the student fresh out of high school was rewarding and meant higher pay at entry level jobs. In this area there was no competition with older workers. It had been necessary for teachers to widen their base of knowledge to include the vernacular common to processing equipment. Although most educational institutions could not afford the actual equipment for practical use, the students were familiarized with the concepts and commands behind the word processor.

Positive Business Attitudes

Experts in the field of the automated office agreed positive business attitudes were essential. Word processing has affected office careers and job skills requirements. Three of the areas that have been affected are worker-management relationships, upward mobility and job responsibility.

Cited by Holley (1982) and others as positive business attitudes are:

1. A desire to do a good job
2. Understanding the need for teamwork and good interpersonal relations
3. Time management
4. Managerial and supervisory techniques.

Included in managerial and supervisory techniques were the ability to think, concentrate, make decisions, set priorities, meet deadlines and accept responsibilities.

Office simulations were used to show the student the need for positive attitudes. The students merged their basic and advanced skills in as many real situations as possible. They included the ability to work with others; the need to make decisions; remembering and following directions; learning how to give information; the ability to take criticism; the development of confidence; the ability to be creative. Students learned to handle serious incidents in job experience; to choose priorities. Finally they learned to work under pressure with skills and attitudes taught in the area of word processing simulation (Johnson, 1976).

WP systems needed highly skilled administrative secretaries, secretaries who could organize ideas. Each office has a sensitivity all its own and secretaries must be able to move with the pulse of that office.

McConnell (1979), technical support manager for Cutler-Williams, Inc., discussed needs in word processing. He admonished teachers to

teach their students to think and not be afraid of innovation. Furthermore he urged them to teach their students to be concise and to judge which materials deserve their attention and which can wait.

Promotion depended on how far beyond the "skills" capacity the secretary extended, was the expert opinion of Lewin (1980). Unless new skill was learned on the job, or a technical vocabulary added to what the secretary already knew, actual secretarial skills played a very small part in promotion.

Any discussion of management skills led to a discussion of time management or it was often referred to as the establishment of priorities. Students were taught in integrated classrooms a healthy attitude in time management. That attitude emphasized there was enough time to do the things you want to do when time was controlled and assignments prioritized to meet the goal of a job well done (Stull, 1981).

Perkins (1980) denotes that a training program led students in gradual stages to office problems that require more and more judgment, creativeness, and problem solving. It is the higher-level competencies that are becoming increasingly important as the automated office becomes more prevalent. Upward mobility of the WP worker was directly related to the competencies and skill level of the worker. The WP worker progressed upward into positions simply on their ability to handle the requirements with increased responsibilities.

In contrast to the conventional business office, where workers were assigned to individualized managers, word processing employees were ultimately assigned their job tasks on the basis of the existing

work load. Therefore duties were reassigned and redistributed among workers when necessary.

Clearly, according to Holley's (1982) study, an entirely new component of education for secretarial support personnel was needed. The emphasis was word and information processing systems and a particular need was cited for human relations and the concept of teamwork.

Summary

According to this study of the literature, few high school business classrooms offered any word processing training. They were the rare exceptions and it will be some years before word processor employers can rely on schools for machine trained personnel.

The new employee to be proficient had to have some hands on experience with automatic typewriters and they needed a period of training and orientation to familiarize themselves with the particular word use needs and document procedures of the organization. Rosen (1977) argues the knowledge gap is wide between traditional secretarial skills and the sophisticated WP environment. Holley (1982) recommends some hands on experience with some type of automatic typewriter.

Kidwell (1977) warns

> Before we make sweeping changes in our training programs we must look to research to provide answers to several important questions.
>
> 1. How much of word processing is concerned with managerial readjustment of office functions, without materially changing the working skills we now produce?
>
> 2. Do we have a strong basis for believing that word processing through the use of machine transcription is, indeed, an efficient way of cutting office cost?

> 3. Do we know that written communication skills are as important as we assume they are? Rising postage and production costs may point toward equal or greater emphasis on oral communication skills.
>
> 4. Do we know the extent of computer-assisted communication projected for future business word processing centers; what training should we be providing for students in basic computer usage and applications?
>
> 5. Does the word processing concept in practice provide for progression to jobs of greater responsibilities and pay, or are these jobs considered by business to be dead-end in nature? (p. 123).

It was indicated by the study that in teaching word processing, both the pros and cons of the system should be thoroughly examined. A prime factor in success was the correct selection of personnel. Careful selection of students was imperative.

Johnson (1976) expresses the need for business and office occupations teachers to keep themselves informed on this rapidly changing scene. Business leaders quoted in business journals have made some startling predictions. Business Week, for example, quotes Pake (1975) of Xerox Corporation as saying that word processing will change the office "like the jet plane has revolutionized travel and the way television has altered family life" (p. 31). The same issue also quotes the Royal Typewriter Company: "There's some speculation that word processing will be bigger than data processing in ten years" (p. 32).

Traditionally, this study has shown, three basic strategies used in teaching word processing or the automated office. These strategies are (1) equipment only, (2) theory and concepts and (3) a combination of both (Turner, 1981). Turner (1981) further suggests the last approach is the one that provides the ideal preparation for the automated office. Realistically this approach was not always

possible due to cost. The integrated program teaching typewriting, communication, word processing concepts and business attitudes was a practical solution.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the procedures utilized for collecting data relevant to the purposes of the study as outlined in Chapter I. Included are: (1) a description of the population; (2) a description of the instrumentation; (3) an analysis of the data and; (4) a summary of the methodology. The attempt was made in this research to determine if entry level word processing concepts could be taught through integrating into the existing business classes four competencies: typewriting and keyboarding skills, communication skills, word processing concepts, and understanding of business management with a positive attitude toward it.

Population

The information that was gathered from the review of literature aided the researcher in designing a telephone interview to be used in each public high school in Pottawatomie County. These schools' student population and the number of business teachers in each school are illustrated on Table I in this chapter. The student population of the schools ranged from 77 to 946. Six schools had only one business teacher while Shawnee High School had four on their high school faculty. The survey found in the appendix used descriptive statistics;

it was designed to describe the status quo as perceived by the business teachers in public high schools in Pottawatomie County.

TABLE I

POPULATION OF POTTAWATOMIE COUNTY SCHOOLS

School	Classification	Population	Number of Business Teachers
Shawnee	5A	946	4
Tecumseh	3A	615	3
McLoud	3A	384	2
Bethel	3A	267	2
Dale	2A	130	1
Maud	2A	103	1
Wanette	A	122	1
Macomb	B	99	1
Asher	B	77	1
Earlsboro	B	101	1

The researcher made a calling list of the population from a directory secured from the Pottawatomie County Superintendent's office in the Pottawatomie County Court House located in Shawnee, Oklahoma. The Shawnee School System functions independently of the Pottawatomie County Superintendent, therefore, it was necessary to get a list of the business teachers in Shawnee Schools from the Shawnee High School Office. When the calling list was completed the population surveyed consisted of 17 Pottawatomie County Business Teachers. This questionnaire was used in January, 1983. The researcher determined those being called would have completed first semester grades and would be the most receptive to a telephone questionnaire at this time.

Instrumentation

A telephone interview was selected as the instrument because the response rate has proven to be good. It was imperative that an exceptionally high response rate be received because the respondents would be a small group.

After the researcher was properly introduced on the telephone, the purpose, to determine if the business teachers in Pottawatomie County believe that the current business curriculum and machines available can be used to prepare students for entry level word processing jobs, was stated. The introductory statement that was used is illustrated in the Appendix of this study. An introductory questionnaire found in the Appendix of this study was a series of questions to help the researcher assess background, education, attitude and comfort level of those being surveyed with both word processors and the word processing capabilities of the computer.

The telephone survey found in Appendix B of this study was designed to meet the objectives of the study as stated in Chapter I. Those objectives are to determine: (1) if the high school business education curriculum is adequate to teach word processing skills; (2) the extent this basic curriculum is being used; (3) if more or less information should be included in order to teach the specific skills; (4) if this approach to curriculum development is taking any initiative away from the development of proficient word processing operators; (5) if this approach to word processing skills has been used by teachers in the Pottawatomie County schools; (6) if a need exists for a curriculum dealing with these word processing skills in the business education curriculum.

The telephone survey was well received by all of the 17 Pottawatomie County Business Teachers. Two respondents were busy when the first call was made and a return call was made. It was necessary to call one respondent during her planning period at her school. The survey calls were made to the other 16 teachers between seven and nine p.m. The survey averaged thirteen minutes telephone time at an average cost of 97 cents.

Data Analysis

The results of this telephone questionnaire to the Pottawatomie County Business Teachers were illustrated on a table showing responses in totals and percentages as well as giving the mean response to the telephone survey in the Appendix. The final results were then tallied and plotted on a bar graph to illustrate the Pottawatomie County Business Teachers' perceptions of the adequacy of the present business

curriculum for teaching entry level word processing concepts. These graphics, Table III and Table IV, were placed in Chapter IV of this study.

Summary

In analyzing this study, responses dealing only with entry level skills and vocabulary for word processing were considered. Any discussion of equipment operation was eliminated. Questions considered for this research dealt only in areas that are considered common to all area students who fit within the above assumption.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter is organized to present an analysis of data to determine if business teachers in Pottawatomie County believe the current business curriculum and machines available can be used to prepare students for entry level word processing jobs. The chapter contains demographic characteristics, an analysis of the data and a summary.

The assumption was that word processing concepts can be taught in present business classrooms with appropriate teaching materials and the electric typewriter. In order to accomplish this purpose, the following specific objectives had to be attained according to the perceptions of Pottawatomie County Teachers of Business Education: to determine (1) if high school business education curriculum is adequate to teach WP skills; (2) the extent this basic curriculum is being used; (3) if more or less information should be included in order to teach the specific skills; (4) if this approach to curriculum development is taking any initiative away from the development of proficient word processing operators, if this approach to word processing skills has been used by teachers in the local county; and (6) if a need exists for a curriculum dealing with these word processing skills in the business education curriculum.

Demographic Characteristics

In order to satisfy the previously stated objectives the following information was attained concerning those teachers being surveyed: (1) years of teaching experience, (2) level of education, (3) work experience in the last five years, (4) experience with word processing, (5) experience with computers, (6) the teacher's desire for experience with automated equipment. The graph and tables in this section illustrate the demographic characteristics of this introductory questionnaire.

Figure 2 illustrates the number of years of teaching experience by school classification of these 17 Pottawatomie County Business Teachers. The graph indicates, as a group, the more experienced business teachers teach in larger schools. The three smallest schools all had teachers with 10 years or less teaching experience. The range is from 4 to 21 years teaching experience with the average teaching experience of business teachers in Pottawatomie County being 11.1 years.

Table II, III, and IV illustrate each of the catagories in the introductory questionnaire. Table II presents office experience and education beyond the Bachelor degree. Table III shows experience and access to word processing equipment. Table IV illustrates the teacher's desire for word processing experience and curriculum. This background material concerning the population being investigated was used in analyzing data gathered in the telephone survey. This data gave the researcher insight into the population being investigated.

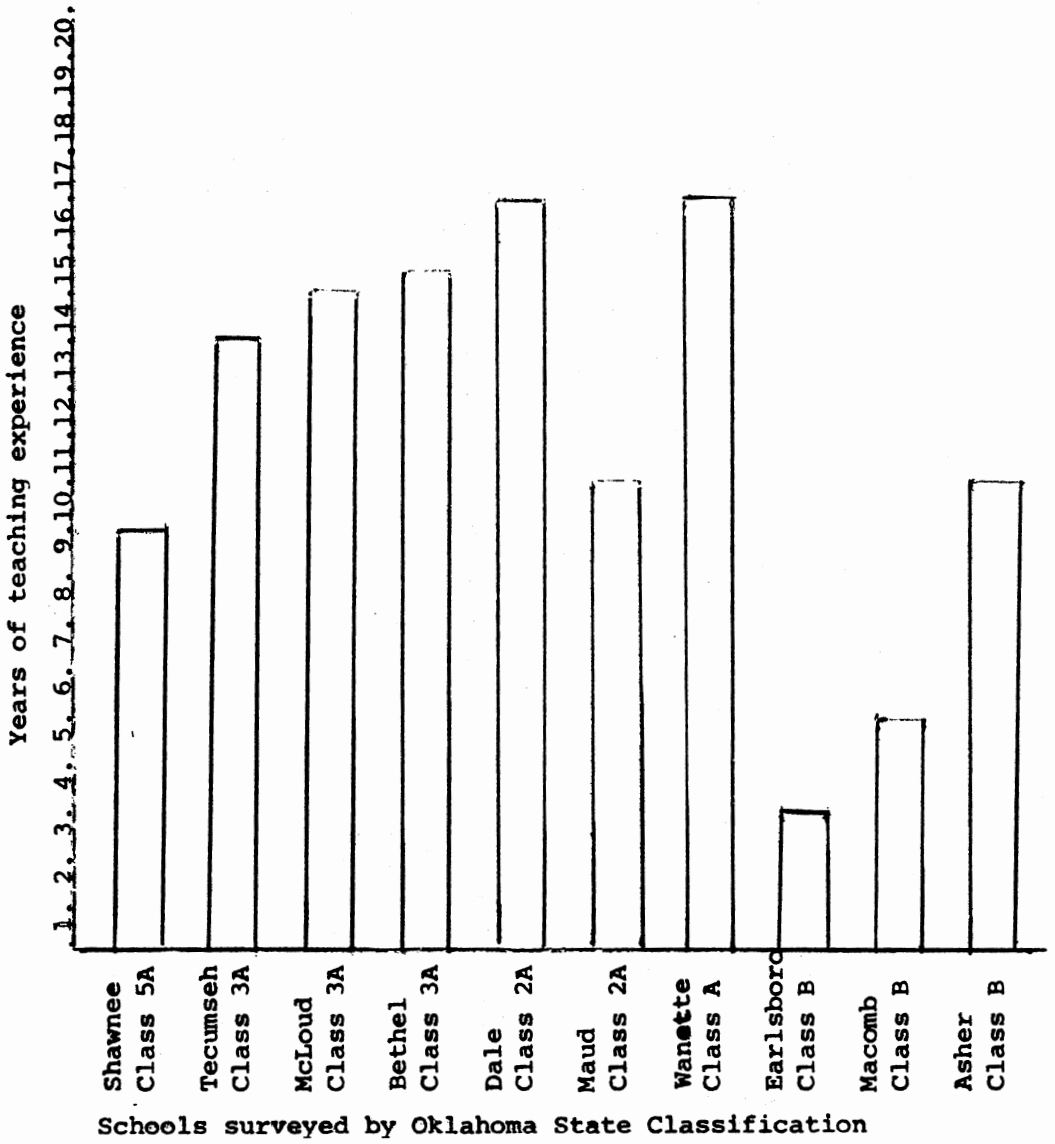

Figure 2. Years of Teaching Experience by School Classification

TABLE II

OFFICE EXPERIENCE AND EDUCATION
BEYOND BACHELOR DEGREE

Ofc. Experience in Past 5 yrs.		Masters degree		Vocational Cert.		Work Beyond Bach. degree	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
6	35	6	35	2	12	7	41

TABLE III

EXPERIENCE AND ACCESS
TO WP EQUIPMENT

In Classroom		In School		Access to WP Equip.		Experience on WP Equipment	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	.06	3	18	3	18	6	35

TABLE IV

TEACHER DESIRE FOR WP EXPERIENCE AND CURRICULUM

Desire for Exp. With WP		Desire for Exp. With Computers		Desire to Teach WP Concepts	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
10	59	13	76	11	65

Analysis of Data

The data presented in this chapter were collected from seventeen business instructors. The instructors were employed to teach in business classrooms in the ten public high schools in Pottawatomie County.

The instructors in each of the ten high schools evaluated or rated their own curriculum concerning word processing on the instrument shown in the Appendix of this study. The instrument took the form of a telephone interview.

Seventeen teachers participated in the interview. The same seventeen were asked background data on an introductory questionnaire shown in the Appendix. The researcher introduced the study and purpose in an introductory statement also found in the Appendix of this study.

The introductory questionnaire gave the following information concerning the teachers surveyed: The average years of teaching experience was 11.1 years. Four of the teachers had no work beyond the bachelor degree, seven had advanced hours, six had masters

degrees and two of the seventeen teachers also had vocational certificates. Six of the teachers had worked in a business office in the last five years and of those six, five had hands on experience with either a word processor or computer in that work. Three teachers have access to word processors presently; eight have access to computers. One teacher in the county schools has a word processor in her classroom, one classroom has a computer. Three of the ten county schools have computers in their schools which are used primarily in the math department. Ten of the teachers surveyed desired hands on experience with word processing and thirteen teachers desired hands on experience with computers. Eleven teachers wanted to teach word processing concepts and skills in their classroom and/or computer concepts and skills.

The computer has been included in the introductory survey because it has word processing capabilities. When it is referred to in this study it deals only with these word processing capabilities.

The seventeen teachers in the ten high schools in Pottawatomie County were surveyed with the telephone questionnaire in the Appendix of this study in order to find if in their opinion the current business curriculum and machines available could be used to prepare students for entry level word processing jobs. The findings of those interviewed are illustrated on Table V and VI of this study. Figure 3, a graph illustrates the composite or mean results of the telephone survey.

TABLE V

TEACHER RESPONSES IN AGREEMENT TO EACH TELEPHONE SURVEY STATEMENT

Statement	Agree		Somewhat Agree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Teaching entry WP skills should be a priority in my business classroom	5	29	9	52
Teaching entry WP concepts should be a priority in my business classroom	9	53	8	47
Bus. education curriculum is adequate in my school to teach WP skills	4	24	3	18
Bus. education curriculum is adequate in my school to teach WP concepts	5	29	6	35
Basic WP skills are being adequately taught in my school	2	12	1	6
WP concepts are being adequately taught in my school	2	12	1	6
More specific WP skills should be included in the bus. cur. of my school	14	82	2	12
More specific WP concepts should be included in the bus. cur. of my school	13	76	2	12
The concepts approach to WP is being used extensively in my school	0	0	0	0
The skills approach to WP is being used extensively in my school	1	6	1	6
There is a need for curriculum dealing with WP skills in my bus. cur.	10	59	1	6
There is a need for curriculum dealing with WP concepts in my bus. cur.	13	76	1	6
The concepts approach to teaching WP would take the initiative from the development of proficient WP operators	0	0	3	18
A combined approach to WP is being used extensively in my school	0	0	0	0

TABLE VI

TEACHER RESPONSES IN DISAGREEMENT TO EACH TELEPHONE SURVEY STATEMENT

Statement	Somewhat Disagree		Disagree	
	No.	%	No.	%
Teaching entry WP skills should be a priority in my business classroom	0	0	3	18
Teaching entry WP concepts should be a priority in my business classroom	0	0	0	0
Business education curriculum is adequate in my school to teach WP skills	2	12	8	47
Business education curriculum is adequate in my school to teach WP concepts	2	12	4	24
Basic WP skills are being adequately taught in my school	0	0	14	82
WP concepts are being adequately taught in my school	0	0	14	82
More specific WP skills should be included in the business curriculum of my school	1	6	0	0
More specific WP concepts should be included in the business curriculum of my school	1	6	1	6
The concepts approach to WP is being used extensively in my school	1	6	16	94
The skills approach to WP is being used extensively in my school	0	0	16	94
There is a need for curriculum dealing with WP skills in my business curriculum	2	12	4	24
There is a need for curriculum dealing with WP concepts in my business curriculum	1	6	2	12
The concepts approach to teaching WP would take the initiative from the development of proficient WP operators	3	18	11	65
A combined approach to WP is being used extensively in my school	0	0	17	100

Table VI illustrates the strongest teacher response to the statement, "More specific WP skills should be included in the business curriculum of my school." There was agreement among fourteen of the seventeen teachers; this was 82 percent of those surveyed. Another 12 percent somewhat agreed. The remaining 6 percent or one respondent somewhat disagreed. This respondent has a word processor in the classroom. The need for curriculum dealing with WP concepts in their business curriculum was realized by 76 percent of the respondents and 76 percent also saw a need for more curriculum dealing with WP concepts in their school.

The widest range of answers came from the statement, "Business education curriculum is adequate in my school to teach WP concepts." The answers varied from 29 percent who agreed, 35 percent somewhat agreed, 12 percent somewhat disagreed and 24 percent disagreed. There was no strong indication from the response.

The strongest response was 100 percent or seventeen of the teachers disagreed with the statement, "A combined approach is being used extensively in my school." This answer was strengthened by the response to the statements, "The concepts approach to WP is being used extensively in my school," and the statement,"The skills approach to WP is being used extensively in my school." Each of these statements brought a response of 94 percent who disagreed with the statement. The other statements that brought a high percentage of disagreement from the teachers surveyed was the statement, "Basic word processing skills are being adequately taught in my school," and "WP concepts are being adequately taught in my school."

A statement that brought some responses of "Somewhat disagree" and "Disagree" from the business teachers of Pottawatomie County was, "The concepts approach to teaching WP would take the initiative from the development of proficient WP operators." Eighteen percent of them somewhat disagreed and 65 percent disagreed. The other statement that had over one half of the respondents in these catagories was, "Business education curriculum is adequate in my school to teach WP skills." Twelve percent of those interviewed somewhat disagreed and 47 percent disagreed.

The one statement that no teacher of business in Pottawatomie County disagreed with was, "More specific word processing skills should be included in the business curriculum of my school."

The questionnaire results showed that all schools in Pottawatomie County could benefit from word processing skills being taught in their classrooms. Table IV had indicated 65 percent of the business teachers in the Pottawatomie County schools desired to teach word processing concepts in their classroom. Only one teacher in her business classroom in Pottawatomie County had a word processor in her classroom. An alternative to hands on teaching of word processing would clearly be indicated if those who desire to teach it were accommodated.

A composite of the findings of this survey is found in Figure 3 of this chapter. This graph illustrates the mean answer for each statement on the questionnaire. This graph helps to better identify the statements with a high frequency of answers that agreed or disagreed. It also helped to better identify those areas where there was no definite opinion; in other words, the answers varied greatly.

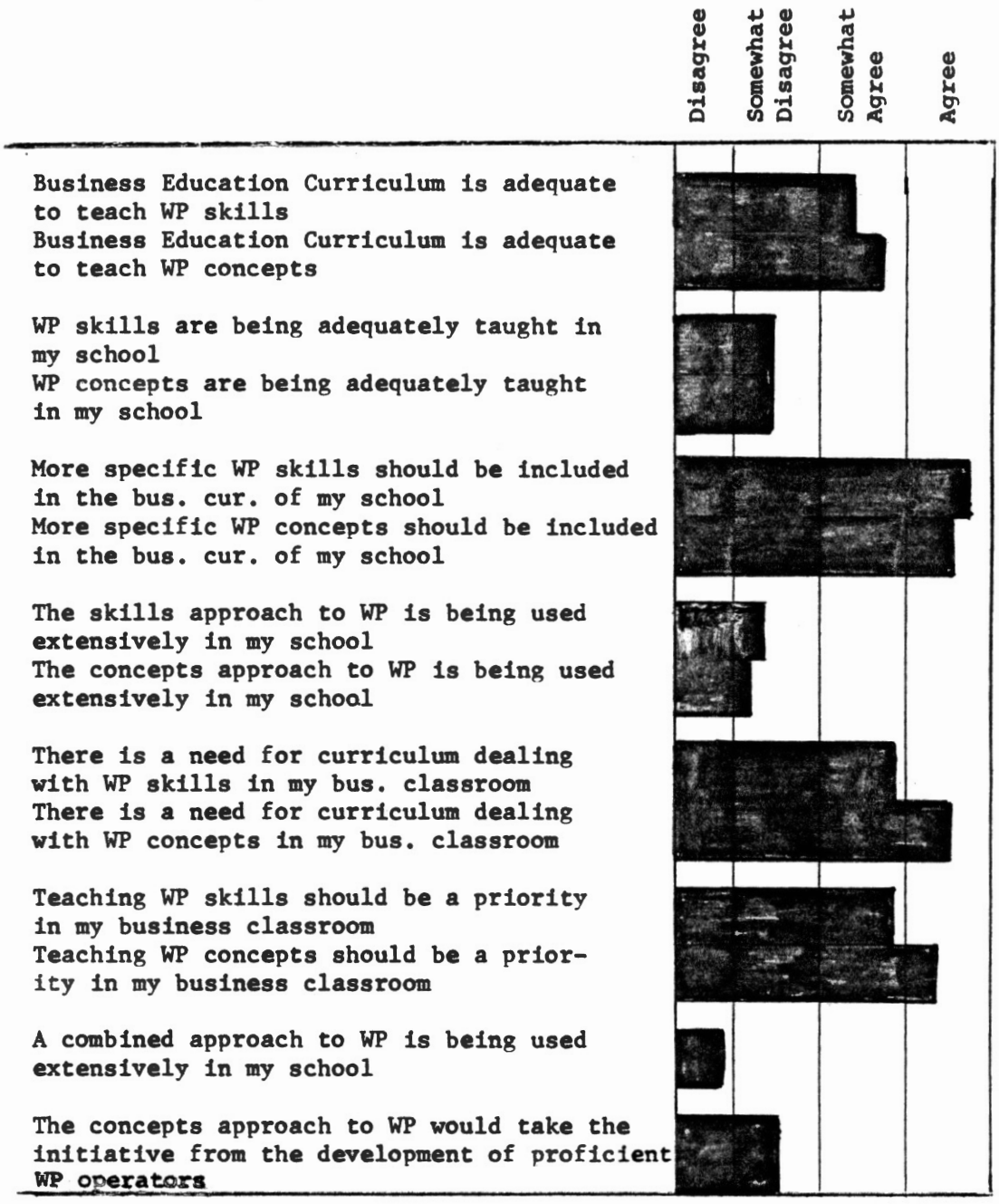

Figure 3. Composite Findings of Pottawatomie County Business Teachers

Figure 3 shows the composite findings of the telephone survey found in the appendix of this study. The responses were given numerical rankings as follows: 1, disagree; 2, somewhat disagree; 3, somewhat agree and; 4, agree. The most conclusive response was to the statement, "A combined approach to WP is being used extensively in my school." The mean numerical ranking was one; all respondents disagreed with the statement. A mean ranking of 3.8 was given to the statement suggesting more word processing skills should be included in the curriculum of the respondent's school while the same statement concerning word processing concepts received a ranking of 3.6. These first three responses reinforced each other as they are asking the same information.

There was uncertainty concerning the adequacy of the business education curriculum to teach word processing skills and concepts. Skills were ranked 2.2 while concepts were ranked 2.7. Both the need for word processing skills and prioritizing the teaching of word processing skills was given a mean ranking of 2.9 while the same statement regarding word processing concepts carried a 3.5 mean score.

The question that seemed most confusing to those being surveyed was, "The concepts approach to word processing would take the initiative from the development of proficient word processing operators." This question was given a mean ranking of 1.5, which would be somewhat disagree; however, it was not a strong response. Many of those interviewed felt they lacked the experience teaching the concepts approach to word processing as well as seeing the result of this teaching method and therefore they could not give a strong response to the question.

Summary

This study indicates the teacher's perception of a need for word processing curriculum in the business classrooms in Pottawatomie County. Furthermore, the study advances the belief that word processing curriculum can be taught in existing business classrooms.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The discussion in this chapter is divided into four sections. The first section presents a summary of the findings of the study. The conclusions are presented in the second section. Recommendations for practice are found in the third section and implications for future research and practice are presented in the final portion of the Chapter.

The purpose of this study was to determine if in the opinion of the business education teachers in Pottawatomie County High Schools WP concepts can be taught with the use of electric typewriters and dictating machines to train entry level word processor operators. Data was gathered by the investigator going directly to each business teacher in Pottawatomie County through a telephone survey. This telephone survey can be found in the Appendix of this study.

A comparison was made in an attempt to determine if the business instructors could perceive WP being taught without the expensive equipment of word processing. The survey dealt with preparing a student for on the job training as an entry level WP operator. This study relied on the expert opinion of teachers with an average teaching experience of 11.1 years and education work beyond the bachelor degree level. The student population these teachers dealt with varied from 946 students to 77 students. Table I in Chapter II illustrates this student population, school classification and number of business teachers.

Summary of Findings

The following is a summary of the findings concerning the objectives of this study. These objectives were rated on a scale of one to four. (1 disagree, 2 somewhat disagree, 3 somewhat agree, 4 agree). The instrument used for this survey is found in the Appendix of this study. These findings can be summarized as follows:

1. There was agreement that the business curriculum of the schools in Pottawatomie County needed more specific word processing skills and concepts.

2. There was agreement that word processing concepts should be a priority in the business classroom.

3. There was somewhat agreement that word processing skills should be a priority in the business classroom.

4. There was somewhat agreement that the business education curriculum was adequate to teach word processing skills and concepts.

5. There was somewhat disagreement that word processing skills and concepts are being taught in Pottawatomie County schools.

6. There was somewhat disagreement that the concepts approach to word processing would take the initiative from the development of proficient word processing operators.

7. There was disagreement that a combined approach to word processing was being used extensively in Pottawatomie County schools.

The data gathered on this questionnaire is presented in tables in Chapter IV.

Conclusions

Using the analysis of data collected in this study, certain conclusions can be presented. The investigator feels satisfied in concluding the following:

1. As a group, the teachers of business in Pottawatomie County were in agreement that word processing skills and concepts should be included in the business curriculum.

2. As a group, the teachers surveyed were in general disagreement that word processing skills and concepts were being adequately taught in the Pottawatomie County High Schools either in combination or separately.

3. As a group those surveyed felt the concepts approach would not take away from the development of proficient word processing operators.

Recommendations For Practice

Business education teachers at the high school level must continue to survey the needs of the business community for information word processing personnel needs. These teachers and high schools must adapt their methods, curriculum, equipment, and facilities within public education budget to meet the growing demand for competent information/ word processing personnel.

Based on the general agreement for a need for specific word processing skills and concepts being included in the business classroom and the disagreement that they are being taught this research would indicate the following recommendations for practice:

1. Pottawatomie County schools continue to include typewriting and keyboarding skills, and transcription skills, communication skills,

business management and positive business attitudes.

2. Basic word processing concepts should be included in every high school in Pottawatomie County.

3. Pottawatomie County schools provide training in teaching word processing concepts and skills to interested teachers.

4. Pottawatomie County schools set goals to purchase word processing equipment.

5. The findings of this survey be shared with all business teachers in Pottawatomie County.

Recommendations for Future Study

1. Students who are taught word processing concepts with use of electric typewriters and transcription machines should be followed as they progress into industry and compared with those trained on word processing equipment.

2. A statewide study of the teacher perception of business curriculum for entry level word processing concepts.

3. A comparative study of teacher perceptions of business curriculum for entry level word processing concepts of other states and Oklahoma.

4. A study of current word processing operators using a similar questionnaire to the one in the study as to their perceptions of the possibilities of this teaching method.

5. A survey of word processing operators in our county to ascertain how many were trained on equipment on the job and how many on equipment in a classroom.

6. A survey of Pottawatomie County teachers to find interest in participating in word processing workshops.

7. A survey of industries to find need for word processing personnel.

8. A survey of industry to find any willingness to cooperate with the concepts approach to teaching word processing by giving students on the job training on word processing equipment.

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APPENDIX

TELEPHONE INTRODUCTION

The researcher used the following introductory statement before any questions were asked of the person being interviewed:

My name is LoRene Akins; I teach high school business at Dale High School and I am researching the idea that word processing concepts can be taught with the use of electric typewriters and transcription machines in the regular business classrooms. I would like to ask you some questions as to how you perceive this idea. The questionnaire will take about ten minutes of your time. Is this a convenient time for you or is there a time I could call back?

The researcher then either called back or proceeded with the questionnaire; explaining the telephone survey number system before the questionnaire was begun.

Introductory Questionnaire

1. How long have you been teaching?

2. What level of education beyond the bachelor's degree have you attained?

3. Do you have a vocational business certificate?

4. Have you worked in a business office within the last five years?

5. If so, did you have hands on experience with a word processor? Computer? Were you able to observe others using the WP? Computer?

6. Have you had any experience with word processing? Computers?

7. Do you presently have access to a word processor? Computer?

8. Do you have word processing equipment in your classroom? In your school?

9. Do you have a computer in your classroom? In your school?

10. If you have not had experience with word processing, would you be interested in gaining experience? With computers?

11. Would you be interested in including word processing concepts in your teaching area? Computer concepts?

Telephone Survey

(4) Agree; (3) Somewhat Agree; (2) Somewhat Disagree; (1) Disagree

1. Teaching entry WP skills should be a priority in my business classroom. _____

2. Teaching entry WP concepts should be a priority in my business classroom. _____

3. Business education curriculum is adequate in my school to teach WP skills. _____

4. Business education curriculum is adequate in my school to teach WP concepts. _____

5. Basic WP skills are being adequately taught in my school. _____

6. WP concepts are being adequately taught in my school. _____

7. More specific WP skills should be included in the business curriculum of my school. _____

8. More specific WP concepts should be included in the business curriculum of my school. _____

9. The concepts approach to teaching WP would take the initiative from the development of proficient WP operators. _____

10. The concepts approach to WP is being used extensively in my school. _____

11. The skills approach to WP is being used extensively in my school. _____

12. A combined approach to WP is being used extensively in my school. _____

13. There is a need for curriculum dealing with WP concepts in my business classroom. _____

14. There is a need for curriculum dealing with WP skills in my business classroom. _____

VITA

Alma LoRene Akins

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Master of Education

Thesis: TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF BUSINESS CURRICULUM FOR ENTRY LEVEL WORD PROCESSING CONCEPTS

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