

ALIENATION OF STUDENTS IN GENERAL EDUCATION
AS COMPARED TO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A discussion of any professional topic with educational personnel in direct contact with secondary school students will often include a description of many students as apathetic, unruly, rebellious, negative, disruptive, isolated, or a number of other similar adjectives. Conversations with the students themselves will equally often include references to their own feelings of meaninglessness, powerlessness, belonginglessness, being manipulated, social and self isolation, etc. when they discuss attitudes towards today's secondary schools. These adjectives from students and school personnel all fall within the general construct known as alienation. Alienation is an expression of certain feelings and the degree to which people have those feelings (1). Generally speaking contemporary social scientists agree that when the individual sees no relationship between his own behavior and rewards for his behavior, alienation sets in (2).

The student-school relationship in secondary schools is one of the few institutionalized authority relationships in modern society whose maintenance is consistently a problem. Although institutionalized authority everywhere often meets with lack of enthusiasm, it is rarely openly flaunted and insulted as it is in today's secondary schools.

Today's secondary students seem to be increasingly critical of school, its official representatives, teachers and principals, and its

curriculum (4).

Statement of the Problem

It has often been noted that vocationally and occupationally oriented students are less likely than other students to be alienated from their families, schools, and government (5). Unfortunately, little research has been conducted in this area. Today's secondary schools require vast investments in time, staff involvement and funds for their operation, therefore, studies exploring phenomena with such an impact on their effectiveness could contribute valuable decision making tools.

Vocational education in the State of Oklahoma is currently offered at the secondary level in two major settings. The comprehensive high school approach puts varying educational programs in one physical facility. The curriculum is usually organized into three broad educational tracks: college preparatory, general, and vocational (5, 6, 35). The relatively recent alternative to the comprehensive high school, the area vocational-technical center, offers different specialized occupational programs to students from participating high schools. The participating students commute to the area vocational-technical center for occupational classes only and then return to their home high schools where they pursue their general program of education and participate in extra-curricular activities (7).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if students enrolled in vocational oriented curriculums differ in alienation level from students enrolled exclusively in general curricula. A second purpose of this

study was to determine if students in an area vocational-technical center differ in alienation level from students attending comprehensive high schools.

Hypotheses

The null hypotheses tested in this study were:

- H_{01} : Students enrolled in general curricula do not differ in alienation level from students enrolled in vocational curricula.
- H_{02} : School setting, i.e., area vocational-technical center or comprehensive high school, makes no statistically significant difference in student alienation level.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Concept of Alienation and Its Origins

The complex nature of alienation gives rise to a number of difficulties when a systematic analysis of the multi-dimensional construct is attempted. Alienation has been a topic of significant discussion in literature, philosophy, political science, psychology, and sociology. Perhaps the most graphic description of alienated man can be found in creative literature. Cervante's Don Quixote, Kafka's The Castle, Rousseau's Emile, and John Osborne's Inadmissible Evidence all depict man in an alienated condition. All deal powerfully with one man's inability to cope with his society and fellow man, his failure to achieve a satisfactory measure of self-realization, and his ignorance of the conditions under which his life might have been happy.

Philosophically we can trace the origins of the concept of alienation to Aristotelian logic which sought to order, classify, and master reason. As this occurs, reason becomes increasingly antagonistic to that which is receptive rather than productive. This antagonism embodies alienation (8).

From Aristotle, we can trace a straight line to Hegel, who made the last great effort to both justify and cancel out the fact of alienation. Hegel attributed the main source of alienation to man himself in his continuous search for self-realization (9).

Actually, the shape of alienation as we know it today did not emerge until the advent of Augustinian Christianity with its doctrine of institutionalized guilt, denial of human instincts, and delayed hope (10).

Karl Marx, a young student of Hegel, was the first to address the topic at length in his Alienated Labor. From Hegel, Marx inherited a firm conviction of alienation and of a relationship between human activity and human alienation. He maintained that man is what he does, and consequently, his nature is determined by his activity. Under capitalism man becomes separated from his work because he has no part in deciding what to do or how to do it. He becomes separated from his own products because he has no control over what he makes or what becomes of it afterwards. He becomes separated from his fellow man because competition and class hostility have rendered most forms of cooperation impossible. Marx considers alienation to be a social mistake, a defect which ought not to be (11). The important point is that Marx has considered alienation to be social in nature, and induced rather than innate. Marx, then becomes the primary source of the idea of alienation in the social sciences, supported by the psychology of Sigmund Freud (12).

Freud saw the problem of alienation as a conflict between what he called the pleasure and reality principles. What he was saying was that both self and society have been juxtaposed to one another so that what is suffered by one must also affect the other, and the resulting tension has led to an alienated being (10). Karen Harney (13), a student of Freud's, developed this general trend of thought into a clinical profile of the alienated person

Max Weber's analysis of society was similar to that of Marx, but he disagreed with Marx's solution. He saw communism or socialism as no better than capitalism because both were expressions of a force which he called "rationalization" (14).

Classification of Alienation

Robert Nisbet writes in The Quest for Community that at the present time all the social sciences have devoted a foremost place to the investigations of various synonyms of alienation. From the historical origins which we have explored, alienation takes many different directions as social scientists become interested in the various synonyms, such as Durkheim's anomie (15), Fromm's self estrangement (16), Mannheim's meaninglessness (17), etc. Keniston (18) has made an attempt to define and graph the varieties of alienation, however, perhaps the most useful to us is Seeman's (19) five sense classification system.

Seeman (19, p. 784) proposes "to treat alienation from the personal standpoint of the actor--that is, alienation is . . . taken from the social-psychological point of view." This framework seems especially useful for studying alienation in a school setting. Seeman has identified five dimensions of or basic ways in which alienation has been used. All of these have their roots firmly anchored in sociological thought and research.

The first of these, powerlessness, refers to "the expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behavior cannot determine the occurrence of the outcomes, or reinforcements, he seeks" (19, p. 784). For a historical base, Seeman relies principally upon the

works of Marx (11) and Weber (13).

In terms of student powerlessness, this would refer to a lack of personal control over his state of affairs in school. The student believes that he is being manipulated by school authorities and there is little he can do to influence his future in school. He believes that any complaint about school would just be ignored (4).

Seeman (19) summarizes a second major usage of the alienation concept under the idea of meaninglessness. This variant of alienation is dealt with extensively in Mannheim's (17) discussions of "functional rationality," Adorno's (20) treatment of prejudice, Cantril's The Psychology of Social Movements, and Hoffer's (21) description of the "true believer."

As student meaninglessness, it would denote a sensed inability to predict outcomes. The student doubts that the school is going to help him in his future (4), or to state it differently, the student does not believe that his present performance in school is at all related to his future status (3).

Normlessness, Seeman's (19) third variant of the alienation theme is derived from Durkheim's (15) description of "anomie." It refers to "a situation in which the social norms regulating individual conduct have broken down or are no longer effective rules for behavior" (p. 787). As in Stinchcombe's (3) negativism, the student believes that socially unapproved behaviors are often required to achieve his goals. The course of action which leads to immediate gratification is preferred to formally prescribed conduct of the school which is deferred goal oriented. Violation of school rules and regulations to the normless student is appropriate if it leads to immediate gratifications which

are seen as preferential to uncertain future goals (3).

The fourth type of alienation as identified by Seeman (19) is isolation. He describes the isolated individual as one who assigns "low reward value to goals or beliefs that are typically highly valued in a given society" (p. 789). Of his five identified variants, this is the most overlapping. The differentiation between normlessness and isolation is clearly one of degrees. Actually "rebellion" as described by Merton (22) or Stinchcombe's (3) "expressive alienation" are probably more accurate descriptors.

The isolated student, using the given criteria, is one who does not accept the goals of the school, nor does he value its objectives. He has a personal set of priorities and is not concerned with achieving in, or completing school. In one word he completely "rejects" school and all that it stands for (4).

According to Seeman (19) the final variant distinguishable in the literature is alienation in the sense of self-estrangement. It is this sense of self-alienation which concerns Fromm (16), Schachtel (23), Riesman (24), and Keyes (25).

Self-estrangement is that aspect of alienation which is characterized by the other-directed type who acts only for its effects on others as in Blauner's (26) worker who works merely for his salary. It is closely related to meaninglessness as exemplified by Marx's (11) worker who becomes estranged because his work becomes meaningless to him. The self-estranged student is one who does not find anything in school self-rewarding. Any activity undertaken is strictly for an expected future reward (3).

Measurement of Alienation

The complexity of the multi-dimensional concept obviously makes it difficult to measure. For example, a person may feel alienated in one sense but not in another.

Clark (1) has attempted to deal with this problem by using the "single unit approach" in which an entire social system is selected and the interview technique is used. Aside from the obvious logistical problems of using this technique in a large public school system, Selltz and Associates (29) found that respondents would more likely answer truthfully on a questionnaire than when an interviewer was confronting them.

Netter (27) has attempted to measure the dimension of estrangement, however, he has neglected other variants of alienation.

Dean (28, p. 756) has constructed a set of scales which attempt to "determine empirical relationships between the several components of alienation." Three sub-scales, powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation are reported separately and then combined to form a total alienation scale. He has combined Seeman's variants of meaninglessness and isolation in with his normlessness scale with some justification.

Dodder (30) did a factor analysis of the Dean Scale at Oklahoma State University and generally confirmed its validity. Burbach (31), Sommer (32), and Harris (33) have used the scale successfully with students and Blane (34) found it applicable for studying high school students.

After a thorough hand and computer search of the literature, this researcher was unable to find any previous studies dealing with student alienation and school curriculum or school setting.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine if students enrolled in vocationally oriented curriculums differ in alienation level from students enrolled in general curricula only. A second purpose of this study was to determine if students in an area vocational-technical center differ in alienation level from students attending comprehensive high schools.

Definition of Terms

Comprehensive High School: A comprehensive high school, for the purpose of this study, is defined as one that offers a broad spectrum of educational programs where students have opportunities to interact in both curricular and extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is subject centered and has been organized into three broad educational tracks: college preparatory, general, and vocational (5, 6, 35).

General Curriculum: General curriculum, for the purpose of this study, is defined as the course of study which has been designed as an alternate curriculum for those students who do not want to prepare for college or to follow the vocational curriculum. It contains only courses of a "general" nature (5, 35).

Area Vocational-Technical Center: An area center is a central specialized facility where occupational education programs are provided

in many different fields to students from participating schools. For this study, the center is an extension of each participating school's curricula, and its students maintain ties with their home high schools where they pursue their general educational program and participate in extra-curricular activities (7).

Participating School: A participating school is one which sends students to the area vocational-technical center.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made relevant to this study.

1. It is assumed that all of the auto mechanics classes used in this study are vocational. This assumption is supported by the following data: In fiscal year 1974-75, the latest data available through the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education at the time this study was designed, the specific programs used in this study trained 48 students with marketable skills. Of these, 29 became employed full-time in the field for which they were trained or a related field, one left school but did not enter the labor force, and one was listed as status unknown (36).
2. To stratify the sample of vocational students, only full-time eleventh and twelfth grade, auto mechanics students were used. It was assumed that data on students in other occupational clusters would show a high positive correlation with this study.

3. It was assumed that the sample was representative of the entire Oklahoma City secondary school population.

Subject Selection

The subjects selected for this study consisted of three groups. The first group consisted of Auto Mechanics I and II students at the Foster Estes Area Vocational-Technical Center. The second group consisted of students enrolled in Auto Mechanics I and II in comprehensive high schools in Oklahoma City. Classen, Star Spencer, and Capital Hill high schools were selected because records showed that their auto mechanics programs had the largest enrollment in the city and because they were all participating schools with Foster Estes (37). The third group consisted of students attending Classen, Star Spencer, and Capitol Hill high schools, who were not enrolled in vocational classes. This third group of students was arbitrarily assigned by the building principals and was not matched. The reason three high schools were selected was to insure city-wide representation in the study.

Measurement Instrument

The instrument used to measure the degree of alienation of the selected subjects was the Dean Alienation Scale (Appendix A). The Dean Alienation Scale is a Likert-type public opinion questionnaire consisting of 24 items. Each item is keyed to one of the three subscales of powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation.

A weight from one to five was assigned to a response on the Likert-type scale, with five being the highest value measured by an item.

Scores for the sub-scales were computed by summing the values of each keyed response on the sub-scale. A total alienation score may be derived by summing the sub-scale totals or summing of all the items.

The reliability of the sub-scales were all tested separately using the "split-half" technique, then corrected by the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula. Reliability values of Powerlessness, 0.78; Normlessness, 0.73; and Social Isolation, 0.84 were reported. The total corrected reliability of the scale was 0.78 (28).

The Dean Alienation Scale was selected for several reasons. First, it allows examination of the individual components of alienation separately, as well as the total concept, thereby providing more insight into the problem. Second, as previously mentioned, it is standardized, thus making data available on its validity and reliability. Third, Burbach (31), Sommer (32), and Harris (33) have used the scale successfully with students and Blane (34) found it applicable for studying high school students. In addition, its length and format was practical for administration to an entire class in the time available.

Collection of the Data

After permission to collect the data was granted by the Oklahoma City School District (Appendix C), dates for collection of the data at the individual schools were coordinated with the building principals to avoid conflict with school activities that could further reduce the size of the sample. Instrument administration dates in the middle of the week were chosen as records show that there are fewer absences on these days. To control for population variance, data was collected on succeeding days in mid-semester as there is less student fluctuation

at this time. All data collection was done by the researcher.

Collection of the data was accomplished by administration of the Dean Alienation Scale to the Auto Mechanics I and II classes at Foster Estes Area Vocational-Technical Center, as well as Capitol Hill, Star Spencer, and Classen high schools. The scale was also administered to non-vocational classes in the general curriculum chosen by the building principals at each of the selected high schools to match as closely as possible with the auto mechanics classes.

The Dean Alienation Scale was initially administered to 225 students. Forty-two questionnaires which were given to non-vocational students were discarded because the respondents indicated that they perceived themselves as being enrolled in a vocational class or because the questionnaire was incorrectly marked. A questionnaire which was considered to be incorrectly marked was one on which more than one response had been recorded to any item.

Analysis of the Data

A total of 183 questionnaires were used for the analysis of data. Seventy-eight were responses from students not enrolled in any vocational classes, 75 were from vocational students in the comprehensive high schools, and 30 were from students who attended the Foster Estes Area Vocational-Technical Center.

In order to organize the data for analysis, they were nominally arranged using curricular and school criteria. Data from the students who attended vocational classes in a comprehensive high school were arbitrarily designated as group one. Data gathered from the non-vocational students were designated as group two, and data gathered

from students who attended the area vocational-technical center were designated as group three. These data, hereafter referred to as school group membership, were determined to be the independent variables.

The three sub-scales of Social Isolation, Powerlessness and Normlessness were determined to yield the dependent variables. Items number 1, 3, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 22, and 24 on the questionnaire were keyed to the first, Social Isolation. Items number 2, 6, 9, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21 and 23 were keyed to the second, Powerlessness. Items number 4, 7, 10, 12, 16, and 19 were keyed to the third, Normlessness. A keyed copy of the instrument can be found in Appendix A.

Statistical analysis of the data was accomplished using multiple-regression analysis following the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The level of the statistical significance was set at .05 and all calculation was done by the Oklahoma State University Computer Center.

"Multiple regression is a method of analyzing the collective and separate contributions of two or more independent variables to the variation of a dependent variable" (39, p. 3). Multiple regression analysis was chosen because it allows study of the linear relationship between a set of independent variables (38). Although analysis of variance and multiple regression analysis are inter-changeable in the case of categorical independent variables, multiple regression analysis is superior or the only appropriate method of analysis when cell frequencies in a factorial design are unequal and disproportionate as in this study (39).

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Return Rates

Data were collected by administering the Dean Alienation Scale to vocational Auto Mechanics I and II classes at Foster Estes Area Vocational-Technical Center and to vocational Auto Mechanics I and II classes at Capitol Hill, Star Spencer, and Classen high schools. The scale was also administered to students at all three high schools who attended no vocational classes. The non-vocational classes were selected by the building principals arbitrarily and were not matched. All data collection were conducted by the researcher.

The Dean Alienation Scale was initially administered to 225 students. Forty-two questionnaires which were given to non-vocational students were discarded because the respondents indicated that they perceived themselves as being enrolled in a vocational class or because the questionnaire was incorrectly marked. A questionnaire which was considered to be incorrectly marked was one on which more than one response had been recorded to any item.

A total of 183 questionnaires were used for the analysis of data, of which 78 were students not enrolled in any vocational classes, 75 were vocational students in the comprehensive high schools, and 30 attended the area vocational-technical school.

Summary of the Data

In order to organize the data for analysis, they were nominally arranged using curricular and school criteria. Data from the students who attended vocational classes in comprehensive high schools were arbitrarily designated as group one. Data gathered from the non-vocational students were designated as group two, and data gathered from students who attended the area vocational-technical center were designated as group three. These data, hereafter referred to as school group membership, were determined to be the independent variables.

The three sub-scales of Social Isolation, Powerlessness, and Normlessness were determined to yield the dependent variables. Items number 1, 3, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 22, and 24 on the questionnaire were keyed to the first, Social Isolation. Items number 2, 6, 9, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, and 23 were keyed to the second, Powerlessness. Items number 4, 7, 10, 12, 16 and 19 were keyed to the third, Normlessness. A keyed copy of the instrument can be found in Appendix A.

Scores for the sub-scales were determined to be the dependent variables and were computed by summing the values of each keyed response on the sub-scale. The value of a response was derived by assigning a weight of from one to five to each possible response on the Likert-type scale, with five being the highest value measured by the item. A total alienation score may be derived by summing the sub-scale totals or by summing all the items.

Table I lists the mean scores of each group on each sub-scale. As can be seen, non-vocational high school students showed a slightly

higher social isolation level than did either of the two vocational student groups. Very little variability appeared, however, between the means of the three groups on either the powerlessness or the normlessness sub-scales.

TABLE I
TABLE OF MEANS

Sub-Scale	Comprehensive High School Vocational		Comprehensive High School Non-Vocational		Area Vo-Tech Center	
	\bar{X}	N	\bar{X}	N	\bar{X}	N
Social Isolation	26.39	75	28.3	78	26.24	30
Powerlessness	29.08	75	28.64	78	28.99	30
Normlessness	18.59	75	17.93	78	18.97	30

Results of the Data Analysis

The purpose of this study was to determine if students enrolled in vocationally oriented curriculums differ in alienation level from students enrolled exclusively in general curricula. A second purpose of this study was to determine if students in an area vocational-technical center differed in alienation level from students attending comprehensive high schools.

Hypotheses were thus stated:

H_{01} : Students enrolled in general curricula do not differ in alienation level from students enrolled in vocational curricula.

H_{02} : School setting, i.e., area vocational-technical center or comprehensive high school, makes no statistically significant difference in student alienation level.

Statistically the hypotheses can be expressed as:

$$H_{01}: M_2 - \frac{M_1N_1 + M_3N_3}{N_1 + N_3} = 0$$

$$H_{02}: M_3 - \frac{M_1N_1 + M_2N_2}{N_1 + N_2} = 0$$

where M_1 is the population mean of the scores of the dependent variables for group one, M_2 is the population mean of the scores of the dependent variables for group two and M_3 is the population mean of the scores of the dependent variable for group three.

Statistical analysis of the data was accomplished using multiple regression analysis following the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Multiple regression analysis was chosen because it allows study of the linear relationship between a set of independent variables and a number of dependent variables while taking into account the inter-relationships among the independent variables (38). Although analysis of variance and multiple-regression analysis are interchangeable in the case of categorical independent variables, multiple-regression analysis is superior or the only appropriate method of analysis when cell frequencies in a factorial design are unequal and disproportionate as in this study (39).

It was necessary to modify the regression equation to accommodate the several variables. In order to show membership in a given category (type of school) of the independent variable (school setting), it was necessary to create dummy variables. "A dummy variable is a vector in which members of a given category are assigned an arbitrary number, while others--that is subjects not belonging to the given category--are assigned another arbitrary number" (39, p. 105).

Using the coding system of assigning ones to subjects of the group we wish to identify and zeros to all other subjects as shown in Table II, dummy variable one (D_1) and dummy variable two (D_2) were created in order to compute the regression.

TABLE II
ASSIGNMENT VALUES TO DUMMY VARIABLES

Group	D_1	D_2
One	1	0
Two	0	1
Three	0	0

If $X = 1$, $D_1 = 1$, otherwise $D_1 = 0$
 If $X = 2$, $D_2 = 1$, otherwise $D_2 = 0$

Group One: Vocational students in comprehensive high schools
 Group Two: Non-vocational students
 Group Three: Vocational students in area vocational-technical centers

When using 1's and 0's for coding group membership, the resulting regression equation has the following properties: 'a' (the intercept) is equalled to the mean of the group assigned 0's throughout, and each 'b' (regression coefficient) is equalled to the mean of the group assigned 1's in a given vector minus the mean of the group assigned 0's throughout (39, p. 114).

Table III shows the correlation coefficients between all of the variables. A relationship large enough to be the result of more than chance alone appeared between the dependent variable, social isolation, and the independent dummy variable, D_2 . D_2 identifies data gathered from the non-vocational comprehensive high school students as compared to data gathered from the two groups of vocational students. This statistically significant correlation indicates that the non-vocational students felt more socially isolated than did the vocational students.

TABLE III
TABLE OF CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS

Variable	Social Isolation	Powerless-ness	Normless-ness	D_1	D_2
Social Isolation	1.00000	0.22836	0.17244	-0.04011	0.13645*
Powerlessness	0.22836	1.00000	0.41003	0.02065	-0.03222
Normlessness	0.17244	0.41003	1.00000	-0.01083	-0.08746
D_1	-0.04011	0.02065	-0.01083	1.00000	-0.38593
D_2	0.13645*	-0.03222	-0.08746	-0.38593	1.00000

*Significant at the .05 level

Separate regressions were done for each of the three dependent variables. Table IV is a summary of the regression analysis for the dependent variable, social isolation. The calculated F value for this variable was 1.72466 and, therefore, failed to achieve statistical significance at the 0.05 alpha level.

TABLE IV
SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS
FOR SOCIAL ISOLATION

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F
Regression	2	86.35988	43.17994	1.72466
Residual	180	4506.62373	25.03680	

Table V is a summary of the regression analysis for the dependent variable, powerlessness. The calculated F value for powerlessness was 0.10067, a value which is statistically non-significant at the 0.05 alpha level.

Table VI is a summary of the regression analysis for the dependent variable, normlessness. The calculated F value for this dependent variable was 0.90769, a value which failed to achieve statistical significance at the 0.05 level of acceptance.

TABLE V
SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS
FOR POWERLESSNESS

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F
Regression	2	4.30582	2.15291	0.10067
Residual	180	3849.49746	21.38610	

TABLE VI
SUMMARY OF REGRESSION ANALYSIS
FOR NORMLESSNESS

Source	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F
Regression	2	23.34613	11.67307	0.90768
Residual	180	2314.85059	12.86028	

The 0.05 level of statistical significance was not achieved for any of the three dependent variables, and any noted relationships could, therefore, be as a result of chance alone. As a result, both hypotheses failed to be rejected.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine if students enrolled in vocationally oriented curriculum differ in alienation level from students enrolled exclusively in general curricula. A second purpose of this study was to determine if students in area vocational-technical centers differ in alienation level from students attending comprehensive high schools.

The hypotheses were:

H_{01} : Students enrolled in general curricula do not differ in alienation level from students enrolled in vocational curricula.

H_{02} : School setting, i.e., area vocational-technical center or comprehensive high school, makes no statistically significant difference in student alienation level.

Methodology

Data was collected by administering the Dean Alienation Scale to 225 students enrolled in the Oklahoma City Public School System. Seventy-eight students not enrolled in any vocational classes, 75 were

vocational students in the comprehensive high schools, and 30 attended the area vocational-technical center.

One hundred eighty-three questionnaires were used for data analysis and 42 questionnaires which were given to non-vocational students were discarded because the respondents indicated that they perceived themselves as being enrolled in a vocational class or because the questionnaire was incorrectly marked. A questionnaire which was considered to be incorrectly marked was one on which more than one response had been recorded to any item.

The Dean Alienation Scale was selected as the measurement instrument for several reasons: (1) it allows examination of the individual components of alienation separately, as well as the total concept thereby providing more insight into the problem; (2) it was standardized, thus making data available on its validity and reliability; (3) it has been successfully used with other high school students; and (4) its length and format made it practical for administration to an entire class in the time available.

The Dean Alienation Scale yields three component sub-scales of Social Isolation, Powerlessness, and Normlessness, which were determined to yield the dependent variables. School and curricular group membership of the students were determined to be the independent variable.

In order to organize the data for analysis, they were nominally arranged using curricular and school criteria. Data from students who attended vocational classes in a comprehensive high school were arbitrarily designated as group one. Data gathered from the non-vocational students were designated as group two, and data gathered

from students who attended the area vocational-technical center were designated as group three.

Statistical analysis of the data was accomplished using multiple regression analysis following the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and all calculation was done by the Oklahoma State University computer.

Multiple regression analysis was chosen because it allows study of the linear relationship between a set of independent variables while taking into account the inter-relationships among the independent variables (38). Although analysis of variance and multiple regression analysis are interchangeable in the case of categorical independent variables, multiple regression analysis is superior or the only appropriate method of analysis when cell frequencies in a factorial design are unequal and disproportionate as in this study (39).

Result of the Analysis

Separate regressions were done for each of the three dependent variables of social isolation, powerlessness, and normlessness. In all three cases the 0.05 alpha level was not achieved. As a result, both hypotheses failed to be rejected. There appeared to be no relationship between either curricular emphasis or school setting and the alienation level of the selected students as measured by the Dean Alienation Scale (28), which could be considered statistically significant.

Conclusions

After a thorough analysis of the data, the only two conclusions directly relevant to the hypotheses were that students enrolled in

vocational oriented curriculum do not differ significantly in alienation level from students enrolled exclusively in general curricula and that school setting, i.e., area vocational-technical center or comprehensive high school, makes no statistically significant difference in student alienation level.

During the analysis of data, the only statistical significance which appeared that could be attributed to other than chance alone was a correlation between the dependent variable, social isolation, and the independent dummy variable, D_2 . D_2 identifies data gathered from the non-vocational comprehensive high school students as compared to data gathered from the two groups of vocational students. This correlation indicates that the non-vocational students felt more socially isolated than did the vocational students. The most probable explanation can be found in the class schedules of the students. All of the non-vocational students from whom data was gathered changed classes every 55 minutes of the school day, thereby forcing interacting with different students and teachers each hour. Both vocational groups of students used in this study attended their vocational class for one-half of their entire school day. They thus become more familiar with their surroundings, their classmates, and their teacher, and therefore more comfortable and less socially isolated in their school environment than students in the non-vocational group.

When the data were subjected to more strenuous statistical analysis, however, this relationship did not reappear.

Evans (5) commented upon the need for studies such as this and stated that he believed that enrollment in vocational classes did indeed reduce alienation of students. This study tends to indicate

that his observations are a result of other factors, or more probable, a combination of factors of which enrollment in vocational classes may well be one.

Rafalides and Hoy (4) have established pupil control strategies of high schools as important variables affecting student alienation and Miller (41) has identified several school related variables which affect student alienation level. Such examinations, however, are beyond the limited scope of this study, as it dealt with only one causal factor.

After careful consideration of the design, methodology, and results of this study, several possibilities for lack of measurable effects appeared. The first possibility is that the measurement instrument itself is inappropriate for the group studies. Burbach (31), Sommer (32), and Harris (33) have used the Dean Alienation Scale successfully with students and Blane (34) has found it applicable for studying high school students. During the course of data collection for this study, however, it was observed that a number of subjects experienced difficulty with the reading level of the instrument.

Miller (41) and Rafalides and Hoy (4) have used other instruments in studies of this nature with both junior high school and high school students and have not reported problems with instrument reading level. It is recommended that the reading level of the instrument be carefully evaluated in future studies in this area.

Recommendations

The dearth of studies of this nature found, compared with the felt need expressed in the literature (5), indicates a need for future

work in this area. Particularly further study should be attempted in the area of multiple causation of alienation. Future studies should control for curricular and school group membership as contributory variables. Future studies in this area should also consider the variable of length of time the student has been enrolled in vocational classes.

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APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENT

PLEASE NOTE:

Dissertation contains small
and indistinct print.
Filmed as received.

UNIVERSITY MICROFILMS.

-2-

- I 11. One can always find friends if he shows himself friendly.
 1 A a U d D*
- N 12. I often wonder what the meaning of life really is.
 5 A a U d D
- P 13. There is little or nothing I can do towards preventing a major "shooting" war.
 5 A a U d D
- I 14. The world in which we live is basically a friendly place.
 1 A a U d D
- P 15. There are so many decisions that have to be made today that sometimes I could just "blow up".
 5 A a U d D
- N 16. The only thing one can be sure of today is that he can be sure of nothing.
 5 A a U d D
- I 17. There are few dependable ties between people any more.
 5 A a U d D
- P 18. There is little chance for promotion on the job unless a man gets a break.
 5 A a U d D
- N 19. With so many religions abroad, one doesn't really know which to believe.
 5 A a U d D
- P 20. We're so regimented today that there's not much room for choice even in personal matters.
 5 A a U d D
- P 21. We are just so many cogs in the machinery of life.
 5 A a U d D
- I 22. People are just naturally friendly and helpful.
 1 A a U d D
- P 23. The future looks very dismal.
 5 A a U d D
- I 24. I don't get to visit friends as often as I'd really like.
 5 A a U d D

* Obviously, scores would be omitted when administered.

For a theoretical discussion of the concept, see Dwight G. Dean, "Alienation: Its Meaning and Measurement", American Sociological Review, 26, 5 (October, 1961, 753-758).

APPENDIX B

PERMISSION TO USE INSTRUMENT

October 21, 1976

Dr. Dwight G. Dean
Denison University
Granville, Ohio 43023

Dear Dr. Dean:

This letter is to request permission to use the Dean Alienation Scale for data collection for my doctoral dissertation.

I am a doctoral candidate at Oklahoma State University and for my dissertation I propose to research the alienation of students at Vocational-Technical Centers as compared to alienation of students at comprehensive High Schools.

I wish to administer the Dean Alienation Scale for legitimate research purposes only, and with no intent to make a profit. Full credit will be given to you for the instrument, and I will send you a copy of the dissertation when completed if you so request.

Sincerely,

Alvin R. Putnam
2601 N. University Place
Stillwater, OK 74074

Iowa State University *of Science and Technology* Ames, Iowa 50010



Department of Sociology and Anthropology
103 East Hall
Telephone: 515 294-6480

November 24, 1976

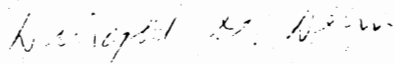
Mr. Alvin R. Putnam
26-1 N. University Place
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074

Dear Mr. Putnam:

It is a pleasure to learn of your interest in alienation. Thank you for the courtesy of writing for permission; you certainly are welcome to use it for your dissertation.

When you have finished, please send me an abstract or some indication of your results. Best wishes!

Sincerely,


Dwight G. Dean, Ph.D.
Professor of Sociology

DGD/js

Encl.

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH APPLICATION

Oklahoma City Public Schools

900 North Klein
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73106

February 1, 1977

Mr. Alvin R. Putnam
26-1 North University Place
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74074

Dear Mr. Putnam,

I am happy to inform you that the Research Screening Committee has approved your request to conduct a study in the Oklahoma City Public Schools. Please contact the following principals to make further arrangements for your study:

<u>School</u>	<u>Principals</u>
Foster Estes Area Vocational Technical Center	Wayne Earnest
Classen	Edward Berry
Star-Spencer	James Nees
Capitol Hill	Ray Thompson

Please feel free to contact this office if you feel there is a need for further clarification of this matter. Good luck on your study.

Sincerely,

Barbara J. Mitchell
Barbara J. Mitchell
Research Associate

METHODOLOGY

1. The purpose of this study is to determine if students enrolled in vocationally oriented curricula are more or less alienated than students enrolled in general curricula only, and. . .
2. to determine if students in an area vocational-technical center are more or less alienated than students attending comprehensive high schools.

Assumptions:

1. Auto mechanics classes were selected for this study because they are the only occupational offerings at the area vocational-technical center and all participating high schools in Oklahoma City. It is assumed that all of the auto mechanics classes used in this study are vocational. This assumption is supported by the following data. In fiscal year 1974-75, the latest data available through the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational-Technical Education at this time, the specific programs used in this study trained 48 students with marketable skills. Of these, 29 became employed full-time in the field for which they were trained or a related field, 1 left school but did not enter the labor force, and 1 was listed as status unknown.¹

2. To stratify the sample of occupational students, only full-time secondary auto mechanics students will be used. It is assumed that data on students in other occupational clusters would show a high positive correlation with this study.
3. It is assumed that my sample is representative of the entire Oklahoma City high school student population.

Selected Subjects:

The selected subjects for this study will consist of three groups. The first will consist of auto mechanics I and II students at the Foster Estes Area Vocational-Technical Center. The second group will consist of students enrolled in Oklahoma City. Classen, Star Spencer, and Capitol Hill high schools were selected because records show that their auto mechanics programs have the largest enrollment in the city, and because they are all participating schools with Foster Estes Area Vocational-Technical Center². The third group will consist of students attending Classen, Star Spencer, and Capitol Hill high schools who are not enrolled in any vocational classes. This group of students will be matched as much as possible according to age, sex, and grade level with the other selected subjects from their respective schools. The only reason three high schools have been selected is to ensure city wide representation in the study.

Measurement Instrument:

The instrument used to measure the degree of alienation of the selected subjects is the Dean Alienation Scale. The Dean Alienation Scale is a public opinion questionnaire consisting of 24 items. Each item is keyed to one of the three sub-scales of powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation. The reliability of the sub-scales after correction by the Spearman-Brown prophecy formula when tested by the "split-half" technique, was: Powerlessness 0.78, Normlessness 0.73, and Social Isolation 0.84. The total corrected reliability of the scale is 0.78.³

The Dean Alienation Scale was selected because it allows examination of the individual components of alienation separately, as well as the total phenomenon thereby providing more insight into the problem.

Collection of the Data:

Collection of the data will be accomplished by administration of the Dean Alienation Scale to the Auto Mechanics I and II classes at Foster Estes Area Vocational-Technical Center, and at Capitol Hill, Star Spencer, and Classen high schools. The scale will also be administered to a class at each of the selected high schools chosen to match as closely as possible with the auto mechanics classes. All data collection will be done by the researcher.

Analysis of the Data:

The mean score for each of the three sub-scales will be reported separately for each of the three groups. Grand means will also be reported showing total alienation scores for the three groups. A statistical analysis of the data will be accomplished using Multiple-Regression Analysis following the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Multiple-regression analysis was chosen because it allows study of the linear relationship between a set of independent variables and a number of dependent variables while taking into account the interrelationships among the independent variables.⁴

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- ⁴ Nie, Bent, & Hull, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, New York, 1970, McGraw-Hill

VITA²

ALVIN ROBERT PUTNAM

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: ALIENATION OF STUDENTS IN GENERAL EDUCATION AS COMPARED TO
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Major Field: Vocational-Technical and Career Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Granite City, Illinois, November 18, 1942,
the son of Guy A. and Myrtle C. Putnam.

Education: Graduated from Gilray Union High School, Gilray, Cali-
fornia, 1960; received an Associate of Arts degree from San
Benito College, Hollister, California, in 1962; received a
Bachelor of Arts in Industrial Arts degree from California
State University, Chico, 1965; received a Master of Education
degree from Boston University in 1975; completed requirements
for the Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University
in July, 1978.

Professional Experience: Industrial Arts Teacher, Washoe County
School District, Reno, Nevada, 1965-1967; Teacher, United
States Department of Defense Overseas Schools, European
Area, 1969-present, with assignments in Germany and Italy.

Professional Organizations: Phi Delta Kappa, Association for
Supervision and Curriculum Development.