

THE STATUS OF YOUTH 15 TO 24 YEARS OF AGE, STILL IN THE
HOMES OF PARENTS OF RURAL RELIEF AND NON-RELIEF
HOUSEHOLDS IN TWO COUNTIES IN OKLAHOMA

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PART I. INTRODUCTION

Source of Material

The primary data presented in this study were taken from schedules (DRS-3C, "A Survey of Rural Families Receiving Relief in October 1933," and DRS-16, "A Survey of Rural Non-Relief Families.") prepared by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

The survey was made in Payne and Cleveland counties of farm and village households listed in the county Federal Emergency Relief Administration offices as receiving relief in October 1933. Each third name on the relief roll was taken for the sample. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration was the major organization granting relief at that time, and according to federal instruction relief could be given as direct relief and work relief, cover orders for food, shelter, clothing, fuel, lights, household necessities (such as soap, matches, lamps etc.), medical care given in the client's home or in a doctor's office (but not medical care given in a clinic or hospital), transportation, moving expenses, car tokens, and cash whenever cash is given in lieu of the above mentioned commodities or services, or wages for work relief.^{1/}

^{1/} Issued in special instructions to local research supervisors by E. D. Tetreau, Rural Relief Analyst, Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

Non-relief cases chosen for comparison were those households which were unknown to any local relief agency during the period January 1, 1930 to October 1, 1933. The survey was made in October 1933. The control group was made up of two non-relief households for each relief case, and were those households living nearest the relief people. The household in this study was made up of all persons living in the home during October 1933. Schedules chosen for the present study were of those households in the original sample having youth 15 to 24 years of age who had not married, and were living in the home.

Supplementary data used in interpreting this material were obtained from observations made by the field workers, published Census data, material published by the Federal Soil Conservation Service, data given by the Rural Resettlement Administration local office, and DRS-16, A Survey of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households, Forthcoming Master's Thesis, Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, by Mattie Faye McCollum.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to determine as nearly as possible the socio-economic status of rural youth who were living in households where Federal Emergency Relief was granted, as compared with youth who were living in households where no relief was given. Specifically, it was thought desirable to ascertain the number of youth, of this particular age grouping in these households studied, as compared with the number of rural youth of similar age in the total rural population of the State, their educational attainment, their opportunities for recreation and advancement, their employment experience, and their future prospects and possibilities for employment.

In order to understand better the status of these young people, attention has been given to household composition, economic conditions existing within these households, occupational status of household heads, educational attainment of parents, and opportunities for social participation. A knowledge of these factors is regarded as a prime requisite for an intelligent approach to the social and economic outlook of these youth.

Applications of the Study

The data presented here may suggest further studies of the problems of rural youth in these and other communities. Individuals who are interested in this type of social study should obtain some conception of the status of the young people of Oklahoma from the material presented. Although a more intensive study than this probably would yield somewhat different conclusions from those arrived at here, doubtless the data employed are typical of the situations of a majority of rural youth in the State. Some implications leading toward basic program procedures will be suggested in this study for those organizations dealing with the training of youth in the rural communities.

Specifically stated, such implications are suggested in that part of the study which deals with the opportunities for social participation among the young people. A large percentage of these youth had experienced no social participation at the time these data were taken, and when consideration is given to the conditions existing within the homes, as presented in Part I of the study, the need for such program procedure is obvious.

The employment status of the youth, as shown in Part II, suggests the need for such training and experience as will enable these young men and women to meet requirements set up by employment services. Such program procedure would, to some extent, suffice for the formal schooling of those who are unable to complete their education in the high schools, colleges, and universities of the State.

General Description of the Area Surveyed

Payne County is somewhat rectangular in shape being about 50 miles in length from east to west, and around 13.5 miles in width from north to south, and contains an area of 678 square miles located in the north central part of the state. On the whole it is below the average for Oklahoma as an agricultural district. General farming, cotton production, livestock, dairy and poultry are the principal agricultural enterprises of this county. At the time this study was made, field workers reported that much of the land was unsuitable for agricultural purposes, and for this reason did not qualify as a good farming district.

In 1933 the federal government began soil conservation work in an effort to correct soil erosion in Payne County by demonstrating methods of controlling erosion by crop rotation, strip cropping, contour ridging of pasture land, retirement from cultivation of all badly eroded land, use of winter cover crops, and construction of farm reservoirs. Out of this beginning grew the Stillwater Creek Basin project which comprises some 173,000 acres and covers a large portion of Payne County where it is effective in bringing about the soil-saving and soil-building programs that are especially needed. In this area 58.0 per cent of the farms are

under agreement, and 43.8 per cent of the acreage has been treated and finished.^{1/} Both federal and state authorities contend that soil losses through erosion are the most serious problems facing Oklahoma agriculture.

The western portion of the county represents a very poor district. With the exception of a few strips, it has been classed as submarginal land, hilly and such that farmers cannot possibly expect more than a bare existence. According to observations made by field workers, the people inhabiting this district were not the energetic type who would make the most of their possibilities, but were uneducated, shiftless and poor.^{2/}

As a step toward a coordinated national program of rehabilitation, conservation, and land utilization, President Roosevelt, by executive order, created the Resettlement Administration under authority of the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935. R. G. Tugwell, Under Secretary of Agriculture, was selected as the Resettlement Administrator. During the same year work began on the fundamental problem of readjustment of people to the land resources of the nation in which land was to be adapted to its best economic use. Mr. Tugwell says that at that time "millions of American citizens in rural areas required assistance to enable them to become self-sustaining, and to have a decent American standard of living." He made further observations to the effect that "this movement came about as a result of changes in American agriculture over a long period of years. In the process of change the agricultural labor market was sharply curtailed. Thousands of farm families were forced off the land, unable to sustain themselves by farming operations. Many

^{1/} Federal Soil Conservation Service, Mimeographed Data, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

^{2/} Observations of Field Workers. Unpublished Data

more thousands were reduced to a mere subsistence level. During the years of the depression, more than a million farm families were on direct relief."

He sums up the condition by saying that the causes arose chiefly from the principal factors: (1) Mistaken policies of land settlement, especially the farming of marginal lands incapable of providing an adequate livelihood. Reckless exploitation and exhaustion of lumbering, mining and oil areas. (2) Over farming and overgrazing policies, resulting in the destruction of acres through wind and water erosion.^{3/}

An area was selected in the western part of Payne County where it seemed most advisable to give such assistance as the Rural Resettlement Administration had to offer. A 22,000 acre area was chosen because of the depleted condition of the soil, and because of the low rate income per family resulting from the existing conditions. Of the families living in that area, 35.0 per cent of them had an income of less than \$100 per year. Of the 89 tenant families, and 60 landowners of this district, 53 were on direct relief when this program was instituted.

In December 1934, the federal land appraiser visited the various tracts and made appraisals for the land purchases that were to follow. At the present time, 60 per cent of the options have been paid. A few remaining tracts have not been taken under option, while some of the land is mortgaged to the extent that Loan Companies will not accept the appraised price offered by the government. The practice adopted by the government is to pay the option in lump sum as soon as it is accepted by the landowner.

^{3/} R. G. Tugwell, Resettlement Administration Publication Number I. Washington, D. C. September 1935.

A recreation project of 12,000 acres has been assigned in which a 3,000 acre lake is under construction. Workmen from this district were given employment on the dam that heads the lake. The local residents have also aided in the construction of a lodge and 24 cabins. These people were permitted to work on the project until they were resettled in a new area where an income was possible. After they were once resettled they were no longer entitled to benefits from the work.^{4/}

In the north and central parts of Payne County it was possible to find good farms and the farmers were of a superior type. The majority of them owned their farms, and had lived there for fifteen to twenty years. Many of them had lived there since the opening of the territory 38 years ago. Corn and cotton were the principal crops, and the average farm consisted of 160 acres with about 60 acres in cultivation.^{5/}

One area of Payne County represented not only a very poor agricultural district, but the remnants of an oil boom that had left in its wake a number of people who found themselves destitute when oil production subsided. They were the type generally found who follow such "mushroom" industries depending upon daily wages for subsistence. When the oil fields were shut down they did not have savings upon which to draw for money needed even though they had been getting good wages for several years. These people were of a highly mobile type who went from place to place as opportunities for livelihood presented themselves.

Cleveland County is one of the central counties of the state comprising approximately 554 square miles of land area, bounded on the west and south by the Canadian River which runs from the northwest to the

^{4/} Information given by local Resettlement Office, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

^{5/} Observations of Field Workers. Unpublished data.

southeast. There is an area of about 180 square miles of river bottom land which comprises an especially fertile area inhabited by well educated, highly cultured, super-marginal farmers who use modern methods in agriculture and up-to-date machinery. A large percentage of this land is still owned and operated either by the person who homesteaded it in 1889 or by his heirs.

Most of the land east of the river bottom is very hilly and poorly adapted to agriculture. If it were not for the oil lease and royalty money obtained from this land, very little of it would be farmed at all because usually it does not return a fair income under the prices of the last few years. On farms of 160 acres, there were only about 20 to 25 acres in cultivation. The majority of the farms in this area have very poor soil except for a few acres of bottom land which either overflows, or becomes infested with Bermuda and Johnson grass. These farms were heavily mortgaged and the interest payments were usually met with oil lease money. The farmers were holding to the farms in expectation of drilling in the territory, since the land had been leased by major oil companies for a number of years. Producing fields had been developed almost within the area.

The hill country east of the South Canadian River was a fair producing agricultural area until the cotton boll-weevil invasion about 1920. Ravages of crop pests coupled with low prices for cotton after 1920 had destroyed the main source of cash income upon which the farmers had depended since that portion of the country was opened for settlement. Although a large proportion of the farm owners had lived in the territory for twenty or thirty years, many of the people were living in abject poverty, and very few were able to keep even. The inhabitants of this

area seemed to be poorly educated, superstitious, sub-marginal farmers who were somewhat irresponsible and shiftless.

There had been but little money lost in Cleveland County due to bank failures. During the last few years the reserves of the farmers in this county had depleted until they had nothing left to fall back upon. The banks were reluctant to lend them money, and the grocery stores had given them credit to the limits of their capacity. Cotton was the only crop for which these people received benefit payments in the recent crop reduction program, and their participation in the plan was of minor importance. Therefore, their principal sources of cash income were few and uncertain.

The tenant farmers of this section had a very extensive tenure history. Many of them were good examples of tramp tenant farmers who drift about aimlessly, not seeming to be concerned with improving their living conditions or getting ahead financially. Large families were the rule and not the exception in this class, and many were heavily in debt because of sickness.

Since the depression there had been an influx of the poor class who had moved into the area from Oklahoma City and small towns. Frequently these immigrants took up residence in farm houses without consent of the land owners. They were inconsiderate of the property going so far as to tear down buildings to use for fuel. Many of the persons moving in did not attempt to cultivate the land, but used the place to live, and to carry on an illicit whiskey trade. As a class, these farmers were neither energetic nor thrifty and many did not have sufficient food and clothing to maintain good health.^{6/}

^{6/} Observations of Field Workers. Unpublished Data

Youth in the Total Population of Oklahoma

According to the Fifteenth Census of the United States, there were 1,574,359 rural people in Oklahoma in 1930, and 319,072 of this number were youth 15 to 24 years of age.^{1/} The rural youth of Payne and Cleveland counties made up approximately 2.1 per cent of the total rural youth population of the state of Oklahoma of this age grouping, and 18.6 per cent of the total rural population of the two counties. For the sake of comparison Table 1 is presented, showing the proportion of youth 15 to 24 years of age with other specified population groups.

Table 1. The Proportion of Youth 15 to 24 years Of Age in the Population of Oklahoma, Payne and Cleveland Counties, and Sample Studied.

Population Subject	Oklahoma	Cleveland and Payne Counties	Households having youth 15 to 24 years of age.	Relief	Non-Relief
Total Population	1,574,359	35,933	896		1,413
Youth 15 - 24 years of age	319,072	6,695	256		459
Proportion of Youth in total population	20.3	18.6	28.6		33.5

The accompanying charts (Figure 1) based on Table 2, give a series of pyramids for the various population units as to age and sex distribution. An unselected population group, theoretically, makes a symmetrical pyramid which gradually slopes from a broad base to the apex equally if males and females are/represented on opposite sides of the axis. The

^{1/}Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930. Population Volume III. Part 2. (pp. 540-543)

population pyramid for the total rural population of the United States 1930, is more even than that of the Oklahoma rural population 1930, except that the age group under 5 years does not make a true base, perhaps due to the decline in the national birthrate and the manner in which data are shown. The same skewness is seen in the population pyramid for the total rural population of Oklahoma in 1930. A relatively even distribution of males and females is noted on these charts. The distortion of regularity in the pyramids is due primarily to the preponderance of persons from 15-24 years of age, rather than to a disparity of the sexes.

Table 2. Age Distribution of Total Rural Population, Farm and Non-Farm, for Oklahoma and the United States 1930, (Shown in percentages)
2/.

Age Groups	Oklahoma		United States	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Total Rural Population	824,436	749,923	27,982,320	25,837,903
0 - 4	11.7	12.5	10.5	11.1
5 - 14	24.4	25.7	22.7	23.6
15 - 24	20.1	20.5	18.5	18.6
25 - 34	13.0	13.7	12.8	13.4
35 - 44	11.0	11.2	12.0	12.1
45 - 54	8.9	8.1	10.2	9.5
55 - 64	6.3	4.8	7.2	6.2
65 - 74	3.3	2.4	4.3	3.7
75 and over	1.3	1.1	1.8	1.8

Figure 2, based on Table 3 represents the rural population of Payne and Cleveland counties chosen for this particular study, i.e., those households, both relief and non-relief, having youth 15 to 24 years of age, single and living in the home. When the selected age groupings

2/ Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930 Population Volume II. (pp. 588, 589, 711)

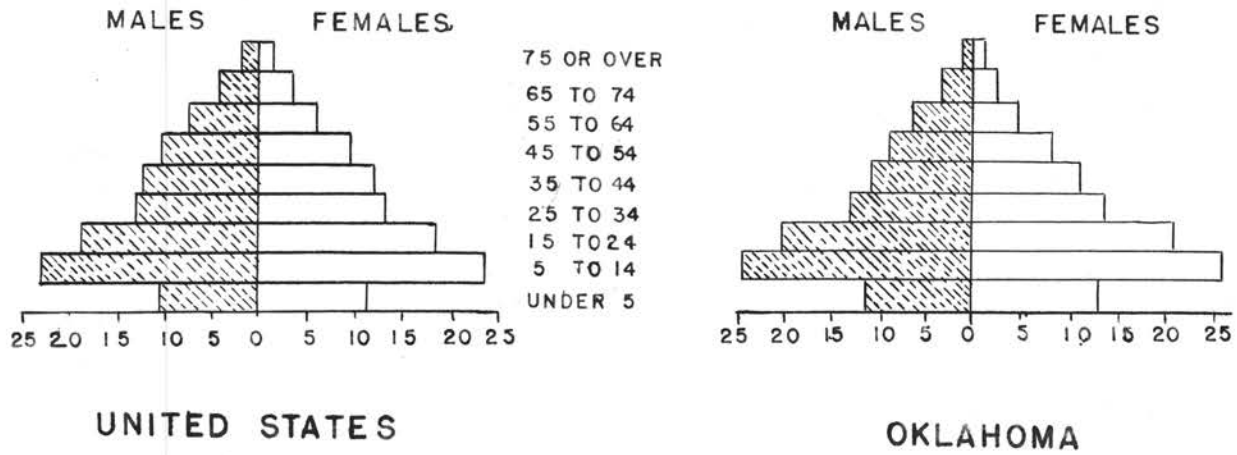


Figure 1. A Comparison of Age and Sex Distribution of the Rural Population of the United States and Oklahoma, 1950.

were superimposed upon the graph for the total population of the study, the males in the age group 15-19 constituted the total male population of the sample. According to the chart a few females in that age group had married. In the next age group (20-24) a few males in the relief group had married, but the chart shows that there are no males of these ages in the non-relief group who are married.

Table 3. Age Distribution of Members of Relief and Non-Relief Households in Payne and Cleveland Counties. (Shown in Percentages.)

Age Groups	Relief Households		Non-Relief Households	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total Number	459	437	753	660
0 - 4	4.4	6.6	5.3	2.7
5 - 9	11.5	13.0	7.4	5.9
10 - 14	18.7	17.6	13.1	18.0
15 - 19	20.0	20.2	23.4	20.9
20 - 24	11.4	9.0	12.2	9.4
25 -34	2.6	4.5	2.9	4.1
35 - 44	8.4	12.4	9.7	16.4
45 - 54	11.8	11.0	14.1	15.1
55 - 64	9.0	5.2	8.2	5.8
65 and over	2.3	1.1	3.6	1.7

These pyramids are asymmetrical in shape owing to the fact that households chosen for the study were those containing youth 15-19 and 20-24, which swells the particular age grouping 15-19 on the chart where the marriage rate is, of course, lower for these ages. In the age groups 15-19 years inclusive, and 20-24 years inclusive, there were respectively 126 males, and 144 males for each 100 females. As might be expected, the greater number of children of both sexes were concentrated in the younger group which would indicate either that those of the upper group had died, or probably married, or were otherwise living outside

Figure 2. A Comparison of Age and Sex Distribution of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households Having Youth 15-24 Years of Age.

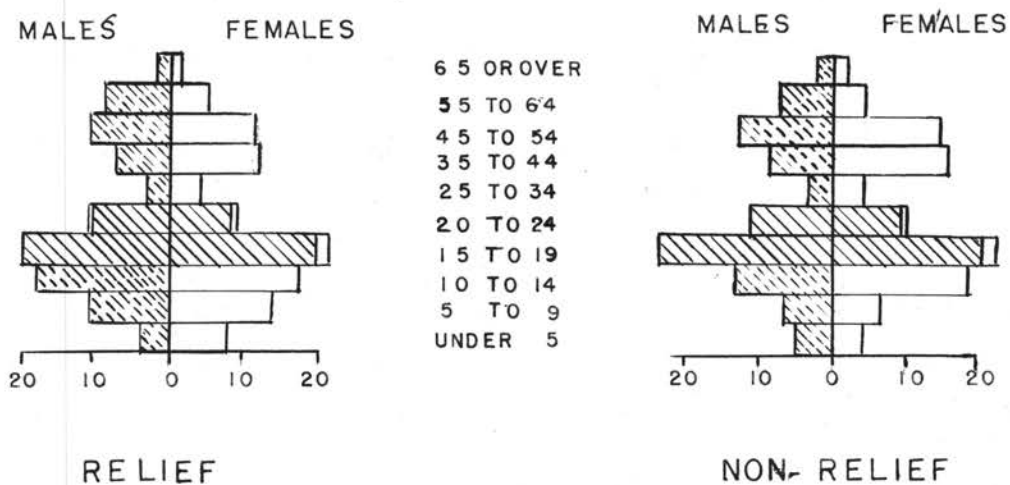
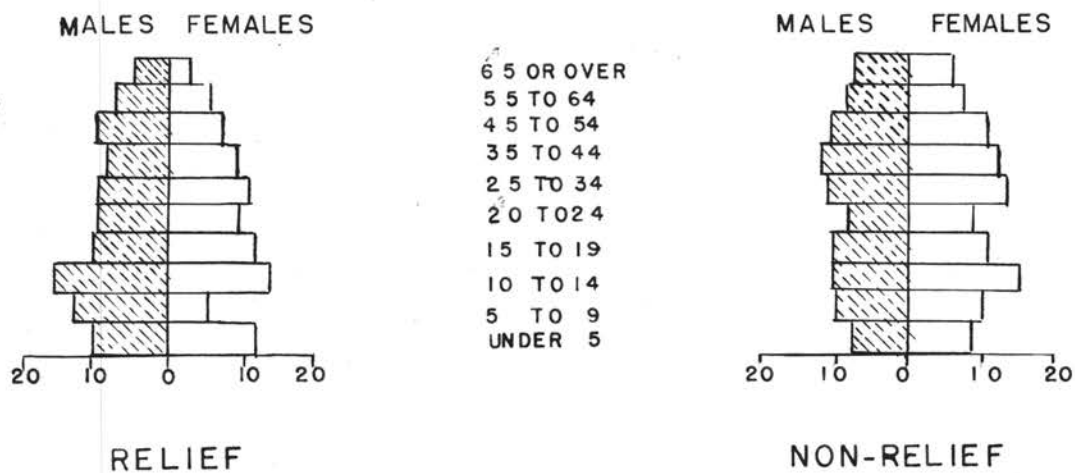


Figure 3. A Comparison of Age and Sex Distribution of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households in Payne and Cleveland Counties.



the home. A relative scarcity of females is noted and although no definite reason is offered for this departure, it is comparable with findings of C. Horace Hamilton of North Carolina, who states:

"Young women leave their rural homes approximately three years earlier in life than young men. In the case of young women more leave home during their eighteenth year than at any other time. If a young woman remains in the home of her parents until she is twenty-one years of age, the probability of her leaving home in later years decreases. In the case of young men, however, the maximum number leave home during the twenty-first year of life, but their highest departure-rate occurs in the twenty-third year. After twenty-one or twenty-two years of age men leave home at a higher rate than do women of the same age."^{3/}

The disproportionately small number of persons in the group 25-29 is shown on the graphs which bears out the assumption that the majority of emigrations of children from the parental home begin with early adulthood, and take place during the years of greatest physical activity before they have accumulated families of their own or have taken up definite occupations. Furthermore, households whose heads are of these ages would seldom contain youth of the selected age groupings of this study.

The total sample from which the selected households were chosen is represented in Figure 3. In the original sample there were 104.5 males per 100 females in the age group 15-19 years, and 103.6 males per 100 females in the 20-24 years age group, which included both single and married population.^{4/}

Household Composition

The characteristics of the household are of fundamental importance in this study, since they constitute the background for the youth who are

^{3/} Hamilton, C. Horace. The Annual Rate of Departure of Rural Youths From Their Parental Homes. Rural Sociology. Vol. 1, June 1936.

^{4/} DRS-16, A Survey of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households. Forthcoming Master's Thesis, Oklahoma Agricultural & Mechanical College, Mattie Faye McCollum.

living in these homes. The socio-economic opportunities of these youth may be somewhat influenced by the size of the family, and the number of persons to be supported. In this study, households have been chosen from rural relief and rural non-relief groups, and a comparison has been made with respect to the number of persons per household. According to the Federal Census 1930, the median sized household for rural group of the state of Oklahoma was approximately 4.5 persons.^{1/}

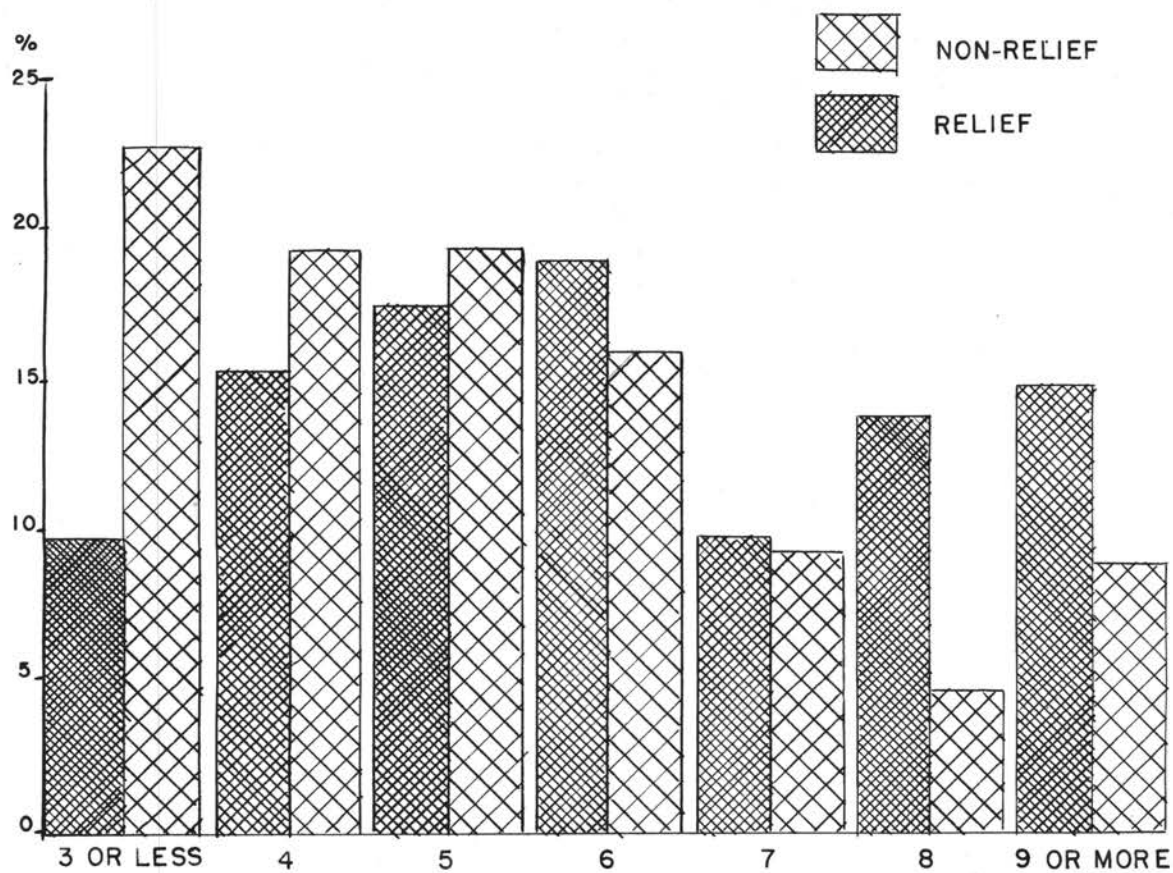
Table 4. Percentage Distribution of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households According to Number of Persons per Household.

Number of Persons : Per Household	Households		
	Total	Relief	Non-Relief
Total Number	412	145	269
Two	1.0	-	1.5
Three	17.2	9.8	21.2
Four	18.0	15.4	19.3
Five	18.7	17.5	19.3
Six	17.0	18.9	16.0
Seven	9.5	9.8	9.3
Eight	8.0	13.9	4.8
Nine	4.1	3.5	4.5
Ten	2.7	5.6	1.1
Eleven	2.4	2.8	2.2
Twelve	.5	.7	.4
Thirteen	.7	1.4	.4
Fourteen	.2	.7	-

Households with 6 or more members occurred in the relief population more often than in the non-relief, (See Figure 4, based on Table 4.) while 21.2 per cent of the non-relief families contained 3 persons or less as compared with 9.8 per cent in the relief households. Those

^{1/} Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930.

Figure 4. Percentage Distribution of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households According to Number of Persons per Household.



households receiving relief were larger than those of their non-relief neighbors, the average size being 6.2 and 5.2 persons respectively.

While this is a comparatively small sample, Table 5, does not show any remarkable differences in the number of children in relief and non-relief households, except in the number of households having only one child. This may mean that only one child remains in the home, since there may be older children who have married. Extremely large families do not stand out among the relief people in this sample. It is true that 2 relief households reported 11 children each, but 10 children were reported once each for relief and non-relief families. This comparatively even distribution in the number of children per household for these two samples is contrary to the popular belief that relief households always have many children. Of the non-relief households 20.8 per cent have 2 children, while 16.8 per cent of the relief households reported 2 children. Figure 4, shows the fairly even distribution of the number of children per household for both relief and non-relief families, which on the whole is as even between the two groups as could be expected allowing for probable age differences in the families.

Broken families comprise 8.4 per cent of those households asking for relief, and approximately 7.0 per cent were families consisting of fathers and children. This is an unexpected situation because of the usual tendency for widowed females to exceed the number of widowed males in a rural population both absolutely and relatively. It can be accounted for, however, because of the fact that the divorced population are also included in this group, for whom the sex ratios show a preponderance of males over females in rural communities.^{2/}

^{2/} O. D. Duncan, Sex Ratios and Marital Conditions of Adult Populations of Different Types of Communities in the United States in Relation to Population Changes. Reprint from Social Forces. Vo. XII Dec. 1933 p.225

The non-relief sample has a high percentage of broken families with 13.0 per cent reported as such, however, they are rather evenly distributed as to male and female heads, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Distribution of Rural Relief and Non-relief Households According to Type of Family.

Types of Families	Total		Relief		Non-Relief	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
All families	412	100.0	143	100.0	269	100.0
Normal "	371	90.0	131	91.6	240	89.2
Broken "	41	9.9	12	8.4	29	10.8
Women	17	4.1	2	1.4	15	5.6
Men	24	5.8	10	7.0	14	5.2

Doubled-up households occurred more frequently in the relief than in the non-relief group, as might be expected. It seems probable that necessity is one explanation for this situation, since families with limited means might pool resources, and cut down on such items as rent, fuel, and equipment during a period of depression. Among the households receiving relief, 19.5 per cent reported from 1 to 4 persons in addition to the original family group. Table 6, shows the percentage of additional members to be much lower for the non-relief households where only 8.2 per cent have persons other than the immediate family living in the home, and where 5.2 per cent report only 1 extra person.

In the relief sample where the additional members are so frequently found there were families caring for from 1 to 3 grandchildren. Other families were caring for nieces for nephews or both, aged parents, brothers, brothers-in-law, unrelated persons, and married sons and daughters with

Table 6. Distribution of Households According to the Number of Extra Persons Residing in the Household.

Number of Extra Persons	Total		Relief		Non-Relief	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
	Total	412	100.0	143	100.0	269	100.0
None	362	87.9	115	80.4	247	91.8
One	29	7.0	15	9.8	14	5.2
Two	12	2.9	6	4.2	6	2.2
Three	5	1.2	5	4.2	0	-
Four	4	1.0	2	1.4	2	.8

families. One relief head reported 11 persons living in his 3 room house. The immediate family consisted of the husband and wife, and their 5 children ranging in age from twin boys 16 years old to 3 younger children, the youngest of whom was 3 years of age. Two married sons and their wives also lived in the home. Apparently, between April 1, 1930, the date of the Census, and October 1933, the drift of population from cities and towns to the farms and villages of Oklahoma resulted in much doubling up of the rural families, especially in the relief and near-relief populations. Another contributing factor was that the depression slowed down the movement of rural youth toward the cities, with the attendant result that there was an impounding of rural population at home. This presumption is borne out by the investigations of many students of farm population movements during the period for which this study is applicable.^{3/}

^{3/} O. D. Duncan, Current Farm Economics, Oklahoma. Series 49, June 1935. Vol. 8 No. 3, P. 68.

Housing

The house has a vital relation to the social and personal life of the different members of the family in that it should provide separate-ness and privacy needed for individual development. "Usually an average of one room per person, exclusive of bath, is regarded as the minimum requirement consistent with health and decency.^{1/} An analysis of the housing conditions of the relief sample shows that these people, regardless of tenure status, are consistently living in houses inadequate for the number of residents, while Table 7, shows only the tenants and laborers of the non-relief sample living in houses having less than one room per person.

Table 7. The Average Number of Rooms Per Household, and Per Person, According to Tenure, and Occupational Status for Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households in Payne and Cleveland Counties.

Tenure and Occupational Group	:Number House-: holds Studied		:Average Size :Household		:Average Rooms :Per Household		:Average Rooms :Per Person	
	: Non-: :Relief:	: Non-: :Relief:	: Non-: :Relief:	: Non-: :Relief:	: Non-: :Relief:	: Non-: :Relief:	: Non-: :Relief:	
Total	143	269	6.3	5.3	3.8	5.3	.6	1.0
Owners	24	127	6.2	4.9	4.1	5.6	.7	1.1
Tenants & Laborers	77	81	6.5	6.1	3.7	4.8	.6	.8
Unemployed	37	19	5.9	5.1	3.7	5.1	.6	1.0
Non.-Agri- cultural	5	42	5.6	4.8	3.4	5.5	.6	1.1

In consideration of the youth living in homes somewhat similar to these, and the effect that such conditions might have upon their

^{1/} E. L. Kirkpatrick, The Farmer's Standard of Living. p. 132.

development, E. L. Kirkpatrick makes the following observation:

The house, as a physically conditioning factor, in any setting, makes easy or difficult the formation of habits of order, cleanliness, healthful living, and an appreciation of beauty. It may be an object of pride or embarrassment. It constitutes part of the objective environment in which happy or unhappy relationships within the family grow. 2/

Aside from the physically conditioning factors of the house as given by Kirkpatrick, the social aspects are to be considered. There would be but little privacy for the youth in these over-crowded households who might wish to entertain friends, read or study. Leisure time would probably be spent away from home as a means of escape from such conditions.

Economic Status

Charts 5 and 6, based on Table 8, present a graphic picture of the tenure and economic status of the households of this study. Among the relief people there were 25.9 per cent of the household heads who were unemployed, and further investigation revealed that some of these people had existed in this manner from one to fifteen years. Their indebtedness ran high with 70.3 per cent owing money. Tenants and laborers, 81.8 per cent of whom were in debt, comprised 53.8 per cent of the total relief population. The non-agricultural group was comparatively small, however, it will be noted that the entire group (100 per cent) had indebtedness.

The greatest existing indebtedness in the relief group was that of an owner who owed \$4,400. However, a large amount of this was due to land purchase that was not paid out. From January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934, he suffered a loss of \$50 in loss of livestock, \$460 crop failure due to drought in 1933, and \$50 was owed for doctor's bills, and for

2/ E. L. Kirkpatrick, *The Farmer's Standard of Living*. p.125.

treatment of malaria.

Table 8. Percentage Indebtedness in Rural Relief and Non-Relief Population According to Tenure Status of Household Heads.

Tenure Status of Heads.	: Per cent of Households : Per cent of Households				: Per cent of Households			
	: With No Indebtedness				: Having Indebtedness.			
	: Relief		: Non-Relief		: Relief		: Non-Relief	
	: :Number:	: :Cent	: :Number:	: :Cent	: :Number:	: :Cent	: :Number:	: :Cent
Total	27	100.0	105	100.0	116	100.0	164	100.0
Agricultural:								
Owners	2	7.4	51	48.6	22	19.0	76	46.3
Tenants and Laborers	14	51.8	23	21.9	63	54.3	58	35.4
Non-Agricultural	0	-	26	24.7	5	4.3	16	9.8
Unemployed	11	40.8	5	4.8	26	22.4	14	8.5

The fact that these relief households seem to stand out with so much indebtedness may be explained in part by the general policies adopted by relief agencies in Oklahoma, whereby relief is not given to a household unless the property owned by the applicant is heavily mortgaged, or he is not a property owner. So long as he can mortgage anything for an income, he is not accepted by the agency.

The highest percentage of heavy indebtedness falls within the non-relief group as Table 8, indicates. Of these households, 4 per cent owed \$5,000 and over. While tenants and laborers comprise a large per cent of those indebted in the non-relief group, only one tenant was found among those owing \$5,000 or more. The remaining number who came within this bracket were owners. However, this is as may be expected, since one could not incur these obligations if he did not have property to borrow against.

Chart 5. A Comparison of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households as to Occupational Status, or Tenure.

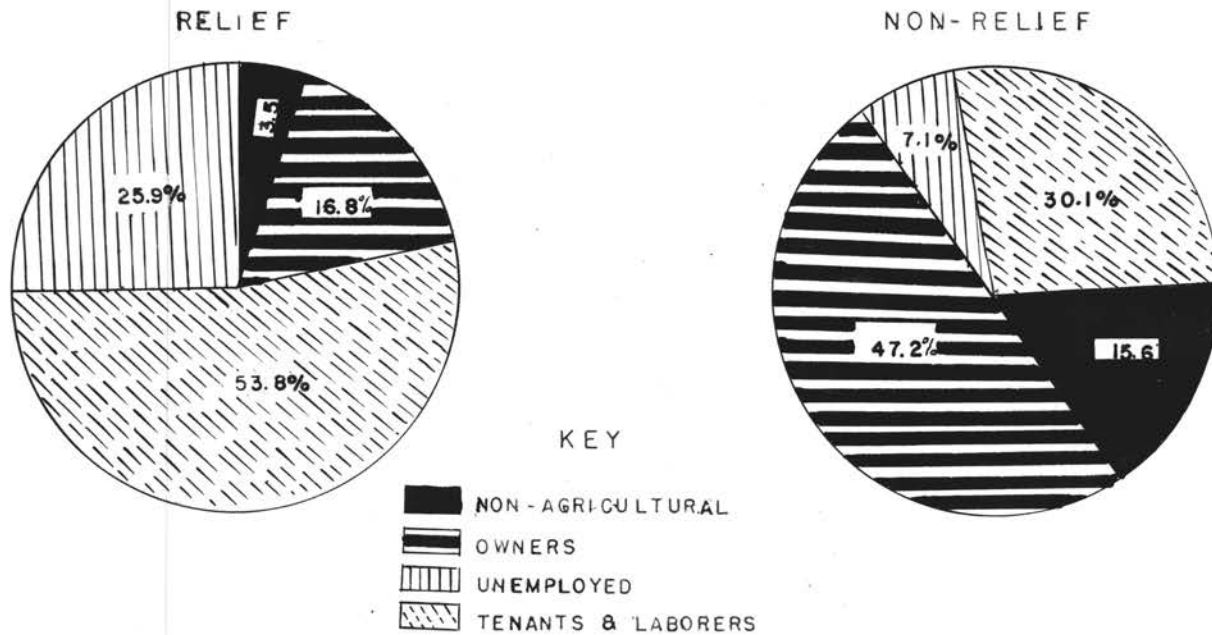


Chart 6. A Comparison of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households, by Tenure, as to the Per Cent Having Indebtedness.

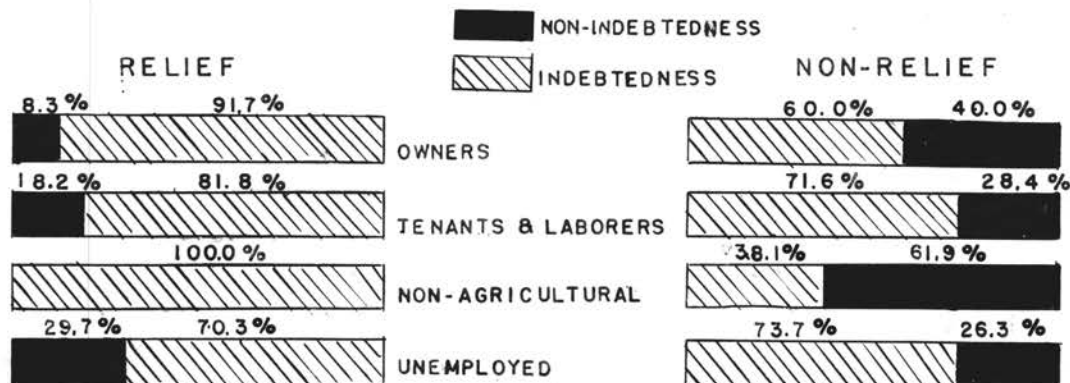


Table 9. Percentage Distribution of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households in Payne and Cleveland Counties, According to Amount of Indebtedness.

Indebtedness In Dollars	Relief		Non-Relief	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Total	143	100.0	269	100.0
None	26	18.1	105	39.0
Under \$100	28	19.6	14	5.2
100 - 200	20	14.1	19	7.1
200 - 300	21	14.7	13	4.8
300 - 400	13	9.0	7	2.6
400 - 500	5	3.5	5	1.9
500 - 750	8	5.6	25	9.3
750 -1000	4	2.8	5	1.9
1000 - 2000	12	8.4	29	10.8
2000 - 3000	4	2.8	19	7.1
3000 - 4000	0	-	9	3.3
4000 - 5000	2	1.4	8	3.0
5000 and over	0	-	11	4.0

The greatest debt of the entire study was that of an owner-operator who owed \$9,800 against his 160 acre farm. Along with the 160 acres that he owned, this man rented 540 acres, making a total of 700 acres of above average river bottom land under operation. From January 1, 1930 to January 1, 1934, he lost \$2,000 through crop failure, \$250 in loss of livestock, and \$100 for funeral expenses for his wife. To offset these losses he was paid \$2,800 for cotton acreage reduction. The farm was purchased for \$5,000 several years ago, and at the time this study was made, the indebtedness was approximately twice that amount. Poor management, and lack of foresight would seem to be the explanation for his economic status. Furthermore, he possessed only a second grade education which does not seem to supply adequate judgment for this man who attempted to operate on such an extensive basis.

Education of Household Heads

Among factors under consideration pertaining to cultural advancement are formal schooling of the different members of the family, and other available educational and social influences. The Census classifies one as illiterate if he is 10 years of age and over, and unable to read and write in any language. The average per cent illiterate for the United States is 4.3 per cent, while Oklahoma ranks 24th. among the states with 2.8 per cent illiterate persons. The rural population of Oklahoma is 3.7 per cent illiterate. ^{1/}

Table 10. Educational Attainment of Parents of Youth 15-24 Years of Age in Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households in Payne and Cleveland Counties. (Shown in Percentages.)

Grade or Year Completed in School	Relief Households		Non-Relief Households	
	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers
Total Number	141	133	254	255
None	1.4	4.5	-	.4
Grade School:				
Under 5	22.7	14.3	18.5	10.6
5-7	38.3	42.1	23.2	28.2
Completed	29.8	31.5	41.3	38.8
High School:				
1	1.4	2.3	3.6	5.5
2	3.6	1.5	4.7	4.7
3	-	.8	.8	1.2
Completed	1.4	3.0	5.1	7.8
College:				
1	1.4	-	.8	.4
2	-	-	.8	1.6
3	-	-	.4	.8
Completed	-	-	.4	-
Post Graduate	-	-	.4	-
Other Training	-	-	-	-

^{1/} Fifteenth Census of the United States 1930. Population Vol. III. p. 51

In this particular study there is no way to ascertain the per cent of illiteracy since the data is based upon the grade attained by those under consideration. Among the relief people there are a few parents who are reported as having no grade attainment. The data showed that 1.4 per cent, or 2 out of 141 fathers were listed thus, while the proportion is higher for mothers with 6 out of 133, or 4.5 per cent classified as having no grade attainment. The non-relief parents were given a higher rating, since there were no fathers reported who did not have some grade attainment, and only 1 mother, or .4 per cent in this classification. The non-relief parents likewise had a higher average grade attainment. The greater per cent of them had not only completed grade school, but a sizeable number of them had a high school education, while some had college, and even post-graduate standing. (See Table 10.) The average grade attainment of the relief group was 5-7 grade, and only a few had finished high school. Of the relief group, 2 fathers had completed the first year of college, and none of the mothers were reported as having had this advantage.

PART II. STATUS OF YOUTH IN RELIEF AND NON-RELIEF HOUSEHOLDS,
JANUARY 1, 1930 to OCTOBER 1, 1933.

The foregoing discussion has been for the purpose of presenting a description of the cultural, economic and geographic background of the youth who are the main objective of this study. The data given in Part II, will deal primarily with the educational attainment of these young people, their opportunities for recreation and advancement in the rural areas, or their handicaps, as the case may be, their employment experience, and their future prospects and possibilities for employment.

Educational Attainment of Youth

The fact that this study was made in the two counties of Oklahoma in which are located the two outstanding institutions for higher learning, i.e., Oklahoma University in Cleveland county and Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College in Payne county, would lead some to believe that larger proportions of youth in these, than in other counties of the state, would avail themselves of the opportunity for a college education. It was found in this study that college training was relatively rare among those not in school both among relief and non-relief people. One out of 90 of the males in the relief group had taken advantage of the opportunity for preparing himself for something better than he had been accustomed to having by taking a college degree. Five out of 69 females in this group attempted to attain an education that would make it possible for them to enter professional fields. This significant difference in the proportions of males and females who entered colleges and universities in the relief group, might be attributed to the fact that these young people were located on farms and in villages where

there are limited means of livelihood for women who do not marry, unless they have sufficient education to teach, or to engage in business as a means of support outside the home. The country does not serve as a hospitable place for the gainful employment of unmarried girls and women.

Girls whose financial means are limited may find part-time work in private homes that will pay for their room and board while they are attending colleges or universities. Numerous loan funds maintained by individuals and various organizations are open to worthy students who wish to take advantage of such means for securing an education, thus making it possible for them to have some college training. These factors may account in part for the fact that a few girls had attended school.

Table 11. Grade Attainment of Youth 15-24 Years of Age in School From Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households.
(Shown by Percentages.)

Grade	Youth In School			
	Relief Households		Non-Relief Households	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total Number	47	52	117	90
None	-	-	-	-
Grade School:				
Under 5	4.3	-	-	-
5-7	31.9	17.3	10.3	4.4
Completed	25.6	15.5	6.0	12.2
High School:				
1 year	8.5	25.0	19.7	17.8
2 "	10.6	25.0	18.8	21.1
3 "	12.8	11.5	20.5	15.6
Completed	2.1	5.7	10.2	15.6
College:				
1 year	2.1	-	5.1	4.4
2 "	2.1	-	5.1	4.5
3 "	-	-	3.4	3.3
Completed	-	-	.9	1.1
Post Graduate	-	-	-	-
Other Training	-	-	-	-

A study of the non-relief group (See Table 11), reveals 43.8 per cent of the males, and 47.2 per cent of the females in school with more from this than from the relief group attending colleges or universities. The non-relief males led in attendance at college with 14.5 per cent as compared with 13.3 per cent of the females. Those from relief households, as might be expected, fell short with 4.2 per cent of the males attending these institutions, while no females were reported as attending.

From those of this particular group who were still in grade school, or high school, females from relief households were retarded in some instances as many as 7 years. Of the entire group of 39 females, only 5 were not retarded. (See Table 12). This high occurrence of retardation would tend to make them unprepared for higher learning.

Table 12. Age-Grade Distribution of Youth 15-24 Years of Age in School From Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households.
(Shown in Percentages)

Age-Grade Distribution	Youth in School			
	Relief Households		Non-Relief Households	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total Number	47	52	117	90
Accelerated	-	1.9	4.3	10.0
At Grade	6.4	9.6	11.1	16.7
1 year below	6.4	19.2	35.9	34.4
2 years below	14.9	21.2	19.7	24.4
3 years below	21.2	15.3	14.5	6.7
4 years below	27.7	15.4	9.4	5.6
5 years below	8.5	9.6	3.4	2.2
6 years below	6.4	3.9	1.7	-
7 years below	6.4	-	-	-
8 years below	2.1	3.9	-	-

A probable factor in retarding the educational development of the

relief youth is the fact that a high percentage of the relief households were tenants and laborers, which means that these families have had a high mobility rate with a direct bearing upon the educational attainment of the children. 1/ Frequent moves made by the family tend to break up continuity of the school work, and of the child's associations until he loses interest and drops out of school as soon as he is past the compulsory age. A compulsory school age law has been in effect in Oklahoma that required all children, unless prevented by mental or physical disability, either to finish the eighth grade or to be eighteen years of age before they could drop out of school. 2/

The average school attainment for females not in school in the relief group was a little below the ninth grade, (8.8) and that of the males was a little lower (7.6) with the eighth grade as the average grade completed by both sexes. (See Table 13) The average grade educational attainment for the present out-of-school population in the United States as a whole is beyond the eighth grade. 3/ Thus the relief group under consideration approached a similar attainment.

Children of relief households were not handicapped noticeably in comparison with those of non-relief households which were only slightly higher with the males a little above the ninth grade, and with the females having completed the tenth grade.

1/ J. T. Sanders, Current Farm Economics Oklahoma. February 1936. p 16.

2/ John Vaughn, School Laws of Oklahoma. 1935. p 71.

3/ Harold Heffsomer, Education and Rehabilitation in Alabama Farm Households Receiving Relief. Bulletin of Alabama Polytechnic Institute. Vol. XXX. No. 7. July 1935. p 4.

Table 13. Grade Attainment of Youth 15-24 Years of Age, Not in School, From Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households (Shown in Percentages)

Grade	Youth Not in School			
	Relief Households		Non-Relief Households	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total Number	90	69	151	100
None	-	-	-	-
Grade School:				
Under 5	6.7	7.5	2.0	3.0
5-7	31.1	17.9	10.7	7.0
Completed	36.7	40.3	34.7	27.0
High School:				
1 Year	7.8	3.0	10.7	7.0
2 Years	8.9	5.9	4.7	15.0
3 Years	1.1	1.5	3.3	3.0
Completed	6.7	17.9	28.0	32.0
College:				
1 Year	-	-	3.3	3.0
2 Years	-	3.0	1.3	-
3 Years	-	1.5	.6	2.0
Completed	1.1	1.5	.7	1.0
Post Graduate	-	-	-	-
Other Training	-	-	-	-

A similar study was made from the original sample which included all children living in the home whose schooling was complete, regardless of age grouping. ^{4/} The average school attainment for the relief males was 7.9 while those of the non-relief households showed an attainment of 9.3. The average grade attainment reached by females was slightly higher, 8.3 in the relief group and 10 in the non-relief. The comparison of data indicates that attainment in these particular areas had not changed appreciably over a period of years, since all children were considered in the original study regardless of age grouping, and they were found to be but little different from those 15-24 years of age in the selected sample.

^{4/} DRS-16, A Survey of Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households. Forthcoming Master's Thesis, Mattie Faye McCollum.

The compulsory school law has been in effect for a number of years, and would account for the similarity in attainment to a large degree.

For the purpose of determining whether or not the amount of education the parents had received had any bearing upon that received by the children who had finished school, grades finished by mothers and daughters, and those of the fathers and sons were correlated. For mothers and daughters a coefficient of simple correlation of $.491 \pm .061$ was found. For the fathers and sons the coefficient of simple correlation in these data is $.322 \pm .059$. While these coefficients are not particularly high, they indicate that there is direct tangible association between the grade attainments of parents and those of children of the same sex. These interpretations show that the grade completed by the mother has a positive relationship with that completed by the daughter. The education of the father appears to be less significantly associated with that received by the son, than is true of mothers and daughters.

Opportunities of Social Participation

Many of these youth who were kept in the rural areas during the depression because of economic conditions probably would have migrated to urban centers if economic opportunities in the cities had not been virtually closed during that time. However, they were not totally cut off from all possible means of advancement since they had, at worst, limited access to schools, colleges, universities, religious organizations, and informal groups outside the home. Within the home some few had access to radios, telephones, automobiles, daily newspapers and magazines, all of which provided some means of contact with outside influences.

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The status of children whose parents were on relief was shown to be less desirable than that of youth whose parents were of the non-relief group, in that they probably had to go outside the home for recreation and social contact. Some of those families who were able previously to provide facilities for communication had to abandon the use of radios, telephones, automobiles, newspapers and magazines when their circumstances became such that they were justified in asking for relief.

Table No. 14 Changes in Facilities for Communication in 143 Rural Relief and 269 Rural Non-Relief Households in Payne and Cleveland Counties.

Facilities for Communication	Relief Households			Non-Relief Households		
	Added	Dropped	None	Added	Dropped	None
Radio	1.4	7.7	90.9	8.5	9.3	82.2
Telephone	-	11.9	88.1	5.2	8.9	85.9
Automobile	.7	29.4	69.9	13.0	5.9	81.1
Daily Newspaper	4.2	18.9	76.9	11.5	9.7	78.8
Other Newspapers	1.4	7.7	90.9	9.3	1.5	89.2
Magazines	2.1	4.9	93.0	11.9	1.9	86.2
Other Items	-	-	-	-	-	-

Note: Added if used in 1934, but not in 1930; dropped if used in 1930, but not in 1934; none if used in either 1930 or 1934.

Between 1930 and 1934 there was a drop of 29.4 per cent in the number of relief households operating automobiles, which was the greatest single decline in the use of communication facilities during that period. This is important not only from the point of view of the household itself, but also for those social and group activities in which it participates with other local families. The use of daily newspapers showed a decrease of 18.9 per cent in the relief households, while 4.2 per cent of the households added daily newspaper subscriptions. This item exceeded all other facilities for communication added by relief households, probably due to the fact that as they had leisure time forced upon them and as

they were compelled to drop other facilities, they found reading matter the most economical source of entertainment. Telephones were not used by 88.1 per cent of the group, and all of those which had been in use prior to 1930 were discontinued by 1934. The percentages are high for all facilities for communication which had not been used in relief households either in 1930 or in 1934. (See Table 14)

Non-relief households reported more facilities added than dropped during this period. Automobiles, daily newspapers, other newspapers and magazines show an increase, while radios and telephones dropped by slightly less than 10.0 per cent.

Table 15. Changes in Social Participation of 143 Rural Relief and 269 Rural Non-Relief Households in Payne and Cleveland Counties (Shown in Percentages)

Form of Participation	Relief Households				Non-Relief Households			
	No Change	: Added	: De-creased	: None	: Change	: Added	: De-creased	: None
Religious	63.6	4.9	20.3	11.2	79.9	3.1	5.9	11.1
Fraternal	8.4	.7	10.5	80.4	32.3	.4	7.5	59.8
Young People's	50.3	6.3	3.5	39.9	56.9	5.2	3.3	34.6
Informal Groups	56.6	5.6	6.3	31.5	69.8	1.5	7.1	21.6
Schools and Colleges	58.7	12.6	21.0	7.7	50.0	9.7	30.9	8.5

Note: None means No Participation.

Those youth who had previously participated in social activities outside the home were forced to change their practices somewhat as their economic level dropped. Outstanding among all organizations attended was that of the Church which held more of the young people of both relief and non-relief households than did any other social agency. The decrease in attendance to educational institutions is conspicuous in as much as 21.0

per cent of the relief group, and 30.9 per cent of the non-relief group discontinued their schooling between 1930 and 1934. Table 15, also shows that over 50.0 per cent of both relief and non-relief youth made no change in their participation in schools and colleges, and more added this particular participation than any other form.

Rural youth were not finding their age-old outlet in city employment during the years of the depression, and whenever possible they seemed to be taking advantage of attending schools and colleges for the purpose of preparing themselves for jobs where such training is required.

E. L. Kirkpatrick and Agnes Boynton conducted a survey in Waushara County, Wisconsin, among rural young people between the ages of 15 and 29, and their findings are noticeably similar to those of this study. In their study of Participation in Organization they reported the following:

"Organizational activities play an important role in the life of the individual and the community. It is encouraging, therefore, to know that three-fifths of all the young people reported attendance at local club meetings, including church and Sunday School services..... Nearly 50 per cent of all the young people are members of the Church or its organizations....Less than 2 per cent attended fraternal meetings....Almost 5 per cent belonged to the school group." 1/

Participation in purposive group activities is one of several phases of sociological research which has been somewhat neglected until comparatively recently. It is an important aspect of rural life, for it is to be to a great extent a measure of the transcendence of the group over the individual. It is, therefore, an index of acculturation, of social interaction, and of the mitigation of psycho-social isolation. As may be gleaned from the writings of A. F. Weber, Warren H. Wilson,

1/ E. L. Kirkpatrick and Agnes M. Boynton, Rural Young People Face Their Own Situation. Rural Sociology. Vol. 1 June 1936. pp. 159-160

C. J. Galpin, Dwight Sanderson, and many other students, the preservation and cultivation of its facilities for social participation is one of the primary struggles of the rural community in the face of a rapidly changing culture. The crux of this problem appears to inhere to a large extent in the evacuation of rural areas by their potential leaders. This seems to have the effect of weakening the stimuli which are calculated to foster local group participation. No doubt, also, the economic distress which characterized the period of this study exercised a disrupting influence upon the regularly established patterns of participation in the rural community. As the recovery from economic chaos proceeds, the emergent rural community offers an excellent laboratory for the development of new forms, modes, or channels of social participation looking toward a closer knitting together, and coordination of the existing agencies for the integration and direction of youth activities.

Employment Status

The employment status of youth in this study during the period January 1, 1930 to October 1, 1933, was a matter of considerable significance since these young men and women were living in the rural areas where opportunities for employment were scarce, and earnings were limited. Of the youth studied, 35.9 per cent belonged to households on direct relief, while the remaining 64.1 per cent were from the non-relief households. In the relief group, 80.3 per cent of the males and 87.4 per cent of the females in the age group 15-24 years were dependent on their parents for support while a relatively small per cent of them were employed, at least part time. See Table 16.

Table 16. Employment Status of Youth 15-24 Years of Age in Rural Relief and Rural Non-Relief Households. October 1, 1933
(Shown in Percentages)

Employment Status	Youth		Youth	
	In Relief Households		In Non-Relief Households	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total	137	119	271	187
Seeking Work	29.2	18.5	20.3	21.4
In School	25.6	42.0	41.0	46.5
At Home	22.6	26.1	20.3	26.7
Employed	11.7	12.6	7.8	5.4
Employed and seeking work.	4.4	...	10.0	....
Employed and in School.	3.6	...	.5	....
Disabled	2.9	.8	.3	....

Figure 7 shows a preponderance of youth under 20 years of age, which probably accounts in some degree for the large percentage of youth who were unemployed and dependent upon their parents for support on October 1, 1933.

The employment status of non-relief males was similar to that of the relief males with 81.9 per cent unemployed. Relatively few non-relief females (5.4 per cent) were employed, while 46.5 per cent of them were in school at the time the study was made. Of the total youth population observed, 33.2 per cent in the relief group were in school as compared with 43.2 per cent in the non-relief group. Approximately the same proportion of youth in each group were found to be seeking work with 24.2 per cent in the relief and 20.7 per cent in the non-relief group. In each group there was an appreciable number who were reported to be "at home" who were neither employed, seeking work, nor in school. This

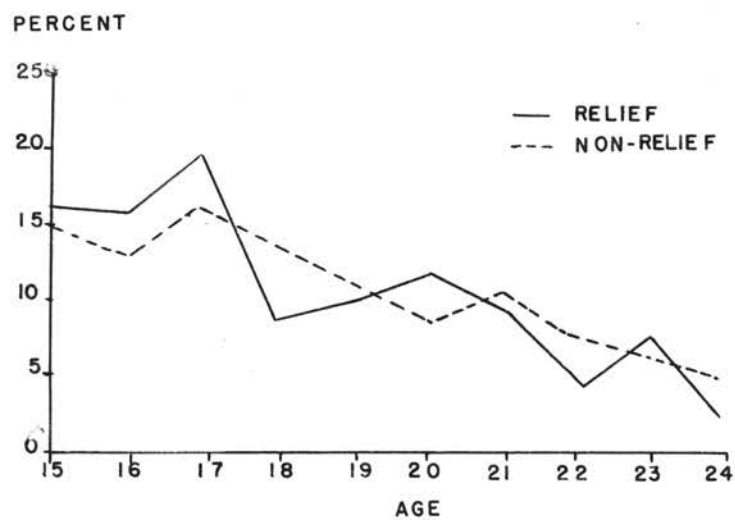


Figure 7. Age Distribution of Youth 15-24 Years of Age in Rural Relief and Non-Relief Households.

group probably included a number of those youth 15 years of age and who were exempt by the school law, and whose employment status was not reported. The schedules did not show employment status for those members of the household who were under 16 years of age.

The proportion of youth employed is greater in the relief group with 12.1 per cent employed as compared with 6.8 per cent among the non-relief youth.

The limited educational attainment and the lack of professional training of these young men and women probably accounts in part for the diversity of employment reported by those who were working. Professional work was engaged in by noticeably few of either relief or non-relief youth. Among those of the relief group, 5 were teaching school, while 4 were teaching in the non-relief group, and 1 was practicing law. The largest percentage of those employed in both groups were helping on the farm, and the second largest group were engaged in agriculture. This is as might be expected, since so many of them were incapable of doing other types of work because of lack of training and experience.

Table 17, shows the different occupations reported, with those requiring unskilled labor in the majority.

Only 10.9 per cent of the relief youth were receiving wages for the work they did, while 89.1 per cent of them were reported as working for room and board, or helping on the farm. Some of the females were listed as helping their mothers, and some were planning to marry. The wage scale ranged from \$5 to \$88 per month with 76.6 per cent of them receiving less than \$50 per month, while 7.1 per cent received from \$50 to \$75, and the remaining 14.3 per cent received from \$75 to \$88 per month.

Table 17. Distribution of Youth Employed According to Type of Employment
(Shown in Percentages.)

Type of Employment	Youth		Youth	
	In Relief Households		In Non-Relief Households	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Total Number	137	119	271	187
Work not accounted for	32.8	52.1	44.6	56.6
Seeking work	29.2	18.5	20.3	21.4
Helping on farm	24.1	16.0	16.6	16.6
Agriculture	8.0	4.2	13.5	....
Teaching school	.8	3.4	....	2.2
Lawyer	....	....	.4	....
Stenographer	....	....	....	.5
Beauty Operator	....	....	....	.6
Enumerator	....	....	.4	....
Telephone Operator	....	.8	....	....
Clerk	....	.8	2.2	.5
Bakery	1.5	.8	....	....
Packing Plant	....	....	.4	....
Oil Field (pumper)	....	....	.4	....
Filling Station	....	....	.4	....
Bus Driver	....	....	...4	....
Waitress	....	....	....	.6
Housekeeping	.7	2.6	....	.5
Laundry	....	....	....	...5
Disabled	2.9	.8	.4	....

Of the non-relief youth who were employed, 6.6 per cent were working for wages. Various reasons were given for those who were not working. One seventeen-year-old boy indicated that he "didn't want to," and one female was "trying to marry." Other reasons were given as, in school, physically disabled, helping on the farm, and too young.

A higher wage scale was given for this group ranging from \$10 to \$120 per month with 16.7 per cent of those employed receiving \$100 or over. In the lower wage brackets, 40.0 per cent received less than \$50 per month, while 30.0 per cent received from \$50 to \$75 per month, and 13.3 per cent received from \$75 to \$100 per month. It is not surprising

to find that youth from non-relief households held better positions, and received higher wages than youth from relief households, when consideration is given to educational attainment of the two groups. See Tables, 11 and 13.

Summary and Conclusion

This is a study of youth 15 to 24 years of age who were living in the homes of parents in rural relief and non-relief households of Payne and Cleveland counties in Oklahoma during the period January 1, 1930, to October 1, 1933. Part I deals with the cultural and economic background of these youth, and the geographic conditions of the areas in which they lived. Much of the area surveyed was poorly adapted to agriculture, and this factor along with drought and crop failures was no doubt basic in bringing about the economic conditions that eventually made many of these people known to the Federal Emergency Relief Administration.

The paralyzed condition of agriculture during the depression brought economic chaos in the rural communities which was aggravated further by the industrial demoralization of the cities. This condition brought about the vicious situation under which those who would have ordinarily left the farms found themselves, and their numbers were increased by those who were disgorged from the cities. This produced a cumulative stagnation of socio-economic life of rural areas generally.

Federal Soil Conservation work, along with the program set up by the Rural Resettlement Administration in Payne County has done much to alleviate the conditions that existed in portions of these areas when the survey was made. According to the local Resettlement Office, the people

living in the Rural Resettlement project area have been greatly benefited by the work carried on during the last two years. The Resettlement Administration reported that in 1935 there were 35 families which had an average income of less than \$100 per year; 39 families received less than \$200, and 30 families averaged \$500 each. Since the development of the project, all of those families have been given employment, and at least current elemental needs have been met.

Within the 143 relief, and 269 non-relief households studied, there were 268, and 458 youth respectively who were between 15 to 24 years of age. The heads of these households were classified according to tenure and occupational status. In relief households, 25.9 per cent of the heads were unemployed, and 70.3 per cent of them were owing money. Tenants and laborers made up 53.8 per cent of the relief population, and 81.8 per cent of this class were debtors. Among owner household heads, 47.2 per cent were in the non-relief, as compared with 16.8 per cent in the relief sample, and it was in the non-relief owner class that heavy indebtedness was most prevalent.

The youth who were living in the households studied were faced with serious problems of socio-economic adjustment. There was little or no opportunity of escaping the forces that held them in precarious circumstances. Need for occupational guidance and training was evidenced from the type of employment engaged in by the minority of young people who were fortunate enough to be working, as well as by those who were unemployed and seeking work. Educational and social agencies have an ample field in the rural areas for contributing to the development of the young men and women who may have been deprived of opportunities for practicable experience and advancement.

Participation in purposive group activities was noticeably absent among the youth in these samples. Such participation is an important aspect of rural life inasmuch as it serves as a measure of transcendence of the group over the individual. It is also an index of acculturation, of social interaction, and of the mitigation of psycho-social isolation. Some means of stimulating interest in group activities among youth, as well as the development of new forms of social participation seems to be necessary in formulating a recovery program for rural communities in Oklahoma.

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