

FACTORS RELATED TO THE DROPOUTS OF FRESHMAN  
STUDENTS IN A VENEZUELAN  
TEACHERS COLLEGE

By

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The development of human resources through education is the most important element in the achievement of cultural, political, social, and economic goals of a society.

Venezuela, through Articles 78 and 80 of the Constitution, considers education to be compulsory and free at the elementary, secondary, and university levels. The main purpose of education is the integral growth of the individual, who should be able to be an active part of a democratic society (Constitución Nacional, 1978).

In 1958, there were six institutions of higher education in Venezuela: three public universities, two private universities, and one public teachers college. There was a total higher education enrollment of 11,000 students (Drayer and Castillo, 1981). Since 1958, after the overthrow of the dictatorship, there has been a great change in student enrollment and in the diversification of higher education due to the new democratic way of life of Venezuelans. The democratic governments have developed education at all levels, resulting in 72 institutions of higher education by 1980: 13 public and six private universities, five public and one private teachers college, four public polytechnic colleges, 13 public technologic colleges, seven public and 17 private junior colleges, and four public military institutions with a total enrollment of 298,884 students (Drayer and Castillo, 1981).

The increasing enrollment in Venezuelan higher education should produce a significant number of graduates who will be involved with the marketplace. However, graduation rates are still low because, according to Marta (1979), many students do not succeed in their academic programs. In fact, administrators today face one of the biggest problems in Venezuelan education: dropouts. In 1969-1970, the total enrollment was 2,100,250 from a population of about 10,000,000 and approximately 30 percent were graduated on schedule (Ministerio de Educación, 1976). The Instituto Universitario Pedagógico Experimental (IUPE) José Manuel Siso Martínez, which was founded in 1976, is one of the teachers colleges affected by this problem. It is a public college that offers learning-at-a-distance programs for degrees in integral education with majors in social science, physical education, language, or natural science; mathematics; physics; and industrial education with majors in electronics and mechanics. Both the enrollment and the budget at this college have been increasing, but the number of students who withdraw in their first semester has also been increasing.

#### Statement of the Problem

There are many factors that influence a student's decision to drop out of school. Among them are such factors as academic background, financial situation, and college environment. Although the IUPE J. M. Siso Martínez allocates significant economic and human resources and gives people the opportunity for continuing education through learning at a distance, it appears that a high number of students withdraw in their first semester while a low number continue attending college.

Problem

This problem concerns the Ministry of Education since it represents a large loss of money, loss of the social benefits of education, and loss of prestige for those institutions suffering high attrition rates. In seeking solutions, authorities have encouraged research to help them solve this problem.

Due to the importance of this situation, this study was conducted to investigate one major question: What significant differences exist between individuals who drop out and individuals who remain on various experiential factors and perceptions?

#### Research Questions

As part of the problem described above, the following research questions were developed for this study:

1. What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on personal characteristics?
  - a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on demographic characteristics? Specifically, are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on age, gender, marital status, and hometown location?
  - b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on academic background? Specifically, are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on high school performance, study habits, first semester grades, and the last degree earned before attending college?
2. What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on individual goals?

- a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on the level of degree aspiration at the time of entering college?
  - b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on economic status?
3. What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on institutional characteristics?
- a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources?
  - b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics?
4. What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to students' academic and social integration?
- a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to perceptions of aspects of the student-faculty relationship?
  - b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to participation in extracurricular activities?
  - c. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to their perceptions of their treatment by academic and support staff?

#### Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to establish a common understanding for use in this study:

Open Teachers College--An educational institution of higher education that offers the degree of Professor of Secondary Education through learning-at-a-distance programs; these programs are mainly taught by individualized orientation, group sessions, and television programs.

Dropout--A student who started college during the fall semester 1983 and left college before completing his first year at college.

Persister--A student who completed his first year at college and began the fall semester 1984 to start his second year at college.

#### Limitations

The following limitations are recognized in this study:

1. The data were collected between January and April of 1985. It is possible that more surveys may have been returned after the end date.
2. This was a case study limited to a single institution.
3. The study was limited to selected variables.
4. The size of the sample for dropouts was restricted to the students enrolled in the fall semester 1983 and students who left the college during the spring and fall of 1984 before completing their first year at college. Consequently, caution must be used in generalizing the results to other populations.
5. The size of the sample for persisters was restricted to the students enrolled during the fall 1983, spring 1984, and fall 1984 after starting their second year at college. Again, therefore, care must be used in generalizing the results to other populations.

### Organization of This Study

This thesis has five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction, which includes the statement of the problem, the research questions, the rationale for the study, definition of terms and limitation of the study. The second chapter deals with the review of related literature, the theoretical model, and assumptions of the study. Chapter III presents the definition of variables, population and procedures, the instrument, the method of collection, and the treatment of the data. Chapter IV provides the results of the study, and Chapter V contains a summary, conclusion, and recommendations developed from the research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Research studies concerned with attrition of college students have increased notably during the last two decades, as attrition is a problem facing those interested in and affiliated with institutions of higher education. The review of literature in this study especially highlights investigations that concentrated on freshmen who left college without enrolling for the second year; however, the review also draws on more extensive attrition studies.

The literature is grouped into six categories: (1) the theoretical models and the theoretical framework on which this study is based; (2) studies related to personal characteristics; (3) studies related to individual goals; (4) studies related to institutional characteristics; (5) studies related to academic and social integration; and (6) studies on attrition in Venezuela.

#### Theoretical Models of Dropouts

The theoretical framework to be followed in this study has its basis in Tinto's (1975) and Pascarella's (1980) models of attrition; these models have their roots in Durkheim's Theory of Suicide, which was applied by Spady (1970) in developing a theoretical empirical model of the undergraduate dropout process.

According to Durkheim (1961), suicide seems to occur when the individual feels the lack of two types of integration, moral integration

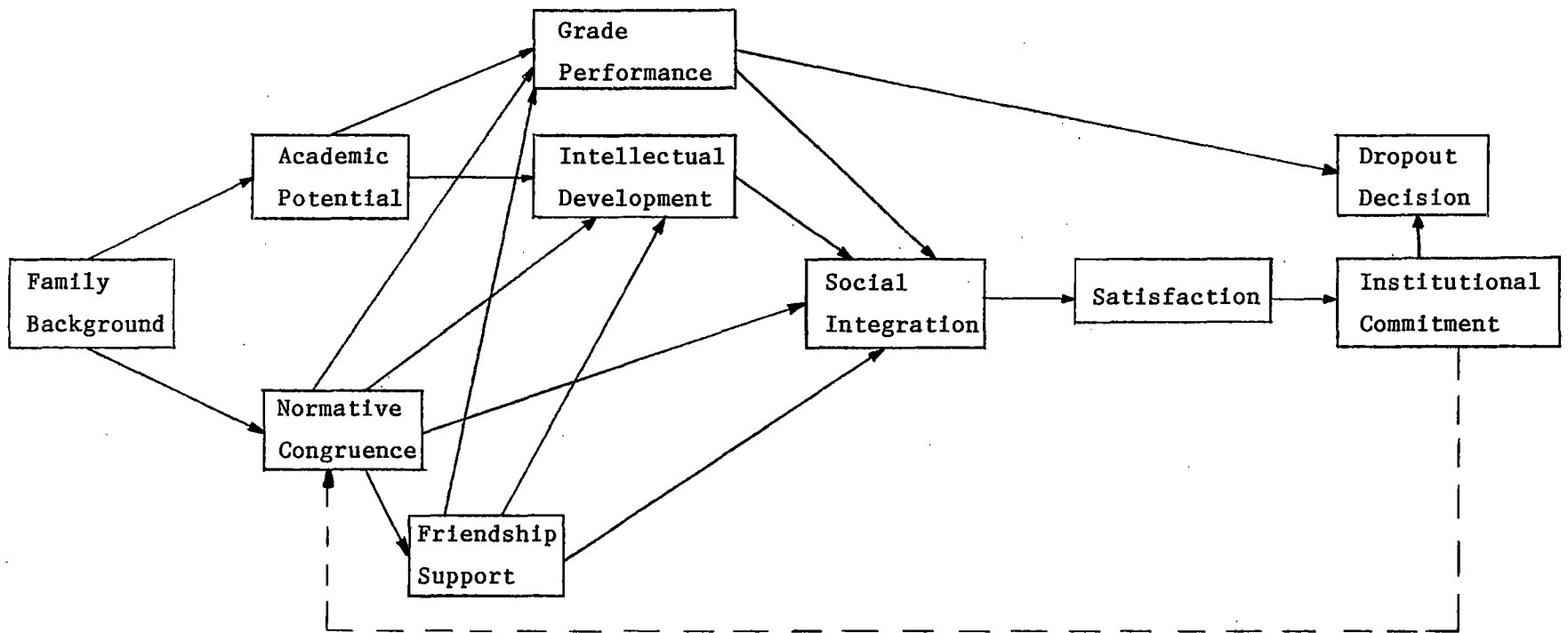
and collective affiliation. Spady (1970) applied the theory of suicide to the social system of college and suggested that a lack of integration in the college, academic or normative, in addition to the individual's academic aptitude and previous training, may influence his dropout decision (Figure 1).

Tinto's theoretical model of dropout, represented in Figure 2, shows that the process of dropout from college can be considered as a longitudinal process of interactions between the individual and the academic and social systems of the college; during this process, the individual's experiences continually modify his goals and institutional commitments in ways that lead to persistence or the decision to dropout.

Pascarella (1980) has developed a theoretical model of the dropout process that emphasizes the importance for students of informal contact with faculty members. According to this theory, background characteristics of students interact with institutional factors such as policies, size, and academic standards; these influence informal contact with faculty members and educational outcomes. Educational outcomes directly affect persistence or withdrawal decisions.

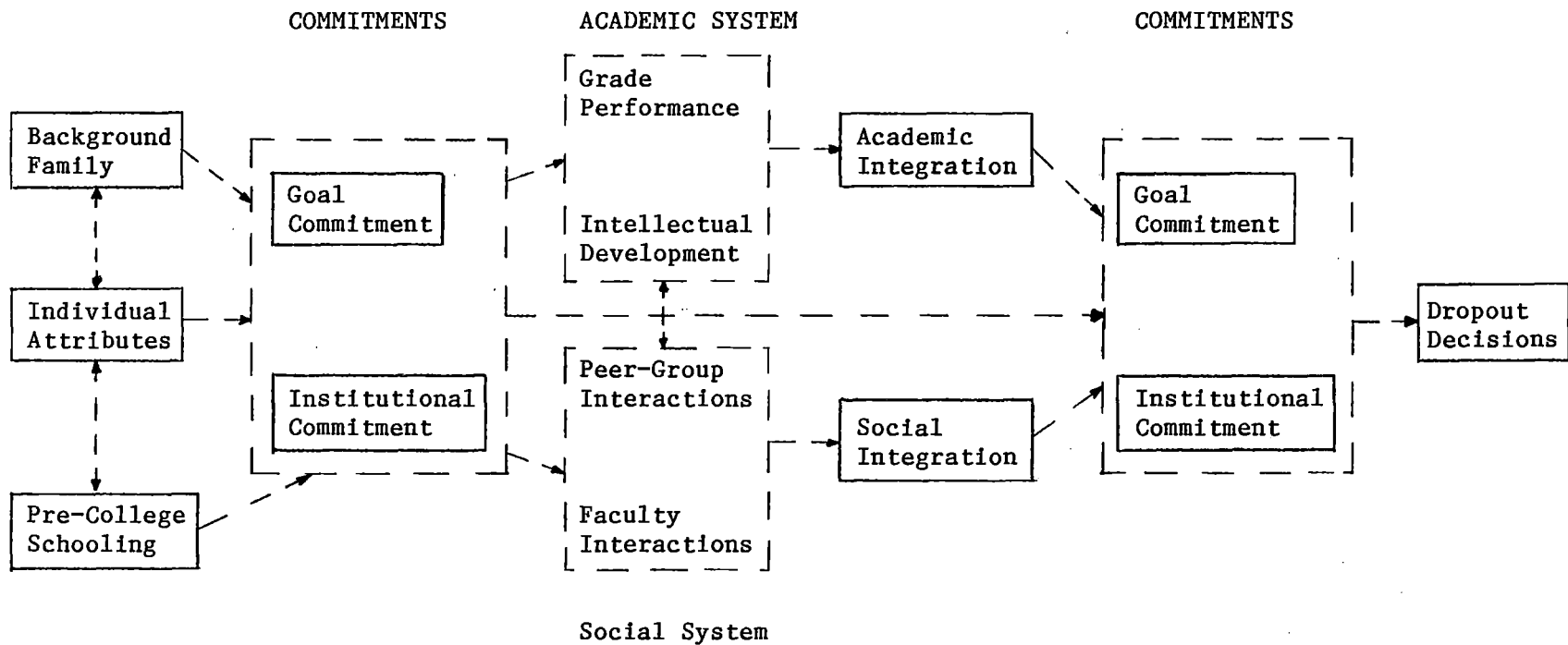
A theoretical dropout model for a Venezuelan teachers college can be based on an assumption of the interaction among four main sets of variables: personal characteristics, individual goals, institutional characteristics, and academic and student social integration (Figure 3). Individuals go into college with various personal characteristics such as demographic characteristics and academic background. Demographic characteristics include age, gender, marital status, and hometown location. Academic background refers to high school performance, study habits, first semester grades, and the student's last degree earned before





Source: Spady, William G. "Dropouts from Higher Education: Toward an Empirical Model." Interchange, 2, No. 3 (1971): 38-62.

Figure 1. Theoretically Based Model of the Undergraduate Dropout Process



Source: Tinto, Vincent. "Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research." Review of Educational Research, 25, No. 1 (Winter, 1975).

Figure 2. Tinto's Model of Attrition

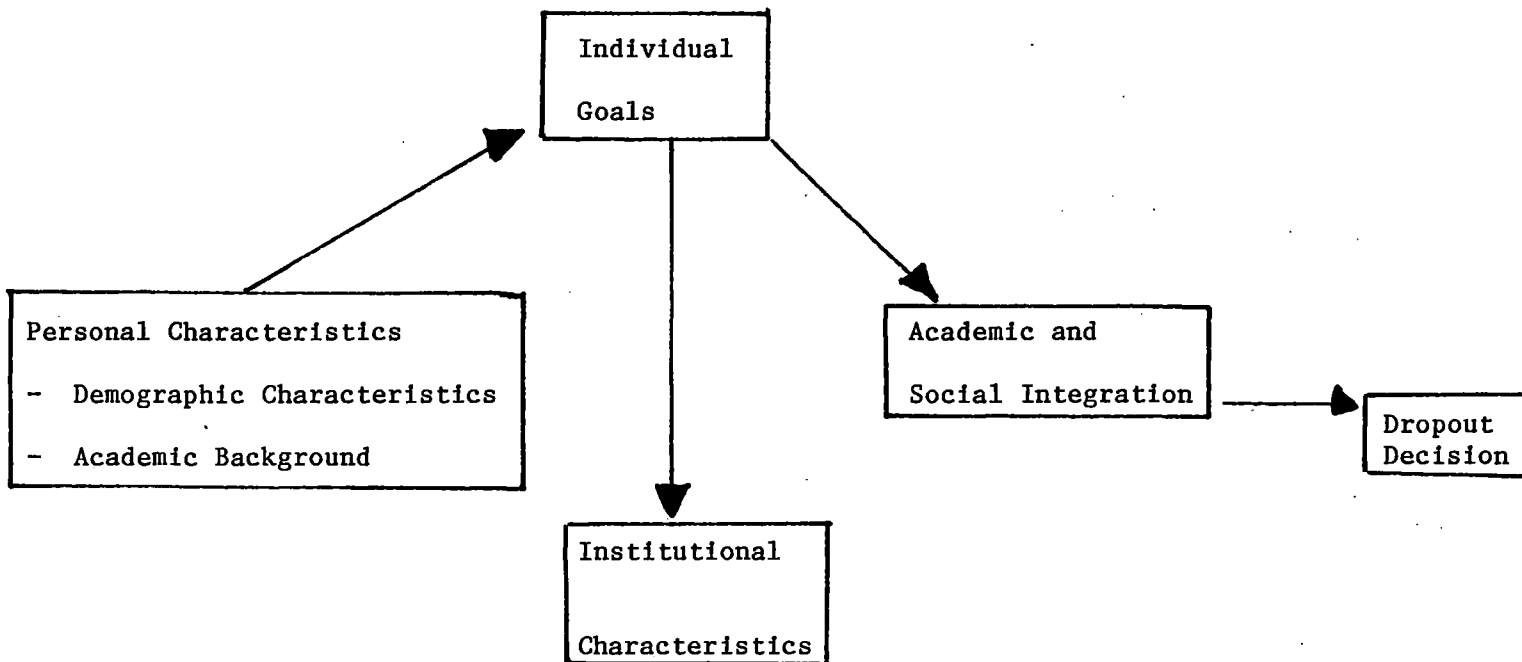


Figure 3. Theoretical Model for Freshman Dropout in a Venezuelan Teachers College

entering IUPE. Those characteristics can influence performance in college directly or indirectly by shaping the individual's educational goals, which then interact with perceived institutional characteristics and the academic and social integration that he or she experienced.

This model takes into account the importance of personal characteristics, individual goals, perceived institutional characteristics and the student's academic and social integration in affecting the student's decision to remain in or to leave college.

The following review of literature provides the research background which served as the basis for the selection of the variables used in this study.

#### Personal Characteristics

In this section, two sets of variables are discussed in relation to their influence on the student's decision to leave or to remain in college. Those are demographic characteristics and academic background.

##### Demographic Characteristics

Four aspects are considered under this subtopic: age, gender, marital status, and hometown location.

Age. Several studies have indicated that age does not have a relationship to attrition. However, Astin (1975) suggested that older students were more likely to drop out than traditional students. Summerskill (1962) concluded that older undergraduates may have more obstacles to graduation, and, thus, they may be more likely to be dropouts than younger students.

Gender. The gender of the students appears to be related to college persistence, with a higher proportion of men finishing college degree programs than women (Astin, 1972; Cope, 1975; Tinto, 1975). However, Cope and Hannah (1975) illustrated different reasons for withdrawal, with men tending to cite academic reasons such as dissatisfaction with college or lack of motivation, while women more frequently mentioned non-academic ones such as marriage. According to Summerskill (1962), studies have either shown little gender differences in attrition rates or less attrition among women at colleges. In contrast, Panos and Astin (1968) found that men dropped out at a higher rate than women. Thus, these various studies seem to have somewhat conflicting findings.

Marital Status. Astin (1977) reported that marital status at time of matriculation as a freshman is a significant characteristic affecting persistence in college. Being married at the time of college entry increases women's chances of dropping out by about 8 percent. Panos and Astin (1968) found that the dropout was more likely than the persister to have been married when he started college.

Hometown Location. Medsker and Trent (1963) reported that research is unclear concerning the relationship between the distance students live from campus and the likelihood of dropping out. Summerskill (1962) found that hometown size and location were important in explaining dropout behavior.

#### Academic Background

The literature reports high school performance, study habits, and first semester grades to be related to students' decisions to leave or remain in college.

High School Performance. The high school records of students are considered valuable indicators of college persistence. Astin (1977) reported a consistent relationship between academic performance in high school and college attrition. Students with averages of A or A+ were nearly three times as likely to receive their bachelor's degree within four years as were students who made grades lower than a C in high school. According to Nelson (1972), the characteristics of high school performance are important because they affect the individual's aspirations, expectations, and motivation in college education. Summerskill (1962) found that in 10 of 11 studies in his review of the literature, dropouts were more likely to have below average grades in secondary schools than were graduates.

Study Habits. One of the more obvious academic factors that affects the probability of student persistence or withdrawal is the student's study habits. If these habits are poor, the student will most likely withdraw because of poor academic performance. Sexton (1965) reported that students who do not drop out estimate that they spend more time studying per week than they believed the average student does. Demitroff (1974) stated that dropouts more frequently characterize their study habits as poor or below average than those who stay in college.

First Semester Grades. Considering studies developed to predict attrition after students enroll in colleges, Summerskill (1962) found a highly significant relationship between attrition and low first semester college grades in all 35 studies he examined. Rose and Elton (1966) also found that a large percentage (72 percent) of those who left college were not in good standing academically. Morrissey (1971)

associated persistence with high first semester grade point averages in college.

Kowalski (1977) found a number of personal and academic characteristics related to persistence, e.g., plans about educational goals, study habits, participation in class discussion, interest in school work, academic skills, and class attendance. Chickering and Hannah (1969) listed the ten most frequently mentioned reasons by students considering withdrawal from college; among them were: (1) academic underachievement; (2) difficulty with educational plans and purposes; (3) vocational plans, and (4) limited offerings in college programs.

#### Individual Goals

The relationship of students' levels of degree aspiration at the time of entering college and students' economic status with rate of attrition is discussed in this section.

#### Level of Aspirations

Research shows that students' degree aspirations are related to college persistence and attrition. Astin (1977) reported that students who aspire to a doctorate or professional degree are least likely to drop out of college, while students who aspire to a bachelor's degree as their terminal degree have a greater chance of dropping out. In addition, Astin (1965) concluded that students who have a specific career orientation when they matriculate tend to remain in college.

Pervin and Rubin (1967) noted that poor motivation and immaturity contribute to dropping out. Poor motivation was attributed to a general lack of interest, apathy, boredom, disliking the curriculum, and lack of goals.

### Economic Status

One of the most common causes of attrition is economic. Iffert (1957) reported that financial difficulties were ranked third in importance when students give reasons for dropping out. Summerskill (1962) in his review of the literature found that, in 16 out of 21 studies, financial reasons were ranked among the three most important factors in attrition. Cope (1975) reported a negative correlation between variables such as parents' education, occupation, and income and the choice for leaving the college. Astin (1972) revealed that students who receive support from their parents, from a scholarship, or from personal savings have a better chance of staying in college, whereas students who are employed are less likely to persist. Marsh (1966), in his study of freshman dropout, reported that the most outstanding reason seems to be lack of finances. Finally, Astin (1973) noted that, if a student does not receive any financial aid, the probability of graduating from college in four years is reduced by 15 to 20 percent.

### Institutional Characteristics

College characteristics have been related to rates of dropout. Iffert (1957) found differences in attrition among the various types of colleges, with dropouts occurring more frequently in technological institutions, teachers colleges, and publicly controlled institutions. Supporting the position of Iffert were the findings of Astin (1972), who reported that public institutions of higher education tend to have higher dropout rates than private institutions. Kames (1971) reported that there is a negative relationship between college prestige and



attrition; high prestige is related to lower attrition rates. Tinto (1975) reported that dropout rates from two-year colleges is higher than in the four-year colleges. Tinto also called attention to the lack of well-established research on institutional characteristics. He criticized such research for being too simple to lead to generalizations. Kapur (1972) reported that a majority of dropouts indicated that they were not happy with their course of study and with their college as a whole. Holmes (1976) found that dissatisfaction with the availability of programs of general education was a probable indicator of potential attrition. Leach (1967) indicated problem situations which persisters and dropouts have experienced. Some of these situations are institutional services and resources, the level of enthusiasm of teachers, programs offered by the college, and the quality of teaching.

#### Academic and Social Integration

Several studies have reported an important interaction between the student's academic and social integration and the decision to drop out or remain in college.

Academic integration seems to be related to the quality of the relationship between students and their professors. Pantages and Creedon (1978) noted that a positive interaction facilitates the development of a favorable attitude toward learning and the college. Hannah (1969) reported that dropouts were more dissatisfied than were persisters with their relationships with their professors. Pascarella and Terenzini (1980) found a significant association between quality and impact of student-faculty informal contact and college persistence. Spady (1970) suggested that interaction with faculty not only increases social inte-

gration but also academic integration. This was supported by Holmes' findings (1966) that the student who scores high on student-faculty interaction tends to have better academic performance than the average.

Kowalski (1977) concluded that a positive personal relationship with a student's advisor and faculty members influence his or her chance to remain in college.

Social integration happens through informal peer groups and participation in extracurricular activities. Success in these areas produces good social communication and friendship support which increases the probability that the person will remain in college.

Tinto (1975) stated that participation in activities is associated with persistence. Jones (1962) reported that social integration through friendship support is directly related to persistence in college. Sexton (1975) concluded that extracurricular activities are an important factor in the socialization process and increase persistence. Spady (1971) found that participation in extracurricular activities, for both sexes, is directly related to college persistence.

#### Related Studies in Venezuela

Venezuelan higher education is characterized by open admissions, a high level of enrollment, a rigid curriculum, and a constitutional right for students to receive a free education. There are no fees and tuition; books and instructional materials can be bought at low prices; meals, transportation, and medical care are available with 50 percent off for students. Furthermore, there are many agencies that offer educational loans to encourage students toward success in their education. However, at all levels of education in Venezuela, some students show weak academic

performance; in addition, there are high rates of dropouts and repeaters. Because of these problems, many efforts and policies are being attempted to help students succeed.

The existing literature on attrition in Venezuela mostly concerns the percentage of students who drop out of elementary, high school, college, or universities, rather than their reasons for dropping out. Heydra (1977) reported 40 percent of dropouts from elementary schools, 40 percent from high schools, and 70 percent from the universities. Uslar Pietri (1978) stated that the total dropout rate in all educational levels in Venezuela is 90 percent. Burroughs (1973) reported that the freshman dropout rate at the Universidad de Oriente in 1970 was 40 percent. Zambrano (1978) in his Oklahoma State University doctoral dissertation reported freshman dropout rates at different Venezuelan teachers colleges; 21.9 percent at Instituto Universitario Pedagógico Experimental Barquisimeto; 26.0 percent at Instituto Universitario Pedagógico Experimental Maracay; and 10.9 percent at Instituto Universitario Pedagógico Experimental Maturín.

The review of literature indicated that as early as the 1960s, such researchers in the United States as Iffert (1957), Summerskill (1962), Rose and Elton (1966), Sexton (1965), Panos and Astin (1968), Marsh (1966), and Pervin (1966) viewed the problem of attrition to be related to such factors as personal characteristics and academic and social integration. During the 1970s, other researchers such as Tinto (1975), Pantages and Creedon (1978), Pascarella and Terenzini (1978), and Kowalski (1977) related attrition to other important factors such as college environment, interaction and support of faculty and peers.

In summary, studies in American colleges have identified relationships between attrition and students' personal, academic, and social experiences. Attrition in Venezuelan colleges has not yet been studied to the extent that attrition has been studied in American higher education. Therefore, while research on attrition in American universities has become quite sophisticated, this study attempts to explore basic differences between persisters and dropouts in Venezuela. Such research adds to the modest information known about Venezuela's attrition problem.

## CHAPTER III

### DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

Since this study identifies the main factors that are related to the student dropout decision, it contributes to efforts to improve conditions that may encourage students to stay at IUPE J. M. Siso Martínez, accomplishing their goals of graduation.

This chapter describes the methodology employed in the study, including a description of the sample, procedures, the variables, the instrument, the collection of data, and the statistical analysis.

The specific research questions are as follows:

1. What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on personal characteristics?
  - a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on demographic characteristics? Specifically, are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on age, gender, marital status, and hometown location?
  - b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on academic background? Specifically, are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on high school performance, study habits, first semester grades and the last degree earned before attending college?

2. What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on individual goals?
  - a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on the level of degree aspiration at the time of entering college?
  - b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on economic status?
3. What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on institutional characteristics?
  - a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources?
  - b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics?
4. What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to students' academic and social integration?
  - a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to perceptions of aspects of the student-faculty relationship?
  - b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to participation in extracurricular activities?
  - c. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to their perceptions of their treatment by academic and support staff?

### Theoretical Framework

The broad theoretical framework on which this study is based is derived from Tinto's theoretical model of dropout (1975) and Pascarella's model of attrition. Both models show that the process of dropout from college can be considered as a longitudinal process of interactions between the individual's characteristics and the academic and social systems of the college. Both models emphasize the importance for students of informal contact with faculty members.

In this study, the conceptual framework links: (1) personal characteristics, which include demographic characteristics and academic background; (2) individual goals; (3) institutional characteristics; and (4) academic and social integration. Figure 4 provides a diagram showing the specific variables comprising each category of variables. Appendix A lists all the variables in each category, the definition of each variable, the survey questions measuring the variables, and the source of the survey questions.

### Population and Procedures

This study was conducted during the spring semester 1985. The subjects for this research were drawn from IUPE J. M. Siso Martínez, in Caracas, Venezuela. This institution was selected because, as a faculty member in this college, the researcher had access to the students in the sample. Furthermore, the rate of attrition is high at IUPE, which is similar to other Venezuelan teachers colleges.

The Registrar's Office provided the names and addresses of students who enrolled during the fall semester 1983 and who continued attending college during the fall 1984. This list numbered 652 students, who

1. Personal characteristics

- Demographic characteristics

- age
- gender
- marital status
- hometown location

- Academic background

- high school performance
- study habits
- first semester grades
- last degree earned before entering college

2. Individual goals

- level of degree aspiration at entering college
- economic status

3. Institutional characteristics

- Student's perceived satisfaction with institutional resources

- counseling services
- library
- audiovisual materials
- parking facilities
- student recruitment activities
- adequacy of facilities
- availability and quality of tutoring services
- quality of adaptation programs
- registration services
- information on campus

Figure 4. Summary of Variables



- Student's perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics

- grading policies
- difficulty of courses
- availability of courses
- quality of teaching
- quality of faculty
- examination system
- academic calendar
- learning at distance
- school in general

4. Student's academic and social integration

- student-faculty relationship
- extracurricular activities
- treatment by academic and support staff

Figure 4 Continued

are called persisters. The Registrar's Office also provided the names and addresses of students who enrolled at the college during the fall semester of 1983 but who left the college before the fall semester of 1984. These 399 students are called dropouts. In view of the relatively small number of students in each category, this study uses all available students.

#### Instrument

One questionnaire, in two forms with minor differences to make it appropriate for dropouts and for persisters, was used in this research. The survey was based on a student-questionnaire developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) (Bower and Myers, 1976, pp. 45-56). A copy of the letter requesting permission to use the instrument is found in Appendix B. The NCHEMS' questionnaire was modified somewhat to include questions specifically pertaining to variables investigated by this study. Other minor modifications were made to make the survey appropriate for Venezuelan students. A copy of the original NCHEMS survey is found in Appendix C and a copy of the actual survey used is found in Appendix D.

The first part of the instrument concerns personal characteristics, specifically demographic and academic characteristics of students, and individual goals and reasons to attend college. The respondents were asked to answer 14 questions by checking the appropriate alternative. The second part concerns the student's perceived satisfaction with institutional resources, the student's perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics, and the student's satisfaction with his/her academic and social integration. The respondents were

asked to answer each question in a rating scale from one (low) to four (high) by circling the appropriate number to indicate their satisfaction and the appropriate number to indicate the importance of each item in the decision to continue or to drop out of college. Also, the respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their use of various college services and their opinions concerning the degree to which the college should improve each service in the next five years. All questions were not analyzed in this study; some will be the focus of future research.

#### Collection of Data

In January, 1985, the questionnaires were mailed to Caracas, Venezuela. Three hundred ninety-nine questionnaires were distributed to dropouts and 652 to persisters through first class mail service. The objectives and purposes of the study were explained to students in a cover letter (Appendix F).

By March 1985, 175 questionnaires had been returned; at that time a follow-up through phone calls and by mailing a second copy was made to those students who had not responded. A total of 529 questionnaires were returned; 228 from dropouts (43 percent) and 301 from persisters (57 percent).

#### Statistical Analysis

The statistical analyses that follow utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Computer Programs (SSPS<sup>X</sup>). In order to assess some of the differences between persisters and dropouts, the Chi-square test was used as one analytical technique. One advantage of

this test is that it involves no assumptions about the form of the original distribution from which the observation came. Siegel (1975) states:

The Chi-square test may be used to determine the significance of differences between two independent groups. The hypotheses under test is usually that two groups differ with respect to some characteristics and therefore with respect to the relative frequency with which group members fall in several categories (p. 104).

Therefore, the Chi-square analysis was used to test the differences between dropouts and persisters in relation to personal characteristics and individual goals, research questions numbers one and two. All of the data analyzed by the Chi-square technique were measured using a significance level of .05.

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine whether dropouts and persisters were significantly different from one another on the basis of three independent variables: student's perceived satisfaction with institutional resources, student's perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics, and student's academic and social integration. Cooley and Lohmes (1971) said that:

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) is an inferential statistical procedure which has a general purpose to compare groups in terms of the mean scores. Multiple correlation is used to examine the relation between a dependent variable and two or more predictors or independent variables (p. 8).

Terenzini (1982) recommended multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to determine whether two or more groups are significantly different from one another on the basis of multiple independent variables. Since results provide information for judging which dimensions are

the strongest contributors to the separation between the groups, the multivariate analysis of variance was employed to determine whether the satisfaction with institutional resources, satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics, and academic and social integration indicated a significant difference between dropouts and persisters.

The various items pertaining to students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources were combined into one index variable based on the mean of the nine items. Similarly, the items relating to students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics were combined into one index variable, based on the mean of the nine items. The items pertaining to academic and social integration were combined into a third index variable, based on the mean of the three items. The reliability coefficient for items related to the variable called students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources was .70. The reliability coefficient for the items related to the variable called students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics was .81. The reliability coefficient for the items related to the variable called student academic and social integration was .68.

#### Summary

Chapter III discussed the theoretical framework, population, methods, procedures, collection of data, and statistical analyses employed. The population of the study included two groups: (1) dropouts and (2) persisters. A survey was employed to find out the main factors related to students' decisions to drop out or continue at IUPE.

Chi-square was chosen as one analytical technique to assess the differences between dropouts and persisters. Multivariate analysis of variance was used in determining the significance of the differences between the two groups of students on several other variables.

## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

#### Introduction

The presentation and analysis of the data for this research are reported as they related to the research questions. [The purpose of the study was to identify various experiential factors and perceptions related to students' decisions to persist or to drop out from college after their first semester.] The literature concerning attrition in the United States suggests that the two groups (dropouts and persisters) tend to differ in personal characteristics, individual goals, perceptions of institutional characteristics, and academic and social integration. This study investigated differences between persisters and dropouts in a Venezuelan college.

Four main research questions were stated. Chi-square and multi-variate analysis of variance (MANOVA) were performed and reported to answer the questions. All of the data analyzed through Chi-square and MANOVA were evaluated using a significance level of .05.

#### Research Question One

What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on personal characteristics?

As described in Chapter III, personal characteristics include both a) demographic characteristics and b) academic background. The specific research questions about these variables are the following:

a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on demographic characteristics? Specifically, are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on age, gender, marital status, and hometown location?

b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on academic background? Specifically, are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on high school performance, study habits, first semester grades, and their last degree earned before attending IUPE?

In order to test each of those research questions, the Chi-square test of significance was used for each variable.

a.1. Age

The students represented a wide age range from 18 to 50 years, although 55.4 percent were between 18 to 25 years, while 37.4 percent were between 26 to 40 years. As shown in Table I, a greater proportion of persisters (55.4%) than of dropouts (40.3%) were between 23 and 30 years. Approximately twenty-eight percent (28.5%) of the dropouts were 31 or older compared to 16.6 percent of the persisters. The level of significance (.00) indicates that there is a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on age.

a.2. Gender

Female students comprised 67.5 percent of the sample, while 32.5 percent were male. Findings are presented in Table II. It was found that persisters were more likely to be female than were dropouts. The level of significance (.00) indicates that there is a significant difference between dropouts and persisters based on gender.



TABLE I  
COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS BY AGE

	Age														Total	
	Under 18		18-22		23-25		26-30		31-40		41-50		Over 50			
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Persisters	4	1.3	83	27.6	97	32.2	67	22.3	41	13.6	9	3.0	0	0	301	100
Dropouts	8	3.5	63	27.6	50	21.9	42	18.4	48	21.1	14	6.1	3	1.3	228	100
Total	12		146		147		109		89		23		3		529	

$\chi^2=19.77$       df=6      p=.00      Cramer's V=.19

TABLE II  
COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS BY GENDER

	Gender					
	Male Number	%	Female Number	%	Total Number	%
Persisters	79	26.2	222	73.8	301	100.0
Dropouts	93	40.8	135	59.2	228	100.0
Total	172		357		529	100.0
$\chi^2=11.85$	df=1		p=.00			

a.3. Marital Status

Twenty-eight and six-tenths percent (28.6%) of the sample were single without children, 7.4 percent were single with children who lived with them, 2.3 percent were single with children who did not live with them, 11.6 percent were married without children, 46.8 percent were married with children who lived with them and 3.3 percent were married with children who did not live with them. No significant difference was found between dropouts and persisters on marital status. <sup>table</sup>

a.4. Hometown Location

The students in the sample were categorized into three groups in relation to the distance of their home from IUPE. Findings are presented in Table III. Persisters were more likely to live more than 2 hours from IUPE than were dropouts, who were more likely to live less than one hour from the school. The level of significance (.00) indicates that there is a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on their hometown location.

TABLE III  
COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS  
BY THEIR HOMETOWN LOCATION

	Hometown Location							
	Less 1 hr		1-2 hrs		More 2 hrs		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Persisters	33	11.0	89	29.6	179	59.5	301	100.0
Dropouts	87	38.3	74	32.6	66	29.1	227	100.0
Total	120		163		245		528	
$\chi^2=68.78$	df=2		p=.00		Cramer's V=.36			

b.1. High School Performance

In order to use the Chi-square test of significance, the students were divided into three groups on the basis of their high school grade point average (GPA). Findings are reported in Table IV. It was found that persisters were more likely to have high school GPAs between 12 to 14 (C approximately in American grades) than were dropouts. A greater proportion of dropouts (23.9 percent) than of persisters (9.6 percent) reported GPAs of 15-17 (B in American grades). The level of significance (.00) indicates that there is a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on their high school GPA.

b.2. Study Habits

In order to use the Chi-square test of significance, the students were divided into four groups according to the numbers of hours they reported spending studying outside class. Findings are presented in Table V. It was found that a greater percentage of the dropouts (81.0 percent) than of the persisters (37.2 percent) spent 23 or

TABLE IV  
 COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS BY HIGH  
 SCHOOL GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA)

	GPA									
	10-11 (D)		12-14 (C)		15-17 (B)		18-20 (A)		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Persisters	33	11.0	239	79.4	29	9.6	0	0	301	100.0
Dropouts	23	10.9	145	63.9	54	23.9	3	1.3	225	100.0
Total	56		384		83		3		526	100.0

$\chi^2=27.5$       df=5      p=.00      Cramer's V=.23

TABLE V

## COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS BY STUDY HABITS

	Study Hours Outside Class											
	less 12		12-23		24-35		36-47		more 47		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Persisters	34	11.3	78	25.9	110	36.5	77	25.6	2	.7	301	100.0
Dropouts	104	46.0	79	35.0	40	17.7	3	1.3	0	0	226	100.0
Total	138		157		150		80		2		527	100.0

$\chi^2=130.60$        $df=4$        $p=.00$       Cramer's  $V=.50$

fewer hours studying outside class. The level of significance (.00) indicates that there is a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on study habits.

b.3. First Semester Grades

In order to use the Chi-square test of significance, students were divided into two groups on the basis of their first semester college academic achievement average (AAAVG): satisfactory (pass) and not satisfactory (fail). Findings are presented in Table VI. One hundred percent of the persisters reported satisfactory academic achievement, compared to 96 percent of the dropouts. Though the percentages are close, the level of significance (.00) indicates that there is a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on their first semester's college grades.

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS ON  
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AVERAGE

	Academic Achievement Average					
	Satisfactory (P)		Not Satisfactory (F)		Total	
	Number	Row %	Number	Row %	Number	%
Persisters	301	100.0	0	0	301	100.0
Dropouts	217	96.0	9	4	226	100.0
Total	518		9		527	100.0

$\chi^2=12.20$        $df=1$        $p=.00$

b.4. Last Degree Earned Before Attending IUPE

In order to use the Chi-square test of significance, the students were divided into three groups on the basis of their last degree earned: high school degree, associate degree, and degree to qualify as a teacher of elementary school. Findings are presented in Table VII. It was found that a greater proportion of the persisters held elementary teacher degrees as compared to the percentage of dropouts who held that degree. A greater proportion of dropouts held the high school degree as the terminal degree than the proportion of persisters who held only a high school degree. The level of significance (.00) indicates that there is a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on the type of degree earned most recently before attending IUPE.

Research Question Two

What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on individual goals?

As described in Chapter III, individual goals are defined by both a) the reasons for degree aspiration at the time of entering college and b) the student's economic status. Specific research questions about these variables follow:

a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on the reasons for degree aspiration at the time of entering college?

b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on economic status?

In order to test each of those research questions, the Chi-square test of significance was used for each variable.

TABLE VII

COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS BY LAST  
DEGREE EARNED BEFORE ATTENDING IUPE

	Last Degree									
	High School		Associate		Teacher		Other		Total	
	Number	Row %	Number	Row %	Number	Row %	Number	Row %	Number	%
Persisters	119	39.5	32	10.6	149	49.5	1	.3	301	100.0
Dropouts	114	50.0	21	9.2	80	35.1	12	5.3	227	100.0
Total	233		53		229		13		528	100.0

$\chi^2=23.87$        $df=4$        $p=.00$       Cramer's  $V=.21$



a. Reasons for Degree Aspiration at Time of Entering IUPE

Students evaluated the relative importance of reasons to enter college. The possible reasons included the following: to get a degree, to improve skills, to get a new career, to be involved in student life, to be involved in extracurricular activities, and to be prepared for a job. The findings concerning the percentages of persisters and dropouts who selected each reason as their primary reason for attending college are presented in Table VIII. It was found that the highest proportions of persisters indentified getting a degree (30.8 percent) and becoming prepared for a job (17.8 percent) as their primary reasons for attending college. Among dropouts, the reasons most frequently chosen were getting a degree (38.2 percent) and improving skills (35.0 percent).

b. Economic Status

The variable related to economic status was the student's satisfaction with the availability of personal funds for attending college. In order to use the Chi-square test of significance, the students were categorized into four groups according to their level of satisfaction: (1) very dissatisfied, (2) somewhat dissatisfied, (3) fairly satisfied, and (4) very satisfied. The statistical findings are presented in Table IX. A greater proportion of persisters (42.8 percent) were fairly satisfied or very satisfied with the extent to which personal funds were available for attending college. The level of significance (.00) indicates that there is a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on the student's satisfaction with the availability of personal funds.

TABLE VIII  
 COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS BY PRIMARY  
 REASONS FOR ATTENDING IUPE

Reasons														
	Degree Number	%	Improve Skills Number	%	New Career Number	%	Student Life Number	%	Extra- curricular Number	%	Job Number	%	Total Number	%
Persisters	92	30.8	43	14.4	37	12.3	32	10.7	42	14.0	53	17.8	299	100.0
Dropouts	84	38.2	77	35.0	18	8.2	8	3.6	13	6.0	20	9.0	220	100.0
Total	176		120		55		40		55		73		519	

$\chi^2=301.40$                       df=5                      p=.05

TABLE IX

COMPARISON OF DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS BY  
SATISFACTION WITH AVAILABILITY OF  
PERSONAL FUNDS

Satisfaction with Personal Funds										
	Very dissatisfied		Somewhat dissatisfied		Fairly satisfied		Very satisfied		Total	
	Number	Row %	Number	Row %	Number	Row %	Number	Row %	Number	%
Persisters	107	47.5	21	9.4	96	42.8	0	0	224	100.0
Dropouts	85	39.4	72	33.3	35	16.2	24	11.1	216	100.0
Total	192		93		131		24		440	100.0
$\chi^2=132.56$ $df=4$ $p=.00$ Cramer's $V=.50$										

### Research Question Three

What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on institutional characteristics?

As described in Chapter III, institutional characteristics include both a) students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources and b) students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics. The specific research questions about these variables are the following:

a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources?

b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics?

A two-way multivariate analysis of variance was used to analyze the data to answer the third research question. The fixed independent variable was Enrollment Status (Dropouts and Persisters). Because previous Chi-square analysis showed dropouts and persisters to be significantly different on gender, gender was controlled as an independent variable in the multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The dependent variables were Students' Perceived Satisfaction with Institutional Resources and Students' Perceived Satisfaction with Institutional Academic Characteristics. Students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources was an index variable created as the mean of nine variables: satisfaction with the library, tutoring services, counseling services, the adaptation program, registration services, audiovisual programs, parking, availability of information on campus, and student recruitment activities. The alpha coefficient for reliability of

the index variable was .70. Students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics was an index variable created as the mean of nine variables: satisfaction with grading policies, level of difficulty of courses, the availability of courses, the quality of teaching, the quality of faculty, the examination system, the academic calendar, the learning-at-a-distance system, and the school in general. The alpha coefficient for reliability of the index variable was .81. Examination of the within-cell error correlations ( $r=.70$ ) of the two variables, Students' Perceived Satisfaction with Institutional Resources and Students' Perceived Satisfaction with Institutional Academic Characteristics, indicated that a multivariate approach to analysis was needed. The multivariate construct was named Students' Perceived Satisfaction with Institutional Characteristics.

Examination of the multivariate test ( $F=.08$ ;  $df=2,497$ ;  $p>.05$ ) for the interaction of enrollment status by gender did not show a significant difference between males and females on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional characteristics. Examination of the multivariate test for gender ( $F=.27$ ;  $df=2,497$ ;  $p>.05$ ) also showed no difference on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional characteristics. Examination of the multivariate test for enrollment status ( $F=72.35$ ;  $df=2,497$ ;  $p<.05$ ) did indicate a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional characteristics. Twenty-three percent of the variability in students' perceived satisfaction with institutional characteristics was accounted for by enrollment status.

Examination of the univariate F's of the two index variables (students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources and

students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics) showed that both were significant contributors to the multivariate F. Students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics was the strongest contributor ( $F=140.37$ ;  $df=1,498$ ;  $p<.05$ ) to the difference between dropouts and persisters. The percentage of variance accounted for by enrollment status in students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics was 22 percent. Persisters were more satisfied with institutional academic characteristics ( $\bar{X}=37.04$ ) than were dropouts ( $\bar{X}=33.15$ ), as presented in Table X. Dropouts and persisters also were significantly different on satisfaction with institutional resources ( $F=46.45$ ;  $df=1,498$ ;  $p<.05$ ). The percentage of variance accounted for in students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources by enrollment status was 9 percent. Persisters were more satisfied with institutional resources ( $\bar{X}=28.23$ ) as compared with dropouts ( $\bar{X}=25.63$ ), as shown in Table X.

#### Research Question Four

What are the significant differences between dropouts and persisters on the quality of academic and social integration?

As described in Chapter III, academic and social integration are defined by three variables a) the quality of the student-faculty relationship, b) the level of involvement in extracurricular activities, and c) the perceived quality of treatment by academic and support staff. Specific questions follow:

a. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to perceptions of aspects of the student-faculty relationship?

TABLE X

DIFFERENCE OF THE MEANS FOR STUDENTS' PERCEIVED SATISFACTION WITH  
 INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES AND STUDENTS' PERCEIVED SATISFACTION  
 WITH ACADEMIC CHARACTERISTICS BETWEEN DROPOUTS AND  
 PERSISTERS BY GENDER

		Students' Perceived Satisfaction with Institutional Resources		Students' Perceived Satisfaction with Academic Characteristics	
<b>Male</b>					
Dropouts	$\overline{N}$	84		84	
	$\overline{X}$	25.63		27.80	
	S.D.	4.53		3.84	
Persisters	$\overline{N}$	78		78	
	$\overline{X}$	28.28		31.48	
	S.D.	3.85		2.93	
<b>Female</b>					
Dropouts	$\overline{N}$	120		120	
	$\overline{X}$	25.50		27.96	
	S.D.	4.43		3.86	
Persisters	$\overline{N}$	220		220	
	$\overline{X}$	28.23		31.52	
	S.D.	3.76		2.44	

b. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to participation in extracurricular activities?

c. Are there significant differences between dropouts and persisters in regard to their perceptions of their treatment by academic and support staff?

Within-cells correlation indicated that no multivariate construct could be formed between the three integration variables (quality of student-faculty relationship, participation in extracurricular activities, and the perceived treatment by academic and support staff). Consequently, it was necessary to use univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) to examine differences between dropouts and persisters. (See Table XI and Table XII.) A significant difference was found between persisters and dropouts on their perception of the quality of the student-faculty relationship ( $F=15.25$ ;  $df=1,498$ ;  $p=.00$ ). Persisters were more satisfied than dropouts with the quality of this relationship ( $\bar{X}$  for male persisters = 3.92;  $\bar{X}$  for male dropouts = 3.65; mean for female persisters = 3.88; mean for female dropouts = 3.76). There were no significant differences between dropouts and persisters on the level of involvement in extracurricular activities ( $F=.64$ ;  $df=1,498$ ;  $p>.05$ ) and on the perceived quality of treatment by academic and support staff ( $F=.64$ ;  $df=1,498$ ;  $p>.05$ ).

#### Summary

A summary of the statistical findings is as follows:

1. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on age. A greater proportion of persisters than of dropouts were



TABLE XI

DIFFERENCE OF THE MEANS FOR STUDENT-FACULTY RELATIONSHIP, EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, AND TREATMENT BY ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT STAFF BETWEEN DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS BY GENDER

		Perception of Student-Faculty Relationship	Perception of Extracurricular Activities	Perception of Treatment by Academic and Support Staff
<b>Male</b>				
Persisters	$\frac{n}{X}$	78 3.92	78 1.63	78 1.63
	S.D.	.38	.84	.84
Dropouts	$\frac{n}{X}$	84 3.65	84 1.50	84 1.50
	S.D.	.61	.88	.88
<b>Female</b>				
Persisters	$\frac{n}{X}$	220 3.88	220 1.63	220 1.63
	S.D.	.45	.81	.81
Dropouts	$\frac{n}{X}$	120 3.76	120 1.62	120 1.62
	S.D.	.59	.99	.99

TABLE XII  
 ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE COMPARING STUDENT-FACULTY RELATIONSHIP, EXTRACURRICULAR  
 ACTIVITIES, AND TREATMENT BY ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT  
 STAFF BETWEEN DROPOUTS AND PERSISTERS

Dependent Variables	SS Between	Sums of Squares Error	df	Mean Squares Between	Mean Squares Error	F
Extracurricular Activities	.48	378.52	1,498	.48	.76	.64*
Student-Faculty Relationship	3.99	130.20	1,498	3.99	.26	15.25**
Quality of Treatment	.48	378.52	1,498	.48	.76	.64*

\*p < .05

\*\*p < .01

30 or under, while a greater proportion of dropouts than of persisters were older than 30.

2. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on gender. Persisters were more likely to be female than were dropouts.

3. There was no significant difference between dropouts and persisters on marital status.

4. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on their hometown locations. Persisters were more likely to live more than two hours from IUPE than were dropouts, who were more likely to live less than one hour from the school.

5. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on high school performance. Persisters were more likely to have a high school GPA between 12 to 14 (C approximately in American grades) than were dropouts. Dropouts were more likely than persisters to have a GPA of 15-17 (B in American grades) or 18-20 (A in American grades).

6. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on study habits according to the number of self-reported hours spent studying outside class. A greater percentage of dropouts than of the persisters spent 23 or fewer hours.

7. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on their first semester grades. One hundred percent of the persisters reported satisfactory academic achievement, compared to 96 percent of the dropouts.

8. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on their last degree earned before entering IUPE. A greater

proportion of the persisters held elementary teacher degrees as compared to the dropouts. A greater proportion of dropouts than of persisters held the high school degree as their last degree earned before entering IUPE.

9. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on the primary reasons for entering IUPE. The highest proportions of persisters identified getting a degree or becoming prepared for a job. The highest proportion of dropouts identified their primary reason as getting a degree or improving their skills.

10. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on their satisfaction with the availability of personal funds. A greater proportion of dropouts than of persisters were very dissatisfied or somewhat dissatisfied with the availability of personal funds to support their education.

11. There was no significant difference between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources. This variable was treated as a construct.

12. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics. Treated as a construct, this variable was the strongest contributor to the difference between dropouts and persisters.

13. There was a significant difference between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with the quality of the student-faculty relationship. Persisters tended to be more satisfied with this relationship than did dropouts.

14. There was no significant difference between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with extracurricular activities.

15. There was no significant difference between dropouts and persisters on students' perceived satisfaction with their treatment by academic and support staff.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

In the previous sections, attention was focused on the questions directing this research, the methods and procedures for carrying out the research, and the quantitative findings. This chapter presents a summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations. The objective of this study was to identify the important factors related to the dropout of freshman students in a Venezuelan teachers college.

Involved in this study was the Instituto Universitario Pedagógico Experimental (IUPE) José Manuel Siso Martínez, which is in Caracas, Venezuela. IUPE is a four-year teachers college which offers learning-at-a-distance courses especially for non-traditional learners who wish to complete their professional preparation or to prepare to enter a new career. The sample for this study was students who were enrolled at the college during the fall semester of 1983 and who continued attending college during the fall semester of 1984. This list numbered 652 students, who were called persisters. Also, the sample included students who enrolled at the college during the fall semester of 1983 and who left the college before the fall semester of 1984. These students were called dropouts and numbered 399.

One questionnaire, in two forms with minor differences to make it appropriate for dropouts and for persisters, was used in this study.

The survey was based on a student-questionnaire developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) (Patrick, Myers, and Van Dusen 1979, pp. 53-57). The NCHEMS' questionnaire was modified somewhat to include questions specifically pertaining to variables investigated by this study. Other minor modifications were made to make the survey appropriate for Venezuelan students. Five hundred twenty-nine questionnaires out of one thousand fifty-one were collected (50 percent).

Four major research questions were developed in relation to various experiential factors and perceptions of dropouts and persisters in regard to the following variables: (1) Personal characteristics, which included a) demographic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, and hometown location; b) academic background related to high school performance, study habits, first semester grades, and the last degree earned before attending IUPE; (2) Individual goals, which included a) the reasons for degree aspiration at the time of entering college and b) the economic status of the student; (3) Students' satisfaction with institutional characteristics, which included a) students' perceived satisfaction with institutional resources, and b) students' perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics; (4) The quality of academic and social integration, which included a) the quality of the student-faculty relationship, b) the extent of participation in extracurricular activities, and c) the students' perception of the quality of their treatment by academic and support staff.

The findings of the study concerning the four major research questions were:

Persisters and dropouts tended to differ on age, with a greater proportion of persisters than of dropouts being 30 years or younger. Dropouts were more likely to be students between 31 to 50 years. Persisters were more likely to be female than were dropouts. Persisters were more likely to live more than two hours from IUPE than were dropouts, who were more likely to live less than one hour from the school. Persisters were more likely to have a high school GPA between 12 to 14 (C approximately in American grades) than were dropouts. Persisters spent more hours studying outside class than dropouts did. Persisters reported a greater percentage of satisfactory academic achievement than dropouts did. A greater proportion of persisters held elementary teacher degrees as compared to the dropouts. The highest proportion of persisters identified getting a degree and becoming prepared for a job as the primary reason for entering IUPE. A greater percentage of persisters than of dropouts were somewhat or very dissatisfied with the availability of financial resources available to them. Persisters showed more perceived satisfaction with institutional academic characteristics than dropouts did. Finally, persisters and dropouts tended to differ on the perceived satisfaction with the quality of the student-faculty relationship, with persisters reporting somewhat more satisfaction.

### Conclusions

As shown by the preceding chapter, a complex set of influences affect students' decisions to drop out or remain in school. Some of the findings in this study do not agree with the results of previous studies.



Findings related to demographic factors did not completely support Summerskill's study (1962) which showed little differences in attrition rates among women and men at colleges. The findings in this study related to gender may reflect the commitment of Venezuelan women who tend to keep their goals in every activity that they start, especially those activities that mean a better life and future for them and their families. Thus, in Venezuela today there are more women than in past times with academic competence who participate actively in economic, political, social and cultural activities that may contribute to a better development of the country. Astin (1975) suggested that older students were more likely to drop out than the traditional student. In relation to age, this study suggested that older people were more likely to become dropouts than were younger people. Perhaps older people feel tired or too old to follow through on learning a new profession or perhaps they are especially busy with family and business activities. Hometown location was found to be a significant factor in explaining dropout behavior. More persisters than dropouts lived two or more hours from IUPE. Perhaps students who must travel so far feel a particularly strong commitment to stay in school.

Academic factors were significant in explaining dropout behavior. Those findings supported Astin's (1977), Nelson's (1972), Sexton's (1965), Summerskill's (1962), Kowalski's (1977), and Astin's (1975) studies. These studies indicated that high school records, study habits, first semester college grades, and high motivation to get a professional degree were important factors related to a student's decision to continue or drop out. It is interesting that dropouts tended to report higher grade point averages than did persisters. Perhaps some of the

dropouts left IUPE looking for another institution that offers other programs that are more creative or more related to their needs and expectations. Or, maybe dropouts with high grades are less satisfied with a nontraditional program such as IUPE's learning-at-distance opportunity. Such dropouts may be seeking a more structured, traditional program. Findings related to students' perceptions of the availability of financial resources as a factor related to attrition decisions were consistent with Iffert (1957), who reported that financial difficulties were important reasons for dropping out. However, it is important to clarify that in many Venezuelan homes, like in the United States, women are the family head and need to work hard to improve their living conditions; this desire may impel them to attend college. The fact that persisters were more likely to hold elementary teacher degrees as compared to the dropouts may be due to the fact that the Ministry of Education now requires a higher degree for continuing teaching in elementary schools. On the other hand, a new degree means promotion, better salary, and professional recognition for each of the persisters at IUPE.

Findings related to satisfaction with institutional characteristics and the student's academic and social integration were supportive of studies made by Tinto (1975) and Pascarella (1980). The process of dropout from college can be considered to be a result of the interaction between individual characteristics and the academic and social systems of the college. Through this interaction, the student continually modifies his or her goals and institutional commitments, which leads to persistence or withdrawal from college. Also, research shows that informal contact between students and faculty is directly related to students' decisions to stay in or leave college.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are suggested by this study:

1. College administrators and faculty need to realize that attrition has to be lowered and that potential dropouts must be identified so they can be assisted. One of the primary goals of college administrators should be the implementation of more aggressive special retention programs. Students need to understand the serious consequences of a withdrawal situation for them, their family, and the society. More comprehensive orientation programs for new students are needed. Such programs as counseling on study habits, for example, are more likely to contribute to student persistence in college. At the high school level, counseling programs should be improved to offer more effective help to high school graduates in the choice of their careers.

2. Administrators and faculty should be involved in seminars which attempt to develop positive attitudes toward student-faculty relationships and students' performance. Perhaps administrators and faculty should have more flexible office hours to accommodate students' convenience.

3. Administrators, faculty, and students should strive for closer cooperation and communication. Students may need better information on each major field, its content, intellectual and time efforts needed for completion of the degree, and the probable market demand. Also, students need to know about counseling services at IUPE and what services are available when they are in need.

4. At present, the IUPE does not have restrictions for students to be enrolled. Serious efforts should be practiced by administrators and faculty to select students who feel a real vocation to teach. Entrance examinations should be given to all potential students to

determine those who have the intellectual ability, motivation, capacity, and responsibility to carry an academic load at a distance, as the learning system at IUPE requires.

5. Administrators and faculty should do a periodic review of the adequacy of institutional academic characteristics: grading policies, the academic calendar, the examination system, the level of difficulty of courses, and the school in general. Such an evaluation should focus on the degree to which the institution is meeting the real needs of the major population of students who go to IUPE: non-traditional students (22-26 years old).

6. It is highly recommended that an annual attrition study be conducted to further identify factors contributing to students' decisions to continue or drop out from IUPE. Particularly, future studies should examine the family influence on students' decisions to drop out or continue at college. Also, it is recommended that college administrators should personally interview students who have decided to drop out at the time the decision is made.

Another future research project should study the students' perception of improvements needed in aspects of IUPE over the next five years, and how these perceptions influence students' decisions to stay or leave IUPE.

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**APPENDIXES**



APPENDIX A

DEFINITION OF VARIABLES

## DEFINITION OF VARIABLES

Variable	Definition	Question #	Source
<b>1. Personal Characteristics</b>			
<b>a. Demographic Characteristics</b>			
(1) Age	age of the respondent	2	NCHEMS
(2) Gender	gender of the respondent	1	NCHEMS
(3) Marital Status	marital status of the respondent	3	Researcher
(4) Hometown Location	place where the student's home is located	5	Researcher
<b>b. Academic Background</b>			
(1) High School Performance	the past academic achievement of students, as measured by GPA	11	Researcher
(2) Study Habits	time that students spend studying outside class, as measured by number of hours	12	Researcher
(3) First Semester Grades	the academic achievement obtained by students in their first semester at IUPE, as measured by GPA	10	NCHEMS
(4) Last Degree Earned Before Attending IUPE	the most recent degree earned by students before attending IUPE	8	Researcher

Variable	Definition	Question #	Source
<b>2. Individual Goals</b>			
a. Reasons of Aspiration at Entering IUPE	the student's perception that his/her education is important, as measured by primary reason for attending IUPE	7	NCHEMS
b. Economic Status	financial situation of students to attend IUPE, as measured by a Likert scale.	11 20 21	NCHEMS
<b>3. Institutional Characteristics</b>			
a. Student's Perceived Satisfaction with Institutional Resources			
(1) Counseling Services	student's perceived satisfaction that counseling services are helpful, as measured by a Likert scale.	30	NCHEMS
(2) Library	student's perceived satisfaction with the adequacy of library resources and services, as measured by a Likert scale.	28	NCHEMS
(3) Audiovisual Materials	student's perceived satisfaction with the adequacy of audiovisual materials, as measured by a Likert scale.	34	Researcher

Variable	Definition	Question #	Source
(4) Parking Facilities	student's perceived satisfaction that parking facilities satisfy demands, as measured by a Likert scale.	37	NCHEMS
(5) Student Recruitment Facilities	student's perceived satisfaction that the college recruited him/her aggressively, as measured by a Likert scale.	42	NCHEMS
(6) Adequacy of Facilities	student's perceived satisfaction with the college facilities, as measured by a Likert scale.	35	Researcher
(7) Availability and Quality of Tutoring	student's perceived satisfaction with the availability and quality of academic tutoring services, as measured by a Likert scale.	29	Researcher
(8) Quality of Adaptation Programs	student's perceived satisfaction with the quality of adaptation programs for new students at college, as measured by a Likert scale.	31	Researcher
(9) Registration Services	student's perceived satisfaction with the adequacy of registration services, as measured by a Likert scale.	32	Researcher
(10) Information on Campus	student's perceived satisfaction with the adequacy of information concerning students, as measured by a Likert scale.	41	Researcher

Variable	Definition	Question #	Source
b. Student's Perceived Satisfaction with Institutional Academic Characteristics			
(1) Grading Policies	student's perceived satisfaction with the grading policies of the college, as measured by a Likert scale.	15	Researcher
(2) Difficulty of Courses	student's perceived satisfaction with the level of difficulty of classes, as measured by a Likert scale.	16	Researcher
(3) Availability of Courses	student's perceived satisfaction with the availability of courses, as measured by a Likert scale.	17	Researcher
(4) Quality of Teaching	student's perceived satisfaction with the quality of teaching at college, as measured by a Likert scale.	18	Researcher
(5) Quality of Faculty	student's perceived satisfaction with the quality of faculty at college, as measured by a Likert scale.	19	Researcher
(6) Examination System	student's perceived satisfaction with the examination system, as measured by a Likert scale.	38	Researcher
(7) Academic Calendar	student's perceived satisfaction with the academic calendar of the college, as measured by a Likert scale.	39	Researcher

Variable	Definition	Question #	Source
(8) Learning at Distance	student's perceived satisfaction with the learning-at-distance system, as measured by a Likert scale.	40	Researcher
(9) School in General	student's perceived satisfaction with the school in general, as measured by a Likert scale.	44	Researcher
4. Student's Academic and Social Integration			
a. Student-Faculty Relationship	student's perceived satisfaction with the quality of the student-faculty informal contacts, as measured by a Likert scale.	36	NCHEMS
b. Extracurricular Activities	student's perceived satisfaction with opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities, as measured by a Likert scale.	43	Researcher
c. Treatment by Academic and Support Staff	student's perceived satisfaction with the way he/she was treated by academic and support staff, as measured by a Likert scale.	43	Researcher

APPENDIX B

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO USE AND  
MODIFY THE NCHEMS SURVEY

7-2 South University Place  
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74075  
(405) 372-8013  
July 29, 1985

The Director  
National Center for Higher Education Management Systems  
Publication Department  
P. O. Drawer P  
Boulder, Colorado 80302

Dear Sir:

I am involved in doctoral studies in higher education and administration at Oklahoma State University. At the present time I am pursuing my thesis study, which deals with the main factors related to the dropouts of freshman students in a Venezuelan teachers college.

I would like approval from you to allow me to use the student-questionnaire for four-year colleges that you constructed and published in A Manual for Conducting Student Attrition Studies. I will use it in connection with my dissertation on factors affecting decisions to stay or to leave the college, and I will make modifications on the instrument to adapt it to the Venezuelan educational system.

I need your written approval at the earliest possibility.

Thank you so much.

Sincerely yours,

Renie Dubs



APPENDIX C

ORIGINAL SURVEY

**STANDARD QUESTIONS SECTION**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

Specific directions are given for completing many of the questions in this questionnaire. Where no directions are given, please circle the number or letter of the most appropriate response, such as in the sample question below.

**Sample:**

4. Are you currently married?  
 0 Yes  
 ① No

If you are not currently married, you would circle the number 1.

1. What is your sex?

- 78  0 Female  
 1 Male

2. How do you describe yourself? Circle one.

- 79  0 American Indian or Alaskan Native  
 1 Asian, Pacific Islander, or Filipino  
 2 Black or Afro-American  
 3 Hispanic, Chicano, or Spanish-speaking American  
 4 White or Caucasian  
 5 Other \_\_\_\_\_

3. How old are you?

- 80  0 Under 18  
 1 18 to 22 years  
 2 23 to 25 years  
 3 26 to 30 years  
 4 31 to 40 years  
 5 41 to 50 years  
 6 51 to 60 years  
 7 61 years or more

4. Are you currently married?

- 81  0 Yes  
 1 No

5. Do you feel that you have a permanent handicap?

- Circle all that apply.
- 82  0 No  
 83  1 Yes, restricted mobility  
 84  2 Yes, restricted hearing  
 85  3 Yes, restricted vision  
 86  4 Yes, but I prefer not to record it on this form  
 87  5 Other \_\_\_\_\_

6. How long did you attend our college?

- 88  0 One term  
 1 One year  
 2 Two years  
 3 Three years  
 4 Four years  
 5 Five years  
 6 Six years  
 7 More than six years

7. The following statements reflect the goals of many college students. In the first column, please circle the letters of those goals that were important to you when you attended our college. In the second column, circle the letters of those goals you feel you are achieving or have achieved as a result of your experiences at our college.

These goals were important to me		These goals I am achieving or have achieved	
<u>Academic Goals</u>			
89	A	90	A To increase my knowledge and understanding in an academic field
91	B	92	B To obtain a certificate or degree
93	C	94	C To complete courses necessary to transfer to another educational institution
95	D	96	D Other _____
<u>Career-Preparation Goals</u>			
97	E	98	E To discover career interests
99	F	100	F To formulate long-term career plans and/or goals
101	G	102	G To prepare for a new career
103	H	104	H Other _____
<u>Job- or Career-Improvement Goals</u>			
105	I	106	I To improve my knowledge, technical skills, and/or competencies in my job or career
107	J	108	J To increase my chances for a raise and/or promotion
109	K	110	K Other _____
<u>Social- and Cultural-Participation Goals</u>			
111	L	112	L To become actively involved in student life and campus activities
113	M	114	M To increase my participation in cultural and social events
115	N	116	N To meet people
117	O	118	O Other _____
<u>Personal-Development and Enrichment Goals</u>			
119	P	120	P To increase my self-confidence
121	Q	122	Q To improve my leadership skills
123	R	124	R To improve my ability to get along with others
125	S	126	S To learn skills that will enrich my daily life or make me a more complete person
127	T	128	T To develop my ability to be independent, self-reliant, and adaptable
129	U	130	U Other _____

8. From the list of goals in question 7, please select the three that were most important to you when you attended our college. For example, if your most important goal was "To obtain a certificate or degree," enter the letter B in the first box

Most Important       Second Most Important       Third Most Important   
 111                                      112                                      113

9. What degree were you seeking when you attended our college?

114 { 0 Not seeking a certificate or degree  
 1 Certificate  
 2 Associate degree  
 3 Bachelor's degree  
 4 Master's degree  
 5 Specialist degree (e.g., Ed.S.)  
 6 Professional degree (e.g., medicine, law, theology)  
 7 Doctoral degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., D.B.A.)

10. a. Please write in your major or area of study at our college.

- b. Now look at List A: Majors and Areas of Study and enter in the boxes below the code number of the category in which your major or area of study falls.

--	--	--	--

135-138

11. a. Was our college your first choice?

139 { 0 Yes  
 1 No

- b. If no, what kind of college was your first choice?

140 { 0 A public two-year college  
 1 A public four-year college or university  
 2 A private college or university  
 3 A vocational/technical school, hospital school of nursing, trade school, or business school  
 4 Other \_\_\_\_\_

What was the name of the college that was your first choice?

\_\_\_\_\_

12. When you left our college, what was your overall grade point average (GPA)?

141 { 0 4.00 to 3.01  
 1 3.00 to 2.01  
 2 2.00 to 1.01  
 3 1.00 or less  
 4 Unknown or did not have one

13. What was your primary enrollment status when you attended our college?

142 { 0 Primarily for credit — full-time (12 or more hours each term enrolled)  
 1 Primarily for credit — part-time (less than 12 hours each term enrolled)  
 2 Primarily not for credit

14. While you were enrolled, how many hours did you normally work when classes were being held?

143 { 0 I was not employed  
 1 Employed 1-10 hours per week  
 2 Employed 11-20 hours per week  
 3 Employed 21-35 hours per week  
 4 Employed 36 hours or more per week

15. Did you apply for financial assistance (loan or scholarship) while at our college?

144 { 0 Yes, and I received it  
 1 Yes, but I did not receive it  
 2 Yes, but I left before I found out if I received it  
 3 No

16. The decision to leave a particular college can be motivated by a variety of reasons. Please circle the letters of all of the reasons that contributed to your decision to leave our college.

Academic Reasons

- 145 A Achieved my academic goals  
 146 B Transferred to another college  
 147 C Needed a break from college  
 148 D Courses/programs I wanted were not available  
 149 E Dissatisfied with my academic performance  
 150 F Dissatisfied with the quality of teaching  
 151 G Dissatisfied with the learning environment  
 152 H Course work not what I wanted  
 153 I Unsure of my academic goals  
 154 J Other \_\_\_\_\_

Financial Reasons

- 155 K Did not have enough money to continue  
 156 L Could not obtain sufficient financial aid  
 157 M Could not earn enough money while enrolled  
 158 N Other \_\_\_\_\_

Other Reasons

- 159 O Achieved my personal goals  
 160 P Accepted a job or entered the military  
 161 Q College experience not what I expected  
 162 R Few people I could identify with  
 163 S Moved out of the area  
 164 T Could not work and go to school at the same time  
 165 U Other responsibilities became too great  
 166 V Personal problems  
 167 W Other \_\_\_\_\_



APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DROPOUTS

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DROPOUTS

This questionnaire attempts to provide a useful scheme about the main factors that contribute to a student's decision to leave the college. Your input is needed. Specific instructions are given for answering the questions in this questionnaire. In addition, at the end of the survey, there is space where you can write your own statements. You should check or rank the response that most nearly describes your own situation.

Section A

Please check one alternative on each of the following 5 questions:

(1:1-4)

1) What is your sex?

a) Male (1:5)

b) Female (1:6)

2) How old are you?

a) Under 18 (1:7)

b) 18 to 22 years

c) 23 to 25 years

d) 26 to 30 years

e) 31 to 40 years

f) 41 to 50 years

g) 51 years or more

3) Are you . . . ? (1:8)

- a) married without children
- b) married with children who live with you
- c) married with children who do not live with you
- d) single (including widowed, separated, and divorced) without children
- e) single (including widowed, separated, and divorced) with children who live with you
- f) single (including widowed, separated, and divorced) with children who do not live with you

4) If you have children living with you, check the age of them on the list below. Use an "X" for each kid. If you do not have children check here \_\_\_\_\_ and follow with the next question.

- a) under school age (1:9)
- b) 5 to 10 years (1:10)
- c) 11 to 14 years (1:11)
- d) 15 to 18 years (1:12)
- e) over 19 years (1:13)

5) How far is your home from IUPE in terms of transportation time?

- a) less than one hour (1:14)
- b) between one hour and two hours
- c) more than two hours

### Section B

Please check one alternative on the following 9 questions:

6) How long did you attend IUPE J. M. Siso Martínez?

- a) one full semester (1:15)
- b) one full semester and part of the second one
- c) two semesters
- d) more than two semesters

7) On the following list, rank your first three reasons for your decision to begin attending this college. Use # 1 for your primary reason, # 2 for your secondary, and # 3 for your third reason.

- a) to complete the first two years in preparation for transferring to another institution. (1:16)
- b) to get a degree (1:17)
- c) to improve your knowledge, skills, or competencies in your job or career (1:18)
- d) to prepare for a new career (1:19)
- e) to become active in student life (1:20)
- f) to increase your participation in extracurricular activities (1:21)
- g) to increase your chances for a promotion (1:22)
- h) to prepare for a job (1:23)
- i) other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_ (1:24)

8) Which one of the following degrees did you achieve most recently before attending IUPE J. M. Siso Martínez?

- a) high school degree (1:25)
- b) associate degree (1:26)
- c) teacher of elementary school (1:27)
- d) other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_ (1:28)

9) During the last term that you were enrolled at IUPE, how many credit/hours did you take?

- a) 9 credit/hours (1:29)
- b) 12 credit/hours
- c) 15 credit/hours
- d) 18 credit/hours
- e) 21 credit/hours

10) During the majority of time that you were enrolled at IUPE, how many hours per week on the average did you work?

- a) none (1:30)
- b) 1 to 10 hours/week
- c) 11 to 20 hours/week
- d) 21 to 35 hours/week
- e) 36 or more hours/week



11) Which of the following types of financial aid did you receive at any time when you were enrolled at IUPE? (Check all that apply)

- a) none (1:31)
- b) scholarship (1:32)
- c) loan (1:33)
- d) family aid (1:34)
- e) other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_ (1:35)

12) Please, check one of the categories below to indicate your academic achievement average at the end of the last semester you completed at IUPE.

- a) satisfactory (1:36)
- b) not satisfactory

13) What was your cumulative overall grade point average during your studies before you were enrolled at IUPE?

- a) 01-03 (1:37)
- b) 04-06
- c) 07-09
- d) 10-11
- e) 12-14
- f) 15-17
- g) 18-20
- h) unknown

14) At IUPE, how many hours per week on the average, did you spend studying outside class?

- a) fewer than 12 hours/week (1:38)
- b) 12-23 hours/week
- c) 24-35 hours/week
- d) 36-47 hours/week
- e) 48 or more

Section C

Listed below are a number of factors which may affect an individual's decision to continue attending college or to drop out. In column "A", please indicate by circling the appropriate number the degree of your current satisfaction with each item. Use the scale provided for column A. In column "B" please indicate by circling the appropriate number the degree of importance to you of each item as you evaluate each term whether to leave or to continue at IUPE. In addition, there is a column in which you can indicate if the item is not applicable to you. For any item if you circle the NA please do not answer column A and B for that item.

	Column A					Column B					
	<u>"Satisfaction"</u>					<u>"Importance"</u>					
		very satisfied	fairly satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	not applicable		to a very great extent	to a great extent	to a little extent	not important at all
15) grading policies .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4	(1:39) (1:40)
16) level of difficulty of courses .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4	(1:41) (1:42)
17) availability of courses .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4	(1:43) (1:44)
18) quality of teaching .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4	(1:45) (1:46)
19) quality of faculty .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4	(1:47) (1:48)

	Column A					Column B				
	<u>"Satisfaction"</u>					<u>"Importance"</u>				
	very satisfied	fairly satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	not applicable	to a very great extent	to a great extent	to a little extent	not important at all	
20) availability of personal funds ....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
							(1:49)	(1:50)		
21) availability of financial aid .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
							(1:51)	(1:52)		
22) compatibility of your employment schedule with your academic schedule	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
							(1:53)	(1:54)		
23) likelihood of finding a job related to your studies upon completing the degree .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
							(1:55)	(1:56)		
24) ability to fulfill home responsibilities and attend school	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
							(1:57)	(1:58)		
25) amount of study time required .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
							(1:59)	(1:60)		
26) availability of transportation, if needed .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
							(1:61)	(1:62)		
27) availability of child care, if needed .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
							(1:63)	(1:64)		

Section D

For each of the following services provided by IUPE listed below, please indicate: 1) the extent to which you have used each one while attending the college, 2) your satisfaction with each service, and 3) your perception of the degree to which the college should improve each service in the next five years.

<u>Use</u>	<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
2 or more times a month	very satisfied	considerable
once a month	fairly satisfied	moderate
1-2 times a semester	somewhat dissatisfied	about the same
not at all	very dissatisfied	not as good
28) library	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:6) (2:7) (2:8)
29) tutoring	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:9) (2:10) (2:11)
30) counseling service	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:12) (2:13) (2:14)
31) adaptation program	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:15) (2:16) (2:17)
32) registration service	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:18) (2:19) (2:20)
33) extracurricular activities	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:21) (2:22) (2:23)
34) audiovisual programs	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:24) (2:25) (2:26)
35) building and room facilities	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:27) (2:28) (2:29)
36) amount of informal contact with faculty	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:30) (2:31) (2:32)
37) parking	..... 1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:33) (2:34) (2:35)

Section E

The following are a number of important aspects of a college. Please, indicate by circling the appropriate number: 1) your satisfaction with each one and 2) your perception of the improvement needed for the next five years.

<u>Satisfaction</u>		<u>Improvement</u>	
very satisfied	_____	considerable	_____
fairly satisfied	_____	moderate	_____
somewhat dissatisfied	_____	about the same	_____
very dissatisfied	_____	not as good	_____
38) examination system .....	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4
		(2:36)	(2:37)
39) academic calendar	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4
		(2:38)	(2:39)
40) learning-at-distance system .....	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4
		(2:40)	(2:41)
40) information on campus .....	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4
		(2:42)	(2:43)
42) student recruitment activities .....	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4
		(2:44)	(2:45)
43) the manner in which you are treated by academic and support staff .....	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4
		(2:46)	(2:47)
44) the school in general .....	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4
		(2:48)	(2:49)
			(2:50)

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PERSISTERS

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PERSISTERS

This questionnaire attempts to provide a useful scheme about the main factors that contribute to a student's decision to persist at college. Your input is needed. Specific instructions are given in each section for answering the questions in this questionnaire. In addition, at the end of the survey, there is space where you can write your own statements. You should check or rank the response that most nearly describes your own situation.

Section A

Please check one alternative on each of the following 5 questions:

(1:1-4)

1) What is your sex?

a) Male (1:5)

b) Female (1:6)

2) How old are you?

a) Under 18 (1:7)

b) 18 to 22 years

c) 23 to 25 years

d) 26 to 30 years

e) 31 to 40 years

f) 41 to 50 years

g) 51 years or more

3) Are you . . . ? (1:8)

- a) married without children
- b) married with children who live with you
- c) married with children who do not live with you
- d) single (including widowed, separated, and divorced) without children
- e) single (including widowed, separated, and divorced) with children who live with you
- f) single (including widowed, separated, and divorced) with children who do not live with you

4) If you have children living with you, check the age of them on the list below. Use an "X" for each kid. If you do not have children check here \_\_\_\_\_ and follow with the next question.

- a) under school age (1:9)
- b) 5 to 10 years (1:10)
- c) 11 to 14 years (1:11)
- d) 15 to 18 years (1:12)
- e) over 19 years (1:13)

5) How far is your home from IUPE in terms of transportation time?

- a) less than one hour (1:14)
- b) between one hour and two hours
- c) more than two hours

### Section B

Please check one alternative on the following 9 questions:

6) How long have you been attending IUPE J. M. Siso Martínez?

- a) one full semester (1:15)
- b) one full semester and part of the second one
- c) two semesters
- d) more than two semesters



7) On the following list, rank your first three reasons for your decision to begin attending this college. Use # 1 for your primary reason, # 2 for your secondary, and # 3 for your third reason.

- a) to complete the first two years in preparation for transferring to another institution. (1:16)
- b) to get a degree (1:17)
- c) to improve your knowledge, skills, or competencies in your job or career (1:18)
- d) to prepare for a new career (1:19)
- e) to become active in student life (1:20)
- f) to increase your participation in extracurricular activities (1:21)
- g) to increase your chances for a promotion (1:22)
- h) to prepare for a job (1:23)
- i) other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_ (1:24)

8) Which one of the following degrees did you achieve most recently before attending IUPE J. M. Siso Martínez?

- a) high school degree (1:25)
- b) associate degree (1:26)
- c) teacher of elementary school (1:27)
- d) other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_ (1:28)

9) During the current term, how many credit/hours are you taking?

- a) 9 credit/hours (1:29)
- b) 12 credit/hours
- c) 15 credit/hours
- d) 18 credit/hours
- e) 21 credit/hours

10) During the majority of time that you have been attending IUPE, how many hours per week on the average have you been working?

- a) none (1:30)
- b) 1 to 10 hours/week
- c) 11 to 20 hours/week
- d) 21 to 35 hours/week
- e) 36 or more hours/week

11) Which of the following types of financial aid have you received at any time while attending college? (Check all that apply)

- a) none (1:31)
- b) scholarship (1:32)
- c) loan (1:33)
- d) family aid (1:34)
- e) other, please specify \_\_\_\_\_ (1:35)

12) Please, check one of the categories below to indicate your academic achievement average at the end of the last semester you completed at IUPE.

- a) satisfactory (1:36)
- b) not satisfactory

13) What was your cumulative overall grade point average during your studies before you were enrolled at IUPE?

- a) 01-03 (1:37)
- b) 04-06
- c) 07-09
- d) 10-11
- e) 12-14
- f) 15-17
- g) 18-20
- h) unknown

14) At IUPE, how many hours per week on the average, do you spend studying outside class?

- a) fewer than 12 hours/week (1:38)
- b) 12-23 hours/week
- c) 24-35 hours/week
- d) 36-47 hours/week
- e) 48 or more

Section C

Listed below are a number of factors which may affect an individual's decision to continue attending college or to drop out. In column "A", please indicate by circling the appropriate number the degree of your current satisfaction with each item. Use the scale provided for column A. In column "B" please indicate by circling the appropriate number the degree of importance to you of each item as you evaluate each term whether to leave or to continue at IUPE. In addition, there is a column in which you can indicate if the item is not applicable to you. For any item if you circle the NA please do not answer column A and B for that item.

	Column A					Column B					
	<u>"Satisfaction"</u>					<u>"Importance"</u>					
		very satisfied	fairly satisfied	somewhat dissatisfied	very dissatisfied	not applicable		to a very great extent	to a great extent	to a little extent	not important at all
15) grading policies .....	NA	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	(1:39) (1:40)
16) level of difficulty of courses .....	NA	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	(1:41) (1:42)
17) availability of courses .....	NA	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	(1:43) (1:44)
18) quality of teaching .....	NA	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	(1:45) (1:46)
19) quality of faculty .....	NA	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	(1:47) (1:48)

Column A					Column B						
<u>"Satisfaction"</u>					<u>"Importance"</u>						
	very satisfied				to a very great extent						
	fairly satisfied				to a great extent						
	somewhat dissatisfied				to a little extent						
	very dissatisfied				not important at all						
	not applicable										
20)	availability of personal funds ....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
								(1:49)	(1:50)		
21)	availability of financial aid .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
								(1:51)	(1:52)		
22)	compatibility of your employment schedule with your academic schedule	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
								(1:53)	(1:54)		
23)	likelihood of finding a job related to your studies upon completing the degree .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
								(1:55)	(1:56)		
24)	ability to fulfill home responsibilities and attend school	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
								(1:57)	(1:58)		
25)	amount of study time required .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
								(1:59)	(1:60)		
26)	availability of transportation, if needed .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
								(1:61)	(1:62)		
27)	availability of child care, if needed .....	NA	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
								(1:63)	(1:64)		

Section D

For each of the following services provided by IUPE listed below, please indicate: 1) the extent to which you have used each one while attending the college, 2) your satisfaction with each service, and 3) your perception of the degree to which the college should improve each service in the next five years.

<u>Use</u>		<u>Satisfaction</u>		<u>Improvement</u>
2 or more times a month	_____	very satisfied	_____	considerable
once a month	_____	fairly satisfied	_____	moderate
1-2 times a semester	_____	somewhat dissatisfied	_____	about the same
not at all	_____	very dissatisfied	_____	not as good
	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 4	1 2 3 4
28) library	.....	.....	.....	..... (2:6) (2:7) (2:8)
29) tutoring	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:9) (2:10) (2:11)
30) counseling service	.... 1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:12) (2:13) (2:14)
31) adaptation program	.... 1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:15) (2:16) (2:17)
32) registration service	.... 1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:18) (2:19) (2:20)
33) extracurricular activities	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:21) (2:22) (2:23)
34) audiovisual programs	... 1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:24) (2:25) (2:26)
35) building and room facilities	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:27) (2:28) (2:29)
36) amount of informal contact with faculty	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:30) (2:31) (2:32)
37) parking	1 2 3 4	.....	1 2 3 4	..... 1 2 3 4 (2:33) (2:34) (2:35)

Section E

The following are a number of important aspects of a college. Please, indicate by circling the appropriate number: 1) your satisfaction with each one and 2) your perception of the improvement needed for the next five years.

<u>Satisfaction</u>					<u>Improvement</u>				
	very satisfied					considerable			
	fairly satisfied					moderate			
	somewhat dissatisfied					about the same			
	very dissatisfied					not as good			
38) examination system .....	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
						(2:36)	(2:37)		
39) academic calendar	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
						(2:38)	(2:39)		
40) learning-at-distance system .....	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
						(2:40)	(2:41)		
40) information on campus .....	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
						(2:42)	(2:43)		
42) student recruitment activities .....	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
						(2:44)	(2:45)		
43) the manner in which you are treated by academic and support staff .....	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
						(2:46)	(2:47)		
44) the school in general .....	1	2	3	4	.....	1	2	3	4
						(2:48)	(2:49)		
							(2:50)		

APPENDIX F

COVER LETTER

## COVER LETTER

The following questionnaire is designed to gather information about the main factors that influence a student's decision to leave or to stay at the IUPE J. M. Siso Martínez.

A high response rate is essential to the success of this study. Your participation can make the difference.

No individual responses will be reported. All results will be reported in aggregate form so no individual can be identified. Personal data about yourself will be used to analyze the responses. This information will remain confidential and your responses will become part of this statistical report.

When you complete the survey, please mail it as soon as possible before February 20, 1985, using the enclosed envelope.

This survey is part of my dissertation which deals with the issue of dropouts at the IUPE. The results will be useful to improve conditions that affect this problem.

Again, thank you for your participation. If you have any question about the questionnaire, I can be reached at 7-2 South University Place, Stillwater, Oklahoma 74075.

Sincerely yours,

Renie Dubs



VITA

RENIE DUBS

Candidate for the Degree of  
Doctor of Education

Thesis: FACTORS RELATED TO THE DROPOUTS OF FRESHMAN  
STUDENTS IN A VENEZUELAN TEACHERS COLLEGE

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Personal Data: Born in Caracas, Venezuela September 22, 1947,  
daughter of Juan and Yvonne Dubs, and married to Amado  
Moreno, with two daughters: Sylvia and Renie del Valle.

Education: Attended elementary and secondary school at Teresiano  
School, Caracas, 1952-1964; received the bachelor's degree,  
Professor of Secondary Education from the Instituto Universi-  
tario Pedagógico de Caracas, Caracas, Venezuela, 1968;  
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Venezolano de Investigaciones Científicas, Altos de Pipe,  
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Professional Experience: Secondary school teacher from 1968 to  
1975; faculty professor, 1979 to 1982, Chemistry Department  
Head 1981 to 1982.