Three Occupational Choice Categories and Their Perceived Reference Groups and Reference Individuals

Stephen M. Vargo
Western Michigan University

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THREE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE
CATEGORIES AND THEIR PERCEIVED
REFERENCE GROUPS AND REFERENCE INDIVIDUALS

by

Stephen M. Vargo

A Thesis
Submitted to the
Faculty of the School of Graduate
Studies in partial fulfillment
of the
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CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

Introduction

In our society nearly every male, and an increasing number of females, selects an occupation and involves himself in long-term commitments which will influence his thoughts, his feelings, and his potentiality for living a productive and satisfying life. Rosenberg\(^1\) terms this type of social action a "big" decision, one of two deemed important to American society.

"One . . . "big" decision is marriage — whether to marry and, if so, to whom. Another is choosing one's life work — whether to work at this job or that. Neither of the choices is completely irrevocable -- we can change mates or change professions -- but there is a widespread tendency in American middle-class society to view them as final decisions, and they are as important a pair of long-term commitments as we are ever likely to make."

Occupational choice, important for the individual, also carries implications for the total society since,

"every society must somehow arrange to get people to do what has to get done in order to enable the society to keep going and prosper. It must so distribute its human resources, both in quantity and quality, that societal needs will be satisfied."

In light of the importance of occupational choice for the individual


\(^2\)Ibid.
and its consequent implications for society, it seems sociologically useful to look systematically at some of the elements leading to job selection.

Occupational choice has been characterized by early researchers as a series of discrete decisions. Ginzberg states that,

"the outstanding conclusion from our findings is that occupational choice is a developmental process: it is not a single decision, but a series of decisions made over a period of years."

Insofar as it consists of a "series of decisions," occupational choice may be described as a process, and as a process, it tightly interweaves multiple elements, including the effects of personality, external environmental conditions, social factors or society, and general cultural factors such as occupational values. Ginzberg elaborates some of the factors and influences impinging on the process.

"In every decision many people are concerned. There is the adolescent trying to organize his manifold impressions about himself and the external environment

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4Ginzberg, op. cit., 185.

5loc. cit., 5.
so that he can begin to choose intelligently among several alternatives. There are his parents who, aware of their son's problems, question whether they should interfere, and if so, in what manner. There are teachers who, by direction or indirection, present materials and make judgments about various occupations and the way to prepare for them. There are friends and advisors who also influence his decision-making."

It is apparent that other persons are an important factor in the process of occupational choice. This is reasonable to expect considering that throughout one's life other people have a profound bearing on it. The whole process of socialization and the corresponding development of the self depends on others and the perception of others' feelings and attitudes toward oneself. As Kuhn states, "the other is crucial to the self and to meaningful action." This study will use reference group theory to look at this important factor of others, namely, reference groups and reference individuals, in relation to occupational choice. More specifically, the study will look at who the perceived reference groups or individuals were for persons choosing certain types of occupations. For the purposes of this study, persons will be seen as reference groups or reference individuals if they were

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7 In a subsection (beginning on p. 16) of the literature review section of this chapter, a number of studies are reviewed which speak in terms of influence from various persons or of influential persons rather than using the nomenclature of reference group theory. These influential persons would be termed reference groups or reference individuals in the present study. Thus, in this literature review section, an influential person or persons and a reference individual or group will be synonymous.
received of as having affected the occupational choices of the respondents.

A basic proposition of reference group theory is that a person's behavior is affected by the groups and individuals with which he identifies and not simply by the groups and individuals to which he is exposed or by the groups of which he is a member. Persons identify with various reference groups and individuals; their action or behavior is affected by this identification. They receive information and adopt behavior patterns from these reference groups and individuals and therefore the specific area of choice behavior would also be affected by such groups and individuals. Thus, reference group theory should be a productive framework in which to study occupational choice behavior.

The potential reference groups and individuals a person might identify with were alluded to above, by Ginzberg. Identification is a normal occurrence within the context of socialization. Throughout this process a person might use parents, friends, and teachers as reference groups or individuals. Identification may also occur when a person wishes to gain or maintain acceptance in a particular group or to occupy a certain role. Hyman and Singer\(^8\) sum it up concisely when they state that

"individuals may take as a reference group a non-membership group to which they aspire to belong, and

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begin to socialize themselves to what they perceive to be its norms before they are ever exposed to its influence."

This would suggest that people in a person's chosen occupation might become reference groups or individuals before entering the occupation. Thus, the above mentioned persons and groups will be the potential reference groups and individuals looked at to determine if there are systematic patterns in the perception of reference groups and individuals by those choosing certain types of occupations.

The Problem

Specific problem statement

The specific purpose of this study is to analyze three categories of occupational choice — business, scientific-esthetic, and general cultural — and their perceived reference groups and reference individuals among a sample of male college dormitory residents.

Sample

The sample was composed of Western Michigan University males

9 These categories follow an adaptation from a study of occupational choice of college males conducted by Simpson, R. L., and Simpson, I. H., "Values, Personal Influence, and Occupational Choice." Social Forces, XXXIX (July 1960), 117-118. These categories will be discussed further in this problem statement and in Chapter II.
living on randomly selected dormitory floors for reasons of convenience and resource limitations. Males were selected in order to establish similarity with the sample used by Simpson and Simpson, since it is desired to compare certain findings of this study with those of the Simpson and Simpson study. For example, Simpson and Simpson found that a greater proportion of the scientific-esthetic category indicated that people in their chosen occupation affected their occupational choice to a greater extent than was true for either the business or general cultural categories. The theoretical framework of the present study would suggest that all categories would perceive people in their chosen occupation as important. The apparent discrepancy between the expected findings of the present study and the Simpson and Simpson finding is examined.

Three characteristics of the population sampled limit the generalizability of the present study's findings. First, college students have certain characteristics which make it impossible to generalize from them to the general population of occupational choosers. College students are most likely to be of middle class background which may tend to bias their selection of occupations. They are apt to select jobs which demand higher education. Thus, a large section of the total range of occupational choices, i.e., manual labor, which may be sought by the general population is

10 *loc. cit., 118.*

11 *loc. cit., 123.*
eliminated from their consideration. Second, only males were included in this sample; generalization may not be made to female occupational choosers. Third, male dormitory residents may exemplify a different set of characteristics than non-dormitory residents. This lack of the ability to generalize is a limitation of this study. However, it is felt that benefit may still be derived from a consideration of reference group theory and occupational choice in this context.

Hypotheses

A group of hypotheses was generated primarily from two usages of reference group theory, namely, the normative use of the theory and the usage concerning a group in which one desires to gain acceptance. One set of hypotheses is concerned with individuals or groups who may be perceived as reference groups or reference individuals by occupational choosers regardless of the category of occupational choice. These may be suggested to be "general" reference groups or reference individuals. A second set of hypotheses is concerned with individuals or groups who may be differentially perceived as reference groups or individuals according to each of the three categories of occupational choice. These may be suggested to be "specific" reference individuals or groups. Potential reference individuals or groups include parents, friends, people in one's chosen occupation, teachers, counselors, college professors, and relatives.
Occupational choice categories

The occupational choice categories used in this study follow a typology developed by Simpson and Simpson.\(^{12}\) Examples of the business category include such occupational choices as management, marketing, and finance. The scientific and esthetic category includes scientists, doctors, writers, artists, etc. The general cultural category contains teachers, professors, ministers, etc. These categories were used to look at perceived reference groups and reference individuals. Additionally, these categories were considered as they are characterized by certain values and as these values may provide a partial basis for the selection of reference individuals.

Values of these three occupational choice categories, then, were looked at as they impinge upon reference group theory. More specifically, this study looked at the values of these choice categories as a potential device to interpret the selection of certain persons as reference individuals. Value preferences of these categories were ascertained by two questions from the instrument used by this study (see Appendix A, Part VI, questions 12 and 16). The indicated preferences were compared to values characteristic of these choice categories as suggested by previous literature and research.

\(^{12}\)loc. cit., 117-118.
Procedures and analysis

A self-administered structured questionnaire was employed for two reasons. Such an instrument may facilitate the collection of a broad range of information. The nature of reference group theory is insufficiently developed to define precisely the nature of information appropriate to the consideration of this study. Thus, it is possible that more data was collected than may be properly included in a circumscribed treatment of the study's hypotheses. A questionnaire also allows for a large sample size. The instrument was hand distributed in order to explain completion and return procedures to minimize possible confusion. At this time, it was also stressed that each student should return his pre-addressed questionnaire to establish some level of validity. Questionnaires were returned via campus mail. This seemed to be the most convenient return mechanism for the respondents.

The completion and return of the instrument was probably affected by self selection bias. The use of statistics appropriate to probability samples was not possible because the returned questionnaires were probably affected by self interest. The sample was a probability sample only in terms of its selection of dormitory floors. A relatively high proportion of questionnaires had to be returned to insure the presence of the element of randomness. This was probably not the case. Thus, it would not be appropriate to

apply inferential statistics to interpret the data. Since the returns were not sufficient to warrant an assumption that randomness was preserved, the only appropriate technique for interpreting the data was percentages.

In conclusion, recognizing the limitations enumerated above, the major purpose of the study is to determine what types of groups or individuals may possibly serve as reference groups or reference individuals during the developmental process of occupational choice. The findings of this study may be viewed as bases for further consideration of the applicability of reference group theory to the occupational choice decision making process rather than definitive statements made from a well defined theory about a specific problem.

Related Literature

Reference group studies

In the pioneer reference group study, Hyman\(^1^4\) had his respondents judge their own statuses in various areas, in each case comparing themselves to (a) all people in the United States, (b) their friends and acquaintances, and (c) their own occupational groups. The findings indicated that self-judgments of status varied according to the comparison group and that reliability of judging varied with interaction between the type of status (intellectual,

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economic, etc.) and the group to which referred. Also, particular reference groups were used in relation to particular problems of status.

Another indication of the use of people as reference groups and the significance of different reference groups occurs in Merton and Kitt's\textsuperscript{15} reformulation of Stouffer's\textsuperscript{16} study of \textit{The American Soldier} in terms of the concept of reference group. The study showed that the attitudes of soldiers regarding their own position varied according to the different reference groups with which they compared themselves. For example, soldiers overseas considered themselves unfortunate in comparison to the men at home, but well off in comparison to the front line troops. It was also found that new troops were effected by their desire to belong or to be accepted. "Green" troops were found to vary as to the battalions in which they were located. For example, "green" troops placed in battalions made up mainly of soldiers who had also just come overseas, showed a considerably higher proportion of those considering themselves ready to go into combat as opposed to "green" troops who were placed in battalions made up mainly of troops who had already seen combat.


The "green" troops seemingly aspired to become members of the group and therefore they accepted the norms of the group.

Newcomb's\textsuperscript{17} reinterpretation of his Bennington study in terms of the reference group concept has great impact in revealing the concept as a potentially valuable tool for explaining the effects of social groups on the formation and change of attitudes. This longitudinal study of girls at Bennington College investigated the effect for four years exposure to a liberal college atmosphere upon girls with conservative backgrounds. Due to the policy of the faculty to expose students to many views, and particularly to acquaint the students with social and international problems, the trend was for the majority of students to exhibit a change from conservatism to nonconservatism in their senior year. The most significant finding was the means by which attitude change or lack thereof was influenced by an individual's reference group. The study discusses the effects on the students' attitudes of their two main reference groups: (a) their conservative families from whom they were separated; and (b) the nonconservative college community. One major finding was that if a group was one in which a given individual was motivated to be accepted or treated as a member, then the individual would be motivated to assimilate the norms or standards of the group. Again we see the importance of persons as reference groups.

Charters and Newcomb demonstrated that group attitudes are influenced by reference groups. More specifically, they showed that responses to attitudinal statements are chosen along prescribed normative lines when the salience of a potentially important reference group is increased. A sample of Roman Catholic college students were divided into three groups — two control and one experimental — to complete an attitude scale. Each group was sent to separate rooms and received different instructions about the scale. The experimental group was told that their assistance was required in perfecting an attitude scale designed to be relevant for members of the Roman Catholic Church. It was hypothesized that the experimental group would respond according to the norms of the Catholic Church while the other groups would respond according to other reference groups. As stated, this hypothesis was supported indicating the importance of knowing who the reference groups are for persons in various situations.

In a sample of law school students dichotomized according to whether they intended to become lawyers or use their training to enter another career (business, politics, etc.), Wallace found a


difference in the values and behavioral traits of each group according to their respective reference groups. The findings indicated that a greater proportion of those students who intended to practice law, and should therefore have the legal profession as their reference group, exhibited certain traits (interest in profession, student-professor relationships, positive evaluation of law school and professors) more so than the other students who intended to go into other vocations and, therefore, it was assumed, had different reference groups. This study assumed that certain persons had different reference groups and then looked at the differential adherence to various values or behavioral traits. It would also be interesting to see who the reference groups or reference individuals were for persons choosing different types of occupations and see if different patterns exist in the selection of reference groups and reference individuals.

Schrag sheds some light on the use of reference groups in choice situations. He used prison inmates to look at the influence of reference groups on the choice of various types of solutions to problematic social situations. The inmates answered questions concerning alternative solutions to problematic situations encountered in correctional institutions. The data was sorted according to a prisoner typology under the assumption that the different types of

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prisoners would have different reference groups and therefore choose different solutions. The typology included: "square John" or pro-social, "right guy" or anti-social, "con politician" or pseudosocial, and "outlaw" or asocial. As hypothesized, the pro-social inmate evaluated problematic situations with reference to legitimate norms since his reference group was noncriminal types outside the prison. The anti-social inmate made evaluations of an illegitimate nature because his reference group held anti-social values. The pseudosocial offender shifted his normative perspective according to the availability of instrumental rewards. The asocial inmate reflected ignorance of role requirements and a deficiency in role-playing ability. This study points to the importance of reference groups in choosing among alternatives.

Brooks\textsuperscript{21} found that the choice of or preference for a particular political party depended on who the reference groups or individuals were for certain persons. Brooks used a sample of unmarried college students between the ages of 16 and 29. The students' reference groups and individuals were determined by asking them to list the person or groups referred to when confronted with a problem. It was assumed the most important reference groups and individuals would be the most salient and therefore listed at the beginning. Students mentioning parents as reference groups were

compared to those mentioning other reference groups or individuals. A statistically significant difference was found, with students listing parents as reference groups more often choosing the same political party as their parents while those students using different reference groups or individuals more often chose a different party from their parents. It was also found that reference group was a better predictor of party preference than the traditional demographic variables of age and sex.

The above studies illustrate some of the variety of uses of the concept of reference group. But, more importantly, they illustrate the importance and significance of looking at who the reference groups and reference individuals are for persons when attempting to analyze behavior, attitudes, or values in various situations.

Identification of reference groups and reference individuals

We will now look at some of the persons who have been identified as reference groups or individuals in studies of occupational choice. Most of the following studies did not use a theoretical framework and none of them used reference group theory as a framework. The nomenclature, therefore, was not that of reference group theory. In other words, these studies did not speak in terms of reference groups or reference individuals but usually in terms of influence from various persons or categories of persons. In this study these influential persons would be termed reference groups or
reference individuals. Thus, in the literature review, an influential person or persons and reference group or reference individual will be synonymous.

Earlier studies have shown that fathers and mothers are important reference individuals in the process of occupational choice. Dyer and others found that the experience and attitudes of both the father and mother relating to the father's occupation tend to shape attitudes of children toward jobs in general. Lipset, et. al. find a differentiation in the amount of advice given to


sons concerning certain careers according to the occupational
category of the father. If the father is a professional worker or a
business executive, advice is given more frequently than if the
father is a manual worker. Lipset and associates also report that
this increased advice has a considerable bearing on the individual's
job orientation in that the sons of families in high-status
occupations more often develop specific job plans during their
school years than do the sons of manual workers and farmers. Roe\textsuperscript{25}
and Simpson and Simpson\textsuperscript{26} found that parents are the most important
reference individuals for the occupational choice of the individual.

However, although parents have been found to be strongly
influential on occupational choice, other factors are also present.
Dyer\textsuperscript{27} found that children are influenced in their job attitudes by
friends and other reference groups outside the family. Haller and
Butterworth\textsuperscript{28} report that the attitudes of youth concerning educa­
tional and occupational aspirations are developed in part as a re­
sult of interaction with each other. McDill and Coleman,\textsuperscript{29} in a

\textsuperscript{25}op. cit.
\textsuperscript{26}op. cit.
\textsuperscript{27}op. cit., 205.
temporally divided two-stage study of high school students at their freshman and senior years, found that the family was the most important influence on the college plans of the respondents as freshmen, but peer influences predominated at the senior level. Weast, in a study of the occupational choice and educational plans of ninth and twelfth grade students, showed that almost all the respondents recognized influence from older siblings. It may be seen, then, that peers and members of the family other than parents are also potentially important reference groups and individuals during the choice process.

Additional reference groups or individuals may be available to respondents in this study from the educational system. The high school situation contains teachers, counselors, and friends who may be important potential reference groups or individuals for the choice process. The high school, as part of the total educational system, functions to prepare the student for a role in the economy from the point of view of the individual and the economic system. This function generates other functions relating to occupational choice by the student, especially as the high school makes available personnel who can aid in his choices.

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32 ibid.
Reference groups or individuals may also be available to choosers in their role as students acting within the university social structure. It seems reasonable that throughout the selecting process social experiences and social interactions would form an essential part of the individual's development and, further, that there should be present within the university the "more or less institutionalized patterns of activities, interactions, and ideas among various groups" which, according to Blau, create a social structure. Potentially important reference groups or individuals peculiar to this social structure are, again, teachers or professors, counselors, and friends. At the high school level and at the college level, then, the student may recognize the importance of persons such as teachers and counselors in addition to family members, but no order of importance is clearly delineated.

Roe, summarizing studies of influence on occupational choice, suggests a probable ordering: parents showed greatest influence, followed by other relatives, and friends or other students. A second ordering is provided by Peters who found that the four most

33Blau, op. cit., 533.


36op. cit.

37Peters, Edwin, op. cit.
Influential factors contributing to vocational choice were, respectively, the parent, a friend, a professional acquaintance, and a relative other than parent. Davis\textsuperscript{38} in analyzing influence on the aspirations of college students, found that professors ranked only slightly below parents in influence. These studies agreed that parents are most influential on occupational choice. It will be interesting to see if the present study concurs and further to pursue the question of who next serves as important reference groups or individuals for occupational choice in general. A second question concerns whether there are differences in the use of reference groups or individuals for different types of occupational choices.

The one study that has bearing on the question of differential reference groups and individuals for different occupational choices is one by Simpson and Simpson.\textsuperscript{39} The authors used a sample of 130 undergraduate sociology students from two different universities. As will be the case in the present study, the sample was divided into the three occupational choice categories of business, scientific and esthetic, and general cultural. In relation to this study the authors found that business choosers were the least likely to name teachers or professors as having influenced their decisions. Scientific and esthetic choosers said teachers or

\textsuperscript{38}op. cit.

\textsuperscript{39}"Values, Personal Influence. . .," op. cit.
professors influenced their decisions more often than business choosers and they were equal in this respect to general cultural choosers. Parents received the highest influence ratings for both business and scientific-esthetic choosers while teachers or professors and male college friends outranked the influence of parents for the general cultural group. Hopefully, this study will be able to expand and at least replicate the findings of Simpson and Simpson.

This study will also peruse one finding of Simpson and Simpson's that the present study's theoretical framework would predict a different outcome to than they found. Simpson and Simpson found that the scientific and esthetic choosers mentioned people in their intended occupation as having influenced their decisions to a far greater extent than did either the business or general cultural choosers. Reference group theory, for reasons to be discussed later, would predict that all three choice categories would consider people in their chosen occupations as a reference group. This may be the major substantive contribution of this study, as well as pointing out the value of a theoretical framework if the present findings disagree with Simpson and Simpson's on this point.

Other variables in occupational choice

Although Forer points out that personality factors such as

interest, ability, and motivation affect occupational choice, these factors will be omitted in the present research in order to concentrate upon social factors in occupational decision making which, according to Slocum \textsuperscript{41} "takes place within a social and cultural context." Other important factors \textsuperscript{42} included in the choosing process are the relative prosperity of the economy, present technological development, and the type of work available at a particular time and place. These factors must also be excluded from the limited scope of this study.

Other factors treated in sociological literature include social class (measured by father's occupation), \textsuperscript{43} I.Q., \textsuperscript{44} educational

\textsuperscript{41} op. cit., 145.

\textsuperscript{42} For example, see: ibid., and Blau, op. cit.


\textsuperscript{44} For example, see: Bell, Gerald D., "Processes in the Formation of Adolescents' Aspirations." \textit{Social Forces}, XLII (December 1963), 179-86; Kahl, op. cit.; Sewell, Haller, Straus, op. cit.; Super, op. cit.
attainment of parents, parental stress or pressure on attending college, and size of community of residence. These variables have been found to have a positive or direct relationship to aspirations and the choice of a more prestigious occupation: the higher the social class background of the respondent, the higher his aspirations; and, correspondingly, the higher his I.Q. or his parents' educational attainment, the higher his aspirations toward a job requiring higher education. These relationships, already established in the literature, will not be directly investigated in this study.

Theoretical Framework

Among factors central to the selection of an occupation, this study focuses on who becomes reference groups and reference individuals for the respondent in his choice of an occupation.

45Dole, op. cit.
46Bordua, op. cit.

48Merton reminds us that reference groups may be a single "reference individual": "Ever since the term 'reference group' was introduced by Hyman, social scientists have adopted the terminological convention of having the term include behavior oriented both to groups and to particular individuals. This elliptical designation was evidently adopted wholly for the purpose of brevity; the term 'reference group and reference individual' would simply have been too clumsy and heavy-handed an expression to survive for long. But whatever the reasons for the abbreviated expression, the very ter-
It is therefore appropriate to conduct this research within the theoretical framework which considers reference groups and reference individuals and their effect upon values, attitudes, and behavior.

Sherif and Sherif\(^49\) state that "reference groups are those groups to which the individual relates himself as a part or to which he aspires to relate himself psychologically." Shibutani\(^50\) elaborates this in his statement that "all discussions of reference groups involve some identifiable grouping to which an actor is related in some manner and the norms and values shared in that group." Persons then, relate to or identify with reference groups or reference individuals and these persons affect their behavior or attitudes. Kemper\(^51\) elaborates the concept further when he

minology itself has tended to fix the definition of problems by social scientists. . . . Research and theory have tended to focus on reference groups to the relative neglect of reference individuals" (italics mine). Merton, R. K., Social Theory and Social Structure. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1957, 302. Also on this point, see: Hyman, Herbert H., "Reflections on Reference Groups." Public Opinion Quarterly, XXIV (Fall 1960), 390. Hyman, who originated the concept of reference group, points out that we have neglected the reference individual and perhaps we should not: "Alas, the reference individual is almost forgotten, and it would be greatly to our advantage to reinstate the concept."


indicates that a reference group is

"a group, collectivity, or person which the actor takes into account in some manner in the course of selecting a behavior from among a set of alternatives or in making a judgment about a problematic issue."

Shibutani\textsuperscript{52} further emphasizes this point when he states, "the concept (of reference group theory) has been particularly useful in accounting for the choices made among apparent alternatives." In other words, an actor relates to or identifies with a group or individual and through this the reference group or reference individual helps to orient the actor in a certain course, whether of action or attitude.

An individual may acquire norms and values from a reference group or reference individual or his behavior may be affected because he uses the group or individual for standards of behavior. This is supported by Merton\textsuperscript{53} who indicates that reference group theory looks at those processes of evaluation and self-appraisal in which the individual takes the values or standards of other individuals and groups. It may be concluded then that reference groups and individuals function as a source of norms and values with concomitant standards of behavior, attitudes, self-evaluation, aspirations, etc. which may orient behavior in certain directions.

Sherif and Sherif\textsuperscript{54} point out that the norms and values

\textsuperscript{52}op. cit., 562.

\textsuperscript{53}op. cit., especially 301-302

\textsuperscript{54}op. cit., 175.
provided by the reference groups of which the individual is a member are those to which he will adhere closely.

"When an individual has motives in common with others and interacts with them toward the formation of a group structure of which he is an integral part, when he internalizes the values or norms which he had a hand in forming, it is obvious that the group in question is his group and the norms are his own norms. His sense of identity, his desire to amount to something, his pride are intimately related with his membership in the group in question. Its norms are his cherished personal values. As a consequence he willingly and with zeal regulates his experience and behavior accordingly. . . . The groups of which the individual is a member are his reference groups."

However, Sherif and Sherif also state that behavior may be affected by other groups and that norms and values do not universally derive from a single membership group but may also originate from groups to which one does not belong, especially as they apply to specialized areas of behavior. Emphasizing that no one group influences an individual totally, Merton discusses the variability in range of influence by a given group.

"It has long been assumed that different groups become relevant to differing spheres of behavior by individuals. This is only to say that, tacitly if not always explicitly, reference groups operate as such in conjunction with distinct kinds of evaluation and behavior. . . . Some groups presumably take on pertinence for a wide variety of behaviors, and others for only a few."

One example of a group with pertinence for a wide variety of behaviors would probably be the family. Through the extended

55 Ibid.
exposure of the socialization process, the family could be a relevant reference group, or one member a relevant reference individual, for every type of behavior from choosing a spouse or an occupation to whether or not to go fishing. A possible example of segmental relevance might be the incumbents of one's potential occupation. These persons might be very relevant for whether or not one chooses a particular occupation but not very relevant for behaviors unrelated to occupational endeavors.

It should also be pointed out that differential salience of reference groups or individuals probably occurs for various behaviors. Thus, parents might be important as a reference group for choosing a particular occupation but, for this behavior, people in the potential occupation might even be more important than parents. It seems reasonable to conclude from the above that the individual identifies with groups in which he holds membership but he may also identify with groups or individuals outside his membership groups and further, there is segmental relevance and salience of reference groups or reference individuals for various behaviors.

Sociologists have tended to distinguish among three uses of the concept reference group: (1) as a source of self-evaluation, (2) as a source of one's major perspectives, and (3) a group in which one wishes to gain or maintain acceptance. These usages and the one which this study will concentrate on are discussed and clarified below.

57These three usages are taken mainly as they were explicated by Shibutani, op. cit.
Sherif and Sherif\textsuperscript{58} use the concept as Hyman\textsuperscript{59} introduced it in 1942; to them the term designates "that group which serves as the point of reference in making comparisons or contrasts, especially in forming judgments about one's self." Kelley\textsuperscript{60} substantiates this usage when he notes the term has been used to "denote a group which the person uses as a reference point in making evaluations of himself or others." The group or individual becomes a standard or checkpoint which the person may use in making judgments in this case. In other words, the group or individual serves a comparison function. It should be made clear that there is no necessity that the reference group be limited to one in which the individual holds membership. Merton\textsuperscript{61} argues that "men frequently orient themselves to groups other than their own in shaping their behavior and evaluations." Hence, logically any group or individual familiar to an actor may become a reference group or reference individual in this sense, insofar as it performs the essential function of providing a set of criteria by which the individual may evaluate himself and/or others.

\textsuperscript{58}op. cit., 175.
\textsuperscript{59}op. cit.; For a continuation of a similar use of this concept, see: Merton and Kitt, op. cit.; and Chapman, D. W., and Volkman, J., "A Social Determinant of the Level of Aspiration." \textit{Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology}, XXXIV (1939), 225-38.
\textsuperscript{60}Kelley, Harold H., "Two Functions of Reference Groups." In Swanson, Guy E., Newcomb, Theodore M., and Hartley, Eugene L., (Eds.), op. cit., 412.
\textsuperscript{61}op. cit., 282.
The second usage of the concept signifies that group whose perspective constitutes the frame of reference of the individual. In this context Sherif and Sherif see reference groups as groups whose norms are used as anchoring points in structuring the perceptual field. Similarly, Merton and Kitt speak of a "social frame of reference" for interpretations. The concept here refers to more of a psychological phenomenon rather than an existing group and to assume the perspective of a group one need not aspire to acceptance. Shibutani reiterates this orientation when he says that "any collectivity, real or imagined, envied or despised, whose perspective is assumed by the actor" may become a reference group. A reference group in this second usage, then, supplies an outlook used by the individual as a frame of reference in the organization of his perceptual field. Shibutani expands his description of this type to agree with Sherif and Sherif that, contrary to the more usual situation, the individual need not be in a primary relationship with a group to be influenced by it: "In some transactions one may assume the perspective attributed to

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62 Shibutani, op. cit.
63 op. cit.
64 op. cit.
65 op. cit., 565.
66 ibid.
67 op. cit., 175.
some social category -- a social class, an ethnic group, those in a given community, or those concerned with some special interest." Here, then, an individual may assume the perspective of a group in which he is not a member and does not desire to become one.

Shibutani typifies the third usage, and the one this study will be most concerned with, in denoting a reference group as "that group in which the actor aspires to gain or maintain acceptance: hence, a group whose claims are paramount in situations requiring choice." Again Kelley substantiates this usage and notes that groups of this type usually are or become normative reference groups -- the source of one's values and norms or standards of behavior -- although they may also be comparison groups or serve both functions simultaneously. This usage is also similar to Merton's concept of "anticipatory socialization," during which an individual assumes a positive orientation and identification toward the group to which he aspires. This identification with a group to which one aspires may aid one's rise into the group as well as easing one's adjustment after entry.

\[\text{According to this usage one should identify with persons or groups with which one aspires to gain or maintain acceptance; this will allow us to predict certain persons and groups that should have become reference groups or}\]

\[\[\text{\underline{\text{\textsuperscript{68}op. cit., 563.}}}\]

\[\text{\underline{\text{\textsuperscript{69}op. cit.}}}\]

\[\text{\underline{\text{\textsuperscript{70}op. cit., 265.}}}\]

\[\text{\underline{\text{\textsuperscript{71}ibid.}}}\]
individuals for occupational choice. These will be discussed in a later section after a discussion of some of the suggested refinenments of reference group theory which may lend some interpretive power to employ on the findings of the present study as well as allow us to see if the data can speak, even if only in a speculative way, to any of these proposed usages.

Kemper\(^2\) discusses the uses of the reference group concept in the literature and adds another type while delineating the normative and comparative types. Those potentially germane to the present undertaking will be discussed here, pointing out similarities between Kemper's conceptualizations and various other authors.

Normative groups or persons provide the actor with a guide to action by explicitly setting norms and espousing values. A normative group expects the actor to comply with these norms and values and their expectations are made clear. According to Kemper\(^3\) it doesn't matter if the actor complies willingly as long as he acts in reference to norms or values promulgated and brought to his attention by the normative group. As Kelley\(^4\) points out implicit in the normative usage is the idea that the reference group observes and evaluates the person and is in a position to award or withhold recognition. The sanctioning technique of a normative

\(\text{\textsuperscript{2}}\)op. cit.

\(\text{\textsuperscript{3}}\)loc. cit., 32.

\(\text{\textsuperscript{4}}\)op. cit.
group is one of punishment. Normative groups and persons may include: family, religion, nation, spouse, parent, or employer.

Kemper\(^7\) discusses four types of comparison groups including equity groups, legitimator groups, role models, and accommodator groups. However, our discussion will concentrate on role models as these appear to be most germane presently. A role model serves as a comparison point to determine the adequacy of one's performance. The role model is usually an individual rather than a group and it may even be a fictional character or an historical figure. Whatever the case, the role model demonstrates "how" something is done. The role model usually possesses skills and displays techniques which the actor lacks or at least thinks he lacks and which he desires. Thus, by observation and comparison with his own performance, the actor can learn the desired qualities.

Kemper\(^7\) distinguishes a third usage which he designates audience groups. In the ideal case, audience groups do not demand normative or value-validating behavior from the person for whom they serve as reference groups. The actor, however, attributes certain values to them and attempts to behave in accordance with these values. The attribution of values may be due to a concrete expression of them to the actor or the imputation may be purely a

\(^7\)op. cit., 33.

\(^7\)ibid.; For a similar conception of an "audience group" see: Turner, Ralph H., "Role-taking, Role Standpoint, and Reference-group Behavior." *American Journal of Sociology, LXI* (January 1956), 328.
matter of speculation on his part. In either case, the actor is guided by what he understands his audience's values to be. To this point, the audience group sounds very much like the normative group in its characteristics. However, as alluded to above, an audience group or person does not demand conformity to norms or values that it has promulgated and in the pure case does not even take notice of the individual. Another and more crucial difference involves the sanctioning techniques of audiences compared to normative groups. Normative groups sanction by punishment whereas audience groups sanction by known or hypothesized rewards.

Turner has also discussed the various usages of reference group and added his own recommended labels to the types that have already been discussed as well as recommending another type to be discussed here. Turner's "identification group" is similar to the normative usage of reference group and his "valuation group" is likewise similar to the comparison usage and will not be further discussed presently. However, Turner adds "interaction groups" to his scheme. Turner points out that behavior is affected somewhat by groups whose members constitute merely conditions to a person's action, and these are referred to as interaction groups. In other words, certain groups or persons must be taken into account in order for a person to accomplish his goals or purposes. An example

77Audience groups may be normative and comparative groups and often there is overlap between these functions in the same group or person.

78op. cit.
here might be college professors in the process of occupational choice. The professor may never become a reference individual of any kind for the person but simply be looked upon as a condition for his behavior in obtaining his final purpose of a particular occupation.

It would be desirable to be able to empirically distinguish each of the various types of reference groups and reference individuals which have been discussed. However, a major obstacle lies in the fact that the same group or individual may be any one of the various types at different times or serve the various functions at the same time making it extremely difficult to distinguish between the types or function served at a particular time. For example, a group of which one is a member will be a normative group according to Kemper's definition, but it may also serve the comparison function at the same time or be used at some time as an audience group. The present study can not distinguish among these various types and when they are being used in which capacity. But, the data may be suggestive of future research possibilities and the patterns that may develop might be logically interpreted as one of the types allowing for the beginnings of a systematic use of the myriad of types and labels in the literature.

Given the difficulty of distinguishing between all the types and uses of the reference group concept and the present lack of an

79Kemper, op. cit.
empirical basis for so doing, this study will attempt to use the normative type and a group in which one wishes to gain acceptance in an attempt to designate logical identification points or reference groups or individuals and see if these are chosen empirically. The other types and suggested refinements of the reference group concept are included in the hope that they might be suggestive of future hypotheses and worthy of mention where a logical case might be made for them.

Thus, concentration will be on looking at who the respondent may have identified with as indicated by his choice of certain persons and groups from a list of potential reference groups and individuals. The instrument lacks sufficient sophistication to be able to label how a reference group or individual is being used although this problem has plagued most reference group research. However, it will indicate whether certain of these reference groups or individuals are chosen by most of the respondents and which, if any, are identified with differentially by the various types of occupational choosers.

Typology of Occupations

In describing the patterns of reference to various groups and individuals, it will be less meaningful to posit relationships between occupational choice and reference groups and individuals for multiple occupations than to present a classificatory scheme for these occupations. For this reason, a typology of occupations
Three broad occupational fields will be used: business occupations, scientific and esthetic occupations, and general cultural occupations. Classified as business occupations will be such occupations as insurance or industrial salesmen, manufacturer's representative, corporation manager, or accountant; among the major fields of study included will be those in business administration, marketing, management, and accounting. The scientific and esthetic classification will include among others, newspaper and advertising writers, artists, musicians, and actors as well as scientific occupations such as chemist, physicist, biologist, and medical doctor. Majors in this category will coincide with the occupational fields in this category. The general cultural classification will include teacher, professor, minister, and lawyer. Majors in education, sociology, psychology, etc. will be placed here according to intended occupations.

The Inference of Values

As an aid in delineating some of the reference groups and reference individuals we might expect as being important in occupational choice, we are reasoning mainly along the lines of two types of reference groups, namely the normative and a group in which one

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80 Roe, op. cit., 145ff; the adaptation used here approximates the adaptation used by Simpson and Simpson, "Values, Personal Influence. . .," op. cit.
desires to gain acceptance. Using these two types will allow us to point to certain persons and groups that might be reference groups or individuals for occupational choice. In addition, the prediction of the selection of potential reference groups and individuals might be aided or further specification of particular ones allowed by looking at the values of students choosing the various occupations under the assumption that their values were effected in some way by certain reference groups or individuals. The values of the three occupational choice categories delineated above differ and this might indicate the use of different reference groups or individuals or the use of the same ones to varying degrees. The use of the values and their attributed sources for these choice categories as a heuristic device in combination with reference group theory should aid the further specification of persons one might use as reference groups or reference individuals.

Empirically we do not have the proper design which would allow for the appropriate data directly to say that a particular value had as its source a particular reference group or reference individual. Where feasible an attempt will be made to determine the isomorphism between the value characteristics postulated by literature to be appropriate to occupational choice categories and the value characteristics which are reflected in the occupational choice categories of the present sample. The values of the three choice categories

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81See: Rosenberg, op. cit.; and Simpson and Simpson, op. cit.
will be explicated with their potential impingement on reference group theory as an interpreting device for the selection of certain reference individuals. The identification of instances of isomorphism would appear to have implications for the selection of reference groups or reference individuals and will be indicated where relevant to the study. The indication of a choice of a reference group or reference individual by an actor indicates some sort of identification with this particular person. As Ginzberg states: "There is always an element of identification when individuals accept advice or are influenced by key persons." This identification should allow the inference that behavior, aspirations, attitudes, values, etc. have been affected. The choice of a particular reference group or individual does not substantiate, in itself, that particular values or norms came from this source. This would require a sampling of both the reference group's or individual's values and the actor's and then a comparison of the two to see if they coincide. But, even this would not eliminate other possibilities without some sort of further verification from the actor that this particular reference group or individual was the source of a particular value assuming that the actor could supply such information.

For certain groups or individuals, however, the inference of being a value source or as having affected values in some way would

82op. cit., 206.
be fairly firm and supportable. The structure of the situation makes it plausible that many of the values are from certain persons. For example, socialization suggests that parents would be sources of values insofar as the very process is the instilling of the culturally defined modes of behavior and feeling. Also, Ginzberg points out that individuals assume for themselves the values of their parents and other key persons while building their own system of values. Socialization literature would also point to peers as important reference groups. And the structure of the educational system allows for teachers or counselors to become sources, supporters, or change agents of values, behavior, etc. Most occupations have an image attached to them and this could serve as a value source as well. Or definitely the people in an occupation have the values of that occupation and students can use them as a source.

But, the definite attribution of a particular value to a particular reference group or individual is not that important or necessary because the perceived values of the student are the ones which guide the student whether or not these coincide with the true values of the occupation.

From the literature we do have the values of students choosing the various types of occupations; the literature also provides some

83 loc. cit., 207-08.

84 O'Dowd, Donald D., and Beardslee, David C., College Student Images of a Selected Group of Professions and Occupations. Cooperative Research Project No. 562 (8142) (April 1960). For example, the college students see the business field as extremely high in wealth.
of the images students have of certain occupations, and in some instances the values held by persons in particular occupations. Thus, it seems useful to use this information as a sensitizing instrument aiding the use of reference group theory in the specification of potential reference groups and individuals.

Values and Expected Reference Patterns

In earlier research, Rosenberg found that men were more extrinsic reward oriented than women and that men who chose business occupations tended to stress extrinsic rewards such as high income in their values more so than choosers of other types of occupations. This seems to reflect the dominant public image of business occupations as avenues to higher levels of income and their accoutrements. With men being more extrinsic reward oriented than women and business choosers the most extrinsic reward oriented, it might be that fathers were reference individuals for business choosers more than for either the scientific-esthetic or the general cultural categories.

Business students expressed values related to high income and rapid advancement in the occupation rather than service to other people or intrinsic rewards from their work per se. This being the case, it is not expected that the professor, who often is looked upon as a person who has by-passed material advancement in favor of

\[85\text{op. cit.}\]

\[86\text{O'Dowd and Beardslee, op. cit.}\]
intrinsic work satisfaction, would be a normative reference individual for the business chooser. Nor would the business aspirant desire to gain acceptance into such a group. Instead, professors will probably be looked upon as "interaction groups or individuals" that is, they will merely be conditions to be considered as part of the student's present social environment while he is working toward his goal, but will not be used as reference individuals by many of the business choosers. People in their chosen occupation, parents, and friends will more likely be reference groups for the business person. People in the occupation should be reference groups because the chooser aspires to this group as his future bailiwick and parents and friends should be the least segmental in their relevance than any of the potential reference groups or individuals.

Rosenberg87 finds people tending toward esthetic occupations to be "self-expression oriented"; similarly, Simpson and Simpson88 feel that aspirants to scientific and esthetic occupations are seeking to join a "highly self-conscious occupational group which distinguishes itself from outsiders on the basis of work skills." Values for scientific and esthetic choosers center on the occupation itself, on self-expression,89 and on prestige or success among colleagues.90 It is expected that reference groups or individuals

87op. cit.
88op. cit., 117.
89See ibid., and Rosenberg, op. cit.
90Simpson and Simpson, op. cit.
for this category would be professors, teachers, and members of the chosen occupation, particularly since students anticipating joining this "highly self-conscious group" should identify with those persons who have the skills that distinguish these types of occupations.

Since the category of general cultural occupations involves direct contact with people to whom services are provided, it might be expected, and Rosenberg found, that students leaning toward these occupations strongly stress values associated with service to people. Reference individuals for students in education would be professors and teachers and for divinity students, ministers or, in other words, people in their chosen occupation. It is also anticipated that this category of students will be more likely to see people active in general cultural occupations as reference groups even to a greater extent than parents or friends since these occupations generally lie outside the main American value system and its stress on material advancement over other rewards. On the other hand, one occupation from the group, the lawyer, may use parents, friends, and those in the profession because this occupation is very much in line with the major American value system.

It might also be expected that the mothers of general cultural choosers would be normative reference individuals for them. This is based on contentions by Erickson and Simpson and

91 op. cit.

Simpson.\textsuperscript{93} It was pointed out that general cultural choosers expressed what might be called "social contribution" values. Erickson contends that the mother is the most influential member of the family constellation in transmitting values to her son and Simpson and Simpson contend that the main value transmitted by the mother is the one of "social contribution." If this is so, then we would expect the mother to be a normative reference individual in relation to this value. We cannot test specifically if this value does come from the mothers of the general cultural choosers but a partial indication of it might be gleaned if general cultural choosers rate their mothers as reference individuals more so than either business or scientific and esthetic occupational choosers.

Parents and friends will probably be important reference groups for all the choice categories. Parents, according to Kemper's definition, are a normative group in that they have promulgated certain values and guidelines for the individual as a normal function of the socialization process and these are probably relevant and salient for occupational choice as well as other behavior. The sociological literature also stresses the importance of peers for a wide range of behaviors and perhaps their relevance also extends into the area of occupational choice (although the possibility of their relevance being more segmental is greater than that of the

\textsuperscript{93}op. cit., 118.
parents). However, we do not have sophisticated enough theory in the area of the selection of reference groups and individuals to be able to be more refined until more empirical evidence is available.

Hypotheses

In light of the preceding discussion of the theoretical framework and the expected reference patterns, the following hypotheses will be tested in this study:

1. All choice categories will perceive their mothers and fathers as reference individuals.

2. All choice categories will perceive friends as reference groups.

3. All choice categories will perceive people in their chosen occupation as reference groups.

4. Business choosers will perceive their fathers as reference individuals.

5. Scientific and esthetic choosers will perceive teachers and professors as reference individuals.

6. General cultural choosers will perceive professors, teachers, and their mothers as reference individuals.

Purpose and Value of the Study

Sociology is concerned with learning more about social processes in general, a major one of which is the process of occupational choice. This study gains sociological relevance by looking at the process as it is affected by who was and is important to the individual during the process of choosing an occupation, or, in other words, the sociological variable of reference groups and reference
individuals. The reference groups and individuals used in decision-making behavior should be an important and fruitful area of study. Although occupational choice is only one area of decision making, it is an extremely important area both for the individual and for society, and therefore useful to study. It is hoped that this study will aid sociological knowledge on social processes in general and more specifically will advance knowledge about the area of occupational choice and perhaps reference group theory.

The purpose of this study is to designate some of the persons who are perceived as reference groups or individuals during the process of occupational choice and to see if similarities and differences exist depending on the type of choice. Some of the findings already present in the literature will be looked at again (especially those in a study by Simpson and Simpson), and an attempt will be made to determine how portions of reference group theory account for occupational choice. Indirectly, some of the findings should also be helpful in the area of counseling and vocational guidance.

Chapter II introduces the methodology and provides an overall description of the sampling procedure. In addition, sections on the administration of the questionnaire, procedure for and amount of returns, and limitations are included. Finally, the contents of the questionnaire and the type of analysis to be used are given as well as some operational specifications of certain concepts.

Chapter III gives further information about the sample in the
form of an analysis of certain characteristics of the sample.

The analysis and findings appear in Chapter IV. Finally, Chapter V summarizes the study briefly, indicates some of its limitations, and suggests potential areas for further research, as well as drawing some conclusions about occupational choice and reference group theory.
CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Description of Sampling Procedure

The population for this study was randomly sampled by floors and/or wings\(^1\) from among the twelve dormitories for men at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Each floor, of approximately fifty students, was assigned a number, after which nine floors were selected by means of a table of random numbers to provide a 10 percent sample. After the nine floors had been selected, an attempt was then made to contact all inhabitants of the floors in order to gain cooperation in their completing the questionnaire used in this study.

In order to provide a basis for comparison with the findings on occupational choice by Simpson and Simpson,\(^2\) this study too was restricted to male respondents. At the time of the study, male dorm residents totalled approximately 3600. With the final selection of the nine floors, this sample included 433 students. From this number, 393 students, or 91 percent, agreed to participate.

\(^1\)A wing is one-half of a floor in some of the larger dormitories and is equal in student capacity to a floor of the smaller dormitories. In this study the term floor will refer both to floors and to wings since wings were treated as one floor in the sampling procedure.

Of the remaining 9 percent, 6 percent, or 27 students, could not be contacted; the other 3 percent, 13 students, felt the questionnaire was either "too personal" or "too long and time consuming" to complete.

Administration of the Questionnaire

After obtaining permission from dormitory directors, the author and two other graduate students in sociology individually distributed questionnaires to each respondent. The distributing staff was limited to three persons trained and familiar with the study, first, to standardize explanations of method of selection, purpose of the study, etc., and secondly, to reduce bias.

During the initial visit, 393 students were contacted and given questionnaires. Three subsequent visits were made to the dormitories to contact the 27 students not present originally. After the third unsuccessful visit, a questionnaire was left in each student's mailbox with an explanatory cover letter; a follow-up letter was also sent. When the 27 students failed to respond to this letter, a second was mailed. Failure to respond to the second letter designated these students as non-participants.

In the hope of increasing response, the provisions for return of questionnaires were designed to be simple and convenient. All respondents were made familiar with the inter-campus mail system which allows material to be sent within the university without postage. Upon completion of the pre-addressed questionnaire, the student folded it and dropped it in any inter-campus mail tray for
delivery to the author.

Returns

Of the 433 in the original sample, 393 or 91% received questionnaires, directions for their completion, and an attached cover letter. Forty students or 9% of the 433 either refused to participate or were unavailable. Forty-six per cent of the original sample or 199 students returned questionnaires. Thirteen of these questionnaires had to be discarded because of insufficient information and/or irrelevant responses leaving 43% of the original sample or 186 students available for the analysis. An unsuccessful attempt was made to increase the return rate,\(^3\) through personal contact and two follow-up letters.

It should be recognized that a relatively low rate of return may indicate self-selection and an inherent bias,\(^4\) the direction and extent of which are unknown. It is therefore suggested that any generalization from the sample to the larger population be done with respect to this fact.

\(^3\)Perhaps, a better technique for the future might be to structure the situation more by setting a specific time to return and collect the questionnaires personally. The collection trip would also provide another opportunity to appeal for completion of the questionnaire if it was still unfinished.

The Questionnaire

A self-administered, structured questionnaire was used in this study. Many of the questions, especially in the occupational choice influence section (section VI), were adapted from a study by Simpson and Simpson. The value preference list in section VI, the items concerning the things that will give the most satisfaction in life and the items dealing with the main purpose of a college education in section I, were all adapted from Rosenberg.

The seven sections of the questionnaire are discussed below.

Part I of the questionnaire concerned the collection of background data. Information obtained here included age, year in school, grade point average, and the student's major and minor. Also included were the student's ideas on the main purpose of a college education and what he felt would give him the most satisfaction in life.

Parts II, III, and IV dealt with the student's major field of study in college and whether he had or intended to change his major. Part II dealt with the student's first major in college and the chief type of influence on this choice -- from an individual, from reading about his major field, or from other sources. Part III concerned students who had changed their major, specific reasons

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5A copy of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A, p. 115.

6Simpson and Simpson, op. cit.

for the change, and who or what had influenced it. Part IV, similar to Part III, concerned persons considering changing their majors.

Part V discussed best friends of the respondent. It asked who these friends were, where they lived, the amount of time the respondent spent with each of them, majors of these friends, and activities shared with each of these friends.

Part VI of the questionnaire constitutes the main source of data for the present study. A major portion of this section deals with family information including income, education, size, and occupation of father and mother. Data are also gathered on the student's expectation of his future standard of living and the prestige of his chosen occupation as compared to that of his father. The main portion of the section -- the most important for this study -- deals with the student's occupational choice and the perceived reference groups and individuals affecting this choice. Also, the occupational values of the student and the features of an occupation that are viewed as important by the student are included in this section of the questionnaire.

Part VII measures self-concept of academic ability and is adapted from a scale constructed by Erickson. The scale allows the student to rate his academic ability in relation to others in his

---

8Erickson, Edsel, Assistant Professor of Sociology and Education at Western Michigan University, constructed the scale in 1962 while at Michigan State University.
class and major.

The Analysis

This study generated largely nominal and ordinal level data. The analysis will therefore emphasize such statistics as frequency distributions and percentages.

Frequencies and percentages will be used to analyze trends and to compare the three occupational choice categories on perceived reference group and reference individual patterns as well as on the values of the three occupational choice categories.

Chi square was considered as a statistical basis for comparison of this sample with that of Simpson and Simpson. It was rejected, however, because of the assumption chi square analysis makes about the randomness of the sample. Given the research procedure, the 186 students replying do not constitute a random sample of males living in Western Michigan University dormitories.

Operational Specifications

Reference groups and reference individuals

Potential reference groups and reference individuals can be groups or persons one interacts with or observes in the immediate social structure, persons with whom one has had such contact previously, or simply persons or groups of which one has knowledge. For this study, persons or groups are operationally defined as reference groups or reference individuals when the respondent rates
them either as influencing him strongly in his choice of occupation, or influencing him some but not strongly. For the student these may include persons formerly present within the high school structure, the family within the home, or friends, counselors, and professors within the university setting. Part VI, question 15, listed the student's potential reference groups and individuals, including:

- a. close friends of same sex at college
- b. other close friends of same sex (high school friends, etc.)
- c. close friends of opposite sex, or fiancee
- d. mother
- e. father
- f. brother
- g. sister
- h. other relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.)
- i. high school teacher
- j. high school counselor
- k. college professor
- l. college counselor
- m. people in student's chosen occupation
- n. other influences

**Occupational choice categories**

The criteria for classifying persons into the three occupational choice categories follow Simpson and Simpson. Business occupations include management, marketing, engineering, and general business occupations. The scientific-esthetic aspirant is seen as "seeking to join a high self-conscious occupational group

---

9 op. cit., 117-18.

10 Engineering is placed in the business category because most students in this major were in fields such as automobile engineering technology and they intend to become foremen or administrators; in addition, engineering is not considered a pure science in the same sense as is physics or chemistry.
which distinguishes itself from outsiders on the basis of work skills;\textsuperscript{11} occupations included actor, writer, musician, doctor, scientist, etc. The general cultural occupations involve "direct contact with people to whom services are provided"\textsuperscript{12} and include teacher, professor (except a teacher or professor of a scientific subject), minister, and lawyer.

The major and occupational choices of the sample and their classifications are listed in appendixes C and D.\textsuperscript{13} Persons with identical majors may appear in different choice categories due to the fact that their occupational choice which determined the classification differed from directions suggested by their majors. Although extensive, they are listed to illustrate the majors and occupations operationally segregated.

\textsuperscript{11}Simpson and Simpson, op. cit., p. 117.

\textsuperscript{12}loc. cit., p. 118.

\textsuperscript{13}See pp. 139-142.
CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF CERTAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

In an attempt to more clearly visualize the biases of the obtained sample certain social class characteristics of the sample will be compared with data from the State of Michigan and from a national sample of June, 1961, college graduates. In addition, the year in school of the sample will be compared with data for the university from which it was drawn. A later section of this chapter will analyze two social class items within this study's sample to determine if there is great variation in the social class background of the three occupational choice categories.

Social Class Characteristics

Sample compared to state

In comparison to data for the State of Michigan, the sample...
was disproportionate in the expected direction on the characteristics of family income, parental education and occupation. Table III-1 shows the income of families for Michigan compared with the sample and III-2, the education of persons 25 years old or over compared to the parents of the sample. Table III-3 provides a comparative distribution on the occupation of males in Michigan and fathers in the sample.

### TABLE III-1³

INCOME OF FAMILIES IN MICHIGAN COMPARED WITH INCOME OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD FOR SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Michigan %</th>
<th>Sample %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under $3,000</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000-$4,999</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000-$6,999</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,000-$9,999($7-$10,999)b</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000 and over($11,000 and over)b</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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TABLE III-2

YEARS IN SCHOOL COMPLETED -- PERSONS IN MICHIGAN, 25 YEARS OLD AND OVER COMPARED WITH FATHERS AND MOTHERS OF SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years Completed</th>
<th>Michigan Male%</th>
<th>Sample Male%</th>
<th>Michigan Female%</th>
<th>Sample Female%</th>
<th>Michigan Father%</th>
<th>Sample Father%</th>
<th>Michigan Mother%</th>
<th>Sample Mother%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th grade or less</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part High School</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate or Equivalent&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part College</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate or more</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>99%b</td>
<td>99%b</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Technical or Trade School Graduates are also included in this category.

<sup>b</sup>Total does not equal 100% due to rounding.

TABLE III-3

OCCUPATION OF MALES IN MICHIGAN COMPARED WITH FATHER'S OCCUPATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category</th>
<th>Michigan %</th>
<th>Sample %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Sales</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>Includes craftsmen, foremen, and operatives.

<sup>b</sup>Includes laborers and farm laborers, private household and other service workers.
Table III-1 indicates that the students in the sample came disproportionately from the more affluent families of the state. For example, only two percent of the sample came from families with less than a $3,000 income whereas 16% of the families in Michigan have this income. At the other extreme we see that 35% of the sample came from families with an income of $11,000 or more whereas only 17% of Michigan's families have an income of $10,000 or more. It is well known that most college students come from the middle and upper income families and therefore the bias of the sample in this direction was expected.

Table III-2 likewise indicates that the sample came from the better educated families of the state. Fully seven-tenths of the fathers and four-fifths of the mothers of the sample had the equivalent of a high school education or better compared to the respective figures for the state of approximately two-fifths for both males and females.

Again, Table III-3 indicates what might be expected of a college sample in relation to the occupations of the father. Over twice as many fathers of sample members were either in business or a profession as is true for males in Michigan. Additionally, over three-fifths of the males of the State are in either skilled or unskilled occupations compared to only one-third of the fathers of the sample.
Sample compared to national college sample

The comparisons with data for the State of Michigan indirectly indicate the desirability of some comparisons with another college sample to point out variations between two groups where one would not necessarily expect the disproportions true of the state comparison. Therefore, the sample will now be compared with a national sample of college graduates on the same three dimensions.

Table III-4 shows that the sample is underrepresented at the lower income levels and overrepresented in the middle levels compared to the national sample. The national sample shows one-fifth below $5,000 whereas this study's sample only indicates 10% at this level. One-third of the national sample falls between $7,500 and fifteen thousand dollars compared to over one-half of the sample falling into approximately that income interval. Thus, this sample is not representative of the national sample with an especially disproportionate weighting in the middle-income levels.

With regard to father's education, this sample is underrepresented at both the lowest and highest levels of education with an overrepresentation in the middle as with income. Table III-5 illustrates these differences with 22% of the national sample's fathers having up to an eighth grade education compared to 14% of the present sample's fathers. At the highest level of education, only five percent of the fathers of this sample have graduate or professional degrees compared to 13% of the national sample. The middle education range of high school graduate and some college
TABLE III-4

INCOME OF FAMILY FOR NATIONAL COLLEGE SAMPLE COMPARED WITH INCOME FOR SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Category</th>
<th>NCS(^a) (%)</th>
<th>Sample (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $5,000</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000-$7,499 ($5,000-$6,999)(^b)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,500-$9,999 ($7,000-$10,999)(^b)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000-$14,999 ($11-$14,999)(^b)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000-$19,999</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000 and over</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)NCS = National College Sample

\(^b\)The intervals from the national sample and the study's did not coincide exactly so the closest meaningful intervals were compared. The sample intervals are in parentheses.

contains over half of this sample's fathers while this interval possesses only a little over one-third of the national sample's fathers. Again, the sample bias appears to be mainly located in the middle level of education as was true of income.

As with the national sample, over one-half of this sample's wage earners were considered to be in the professions or in business as indicated by Table III-6. However, the distribution in each of these categories differed with only approximately one-tenth of this sample's wage earners being in the professions as opposed to almost one-fourth of the national sample's being so designated. The

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\(^4\)The data for Tables III-4 through III-6 were taken from: Davis, J. A., Undergraduate Career Decisions. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1965, p. 196. The data in all of the tables from this source is based on a representative subsample of the national sample.
### TABLE III-5

FATHER'S EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR NATIONAL COLLEGE SAMPLEx COMPARED WITH STUDY SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Education</th>
<th>NCS(^a)</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8th grade or less</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part High School</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate or Equivalent(^b)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part College</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Graduate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or Professional Degree</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>99(^c)</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)NCS=National College Sample  
\(^b\)Technical or Trade School graduates are also included in this category.  
\(^c\)Total does not equal 100\% due to rounding.

### TABLE III-6

COMPARISON OF FATHER'S OCCUPATION FOR BOTH NATIONAL SAMPLE AND STUDY SAMPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Category</th>
<th>NCS(^a)</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business and Sales</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled(^b)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled(^c)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)NCS=National College Sample  
\(^b\)Includes semi-skilled from the NCS.  
\(^c\)Includes service and unskilled from the NCS.
middle occupational categories of clerical and skilled were fairly even between the two samples and this study's sample showed fewer farmers as wage earners.

In summary, it appears that in comparison to a national sample of college graduates this study's sample fell mainly in the middle ranges on the social class characteristics of education and income and was underrepresented in the professional category for the parental head's occupation. These comparisons tend to underline the earlier caution of generalizing findings conservatively.

Year in School

In comparison with the total number of males in school grouped by year, the sample was slightly disproportionate. If it is assumed that the distribution by class of the total male population is indicative of the same distribution for male dormitory residents, the sample overrepresents freshmen and juniors and underrepresents seniors; representation of sophomores in the sample approximates the larger population (Table III-7). The sample is not, however, seriously out of line with the total male population especially since the greatest discrepancy, between seniors, may be due to the fact that seniors are least likely to be living in dormitories. In general, therefore, the discrepancies that exist should be

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5Since records on class in school for dormitory residents are not kept, a comparison between all male dormitory residents and those in this sample could not be made.
interpreted chiefly as a reminder that findings should be generalized only to dormitory residents.

TABLE III-7

YEAR IN SCHOOL OF RESPONDENTS
COMPARSED WITH TOTAL MALE POPULATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year in School</th>
<th>Males in Sample</th>
<th>Males in Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population by Class</td>
<td>Population by Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophomore</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Social Class Characteristics for the Sample

To determine whether large differences exist between the three occupational choice categories, the sample was divided into those categories (business, scientific and esthetic, and general cultural) and the income distribution trichotomized in Table III-8 in order to compare social class distributions.

Table III-8 indicates that a greater proportion of business students come from higher income families than do students in the other two categories. When the medium and high income categories are combined, the families of 79% of business students show at least a medium income compared to 61% for the scientific-esthetic category and 68% for the general cultural category. A Chi-square test indicated that there is no significant difference in family income
### TABLE III-8
SOCIAL CLASS OF THE RESPONDENTS
BY THREE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE
CATEGORIES AND INCOME OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income of household head</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Scientific and Esthetic</th>
<th>General Cultural</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High—$15,000 to $30,000 and over</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium—$7,000 to $14,999</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low—Less than $3,000 to $6,999</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square = 4.119 with 4 degrees of freedom; not significant at .05 level.

between the three choice categories. Business students more often come from higher income families but there is no significant difference in the social class background as measured by family income.

The educational achievement of parents provides a second indication of social class background. Table III-9 gives the educational attainment of the sample's parents allowing a comparison between the occupational choice categories. About one-third of each category had fathers with at least some college. The largest difference in father's education was at the high school and sub high school level with more business and general cultural choosers having fathers with less than a high school education while more
scientific-esthetic choosers had fathers with a high school education. The scientific-esthetic choosers also had better educated mothers with one-third having some college compared to 23% of the business choosers' mothers and 28% of the general cultural choosers' mothers. These differences were not significant at the .05 level on a Chi-square test. Thus, the social backgrounds appear to be quite similar for the three choice categories.

TABLE III-9
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT LEVEL OF THE RESPONDENTS' PARENTS BY THREE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Scientific and Esthetic</th>
<th>General Cultural</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school or less</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate or technical or trade school</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or more</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99%a</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school or less</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduate or technical or trade school</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or more</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15b</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>65b</td>
<td>99%a</td>
<td>27b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aTotal does not equal 100% due to rounding.
bN varies due to nonresponse.

Chi-square tests for three choice categories not significant at .05 level for either father or mother.
CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter will discuss the hypotheses put forth in Chapter I and data will be given either supporting or not supporting these hypotheses. Percentages will be the major statistical tool for analyzing the data. Throughout the analysis, comparisons between the present findings and those of Simpson and Simpson\(^1\) will be made in an attempt to distinguish the reference groups and individuals bearing upon certain occupational choices.

The major focus of this chapter is the identification of the respondents' perceived reference individuals and reference groups for the three occupational choice categories. A secondary consideration will deal with the values of the three choice categories as they may be used for the selection of particular reference individuals. Two questions tapped the occupational values of the choosers (Appendix A, VI, 12, 16). The following question was used as a basis for determining the respondents' perceived reference individuals and reference groups. "How strongly do you think you were influenced in your choice of an occupation by each of the following?"

a. close friends of the same sex at college
b. other close friends of the same sex (high school friends, etc.)

---

c. close friends of opposite sex, or fiancee
d. mother
e. father
f. brother
g. sister
h. other relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.)
i. high school teacher
j. high school counselor
k. college professor
l. college counselor
m. people in your chosen occupation
n. other influences

The respondent was asked to indicate strength of influence by the above on the following basis: those who influenced him strongly; those who influenced him some but not strongly; and those who influenced him not at all. The appropriate tables and a discussion of the corresponding hypotheses are presented below.

Parents as Reference Individuals

The first hypothesis -- a general one covering all the occupational choice categories -- states that the family or at least certain members of the family especially the mother and father should be important reference individuals for the individual in his choice of an occupation. The hypothesis is supported in that as reference group and individual was operationally specified, mother and father did rate high as reference individuals -- mothers and fathers either "influenced strongly" or "influenced somewhat" the student's occupational choice. Table IV-1 shows that both mothers and fathers were identified with or became reference individuals for occupational choice for a high percentage of the respondents. We see that "father" was seen as a reference individual by 57% of the
respondents and "mother" by 54%, ranking them second and third respectively among the list of potential reference groups and individuals. The only category ranking higher than parents was people in the chosen occupation of the respondent indicating that parents were fairly important reference individuals for most of the respondents.

We can also look at the hypothesis from the perspective of how each of the choice categories ranked parents as reference individuals. Parents are a normative reference point and due to this it was expected that a good portion of each category would rate them as reference individuals. Table IV-2 provides a breakdown by choice categories allowing for the determination of the various patterns.

Mothers and fathers of business choosers were reference individuals for them more than any other group or individual except those in the category, "people in your chosen occupation." Sixty percent of the business choosers saw their mothers as reference individuals and 67% saw their fathers in the same light. Thus, the hypothesis is supported for business choosers in that parents ranked high as reference individuals in their occupational choice.

Both parents also rated high as reference individuals for the scientific and esthetic choosers. Again the only category which outranked parents in overall influence was "people in the chosen occupation." The only other reference individual that paralleled either of the parents as a reference point was "high school teacher" which equalled the rating obtained by "father" for the scientific-
TABLE IV-1

RANKING OF PERCEIVED REFERENCE GROUPS AND REFERENCE INDIVIDUALS BY ALL RESPONDENTS WITH RESPONSE CATEGORIES OF "INFLUENCED STRONGLY" AND "INFLUENCED SOMEWHAT" COMBINED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Reference Groups and Individuals</th>
<th>% rating reference groups and individuals as either strongly or somewhat influential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 People in chosen occupation</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Father</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Mother</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 High School Teacher</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 College Professor</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Close friends of same sex at college</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Other close friends of same sex</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Close friends of opposite sex</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 High School Counselor</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Other relatives</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Other influences</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 College Counselor</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Sister</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Brother</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

esthetic category. Interestingly, this finding reiterates Simpson and Simpson's report that teachers and professors approximate the strength of parental influence for the scientific and esthetic group.

A greater proportion of the general cultural category perceived high school teachers and people in their chosen occupation as reference groups than either parent. In addition, "college professor" slightly outranked "mother" as a reference individual for this choice category. Nonetheless, parents were also seen as

2loc. cit., 124.
TABLE IV-2

PERCEIVED REFERENCE GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS FOR OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE, BY THREE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Groups and Reference Individuals</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Scientific and Esthetic</th>
<th>General Cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%  N</td>
<td>%  N</td>
<td>%   N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mother</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>3  2</td>
<td>15  4</td>
<td>12  11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>57  34</td>
<td>41  11</td>
<td>37  33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>40  24</td>
<td>44  12</td>
<td>51  46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Father</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>32  20</td>
<td>19  5</td>
<td>12  11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>35  22</td>
<td>29  8</td>
<td>41  37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>33  21</td>
<td>52  14</td>
<td>47  43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Close friends same sex at college</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>12  7</td>
<td>4  1</td>
<td>13  12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>32  19</td>
<td>18  5</td>
<td>29  26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>56  33</td>
<td>78  21</td>
<td>58  52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other close friends same sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>7   4</td>
<td>0   0</td>
<td>4   4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>28  17</td>
<td>26  7</td>
<td>29  26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>65  40</td>
<td>74  20</td>
<td>67  61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Close friends, opposite sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>7   4</td>
<td>4   1</td>
<td>12  11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>10  6</td>
<td>15  4</td>
<td>29  26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>83  49</td>
<td>81  22</td>
<td>59  53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference Groups and Reference Individuals</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Scientific and Esthetic</th>
<th>General Cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>People in chosen occupation</strong></td>
<td>%  N</td>
<td>%  N</td>
<td>%  N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>43 26</td>
<td>48 13</td>
<td>55 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>34 21</td>
<td>22 6</td>
<td>24 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>23 14</td>
<td>30 8</td>
<td>21 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High School Teacher</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>7 4</td>
<td>26 7</td>
<td>38 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>13 8</td>
<td>22 6</td>
<td>24 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>80 47</td>
<td>52 14</td>
<td>38 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College Professor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>18 11</td>
<td>19 5</td>
<td>28 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>20 12</td>
<td>18 5</td>
<td>22 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>62 37</td>
<td>63 17</td>
<td>50 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Brother</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>3 2</td>
<td>7 2</td>
<td>4 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>18 11</td>
<td>15 4</td>
<td>10 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>79 47</td>
<td>78 21</td>
<td>86 77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sister</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>2 1</td>
<td>0 0</td>
<td>8 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>12 7</td>
<td>15 4</td>
<td>15 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>86 51</td>
<td>85 23</td>
<td>77 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other relatives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced strongly</td>
<td>7 4</td>
<td>11 3</td>
<td>10 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influenced somewhat</td>
<td>23 14</td>
<td>22 6</td>
<td>10 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No influence</td>
<td>70 42</td>
<td>67 18</td>
<td>80 73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
reference individuals by a high proportion of this category; 49% saw their mother as a reference individual with 53% so designating their father. Simpson and Simpson\(^3\) found that the combined category of "teachers or professors" outranked the influence of the father for the general cultural category; the findings of the present study essentially agree, with the high school teacher category outranking both parents, and the college professor category being slightly above the mother and slightly below the father.

Thus, it appears that the hypothesis was supported in that

\(^3\)ibid.
parents were seen as reference individuals by a fairly high proportion of the respondents. This finding was anticipated; parents are normative reference points and the extended exposure of the respondent to them should allow parents to be relevant reference individuals for a number of areas of behavior including occupational choice. This finding essentially agrees with previous research showing that parents ranked high as reference individuals for occupational choice, although most of the previous research found them to be the highest ranking reference individuals which was not true in this case.

Perhaps the more enlightening observation about parents as reference individuals concerns the type of influence received from them or how the reference individual is used by the respondent. The type of influence could not be directly obtained in the present research and may be a profitable area for further research; however, a possible implicit indication of it may be found in the differences between the response categories: "influenced strongly" and "influenced somewhat." It will be noted from Table IV-2 that, except for the "father" as a reference individual for business choosers, parents do not have overwhelmingly high "influenced strongly" ratings. It may be that parents or a parent serve as a "general" reference individual or supportive type of influence instead of as a determining influence or "specific" reference individual; that is, perhaps during the process of occupational decision making, a person is influenced strongly in a particular direction by some other source.
than his parents after which parents are used as reference individuals for consensual validation. The idea of a supportive type of influence is pointed out by Simpson and Simpson⁴ who limit its applicability to influence from the mother only, and do not mention it with regard to the father; the present data, with the exception of fathers' influence on business choosers, would seem to indicate this supportive type of influence for both parents.

Parents are probably used as "general" reference individuals in another sense. General underlying support or encouragement probably flows from the parents or at least such is perceived to be the case by the students. Thus, parents may provide general norms concerning the necessity of obtaining an education in today's world as well as encouraging the child to follow certain exhibited interests, etc. Partial indication of this sort of "general" parent reference individual might be forthcoming from two of the questions in the questionnaire. One asked, "Did your parents encourage you to go to college?" to which fully 93% of the respondents answered in the affirmative. A second question asked, "How did your parents feel about your choice of major(field of study)?" Sixty-six percent of the respondents perceived their parents as being in favor of their choice and 96% saw them as indifferent or in favor with only 4% perceiving them as opposed to the choice. This seems to exhibit some of the flavor of this underlying supportive type of

⁴loc. cit., 125.
reference individual function that parents may serve in a
decision-making process such as this.

Friends as Reference Groups

Many of the studies reviewed earlier found that friends or
dears were influential on occupational aspirations and choice.
The socialization process would lead one to believe that peers
should be wide-ranging in their relevance as reference groups. In
consequence, the second hypothesis states essentially that all
three occupational choice categories will rate friends high in
influence or that certain categories of friends will be reference
groups for the respondents' occupational choice. Three classes of
friends were present on the questionnaire as shown in Table IV-1.
These are comparable to the three categories that Simpson and
Simpson\(^5\) used in their study when they found that friends were
"frequently cited as having influenced occupational plans," with no
significant differences among occupational categories. Simpson and
Simpson omit frequencies and percentages for these categories there­
by not permitting a direct comparison with the present data, but it
is possible to compare the findings to an extent in order to deter­
mine if the data tend to support the previous research. We should
be able to see if friends appear to be relevant or not as reference
groups or more specifically, how relevant they are for occupational
choice.

\(^5\)loc. cit., 124.
Table IV-1 indicates that between 30% and 40% of the respondents saw each of the categories of friends as reference groups. Friends ranked from sixth to eighth in the list of potential reference groups and individuals; this position is lower than had been expected from the findings of previous studies. Other studies have found friends falling just below parents in effecting occupational choice whereas in this research two formal positions were seen as reference individuals more often than friends of any description, as a general pattern. This hints at an area of reference group theory which requires further inquiry: segmental relevance or which groups or persons are more salient reference groups or individuals in various situations. This question will be discussed later; we now turn to a further delineation of friends as reference groups for the various choice categories.

Table IV-2 shows that "close friends of the same sex at college" were perceived as reference groups in approximately equal proportions by the business and general cultural categories with a few more than 40% stating that these friends had at least some influence on their occupational choice. Of the scientific-esthetic category, 22% saw this group as a reference group for their choice of an occupation. The lower proportion of friends as reference groups by the scientific-esthetic category possibly reflects an

---

in-group feeling attributed to persons entering these professions.\(^7\)
Such a trait would explain their looking more to persons already
established in the occupation rather than to friends.

Large differences did not exist among the categories in the
perception of "other close friends of the same sex" (high school
friends, etc.) as a reference group. The language of the hypothesis
tends to preclude great differences; it anticipates a fairly high
rating of this group of friends as a reference group in approximately
equal proportions for the various choice categories. The data
indicated approximately equal perception of this group as a reference
group for the business and general cultural categories with
only slightly fewer of the scientific-esthetic category so perceiving
them; the rating and proportion seeing them as reference
groups, however, was not exceptionally high for any of the three
choice categories and therefore tends not to support the hypothesis.

The third type of friends considered in the research were
"close friends of opposite sex, or fiancee." Here, the general
cultural group rated this source as a reference group much more
frequently than did the other two choice categories. Forty-one
percent of the general cultural group saw this source as having at
least some influence compared to only 17% of the business group and
19% of the scientific-esthetic category. This finding may be an
idiosyncrasy of the sample in view of the Simpson and Simpson\(^8\)

\(^7\) See: Simpson and Simpson, op. cit., 117.

\(^8\) loc. cit., 124.
finding of no significant differences among the three occupational choice categories for any of the three categories of friends. It is also possible that the general cultural group does in fact depend more on friends of the opposite sex in the process of occupational decision making as the present data suggest. Verification would require further research with a random sample which would permit greater confidence in generalizing from the findings. A further note might be inserted concerning the use of women as reference groups or individuals by the general cultural category. We notice from Table IV-2 that the general cultural category also sees "sister" as a reference individual moreso than either the business or scientific-esthetic choosers, their respective percentages being 23%, 14%, and 15%. This would tend to support the greater use of women as reference groups and individuals by the general cultural category; however, this trend does not hold up when speaking of "mother" as a reference individual and this will be discussed along with the hypothesis concerning the mother as a reference individual for the general cultural category in a later section.

Here, as in the case of parents as reference individuals, the more interesting finding is that the use of friends as reference groups is not more pervasive, especially at the "influenced strongly" end of the continuum. It may be seen from Table IV-2 that the highest percentage of respondents stating that they were influenced strongly by friends in their occupational choice was quite low at 13%. Perhaps friends are not as important as other studies have
made them appear, but rather are segmentally relevant for occupational choice. It is not that friends are not relevant for occupational choice, but that they seem not to be relevant as determining influences or "specific" reference groups on a choice. As with parents, friends may be "general" reference groups or serve a different type of function and supply a different type of influence in occupational choice. During the process of occupational choice, persons seemingly use friends as a supportive reference group to gain consensus on their choice rather than as a determining factor.

In summary, it appears that friends, especially close friends of the same sex at college, are used by a moderately high number of business and general cultural choosers as reference groups for occupational choice. This trend is also true for the use of friends of the opposite sex by general cultural choosers. These findings yield some support to the hypothesis. However, all the choice categories do not perceive friends as reference groups and for those that do it seems to be as a supportive type of reference group as was the case for parents. Thus, it appears that friends are only segmentally relevant for occupational choice and the hypothesis not supported fully.

People in Chosen Occupation as a Reference Group

The third hypothesis states that a large proportion of all respondents will perceive people in their chosen occupation as
reference groups. This hypothesis has its basis in reference group theory and more specifically a particular type of group which may become a reference group. This type is a group in which one wishes to gain acceptance. Based on the assumption that one desires to gain acceptance in his future occupational group we would predict that people in one's chosen occupation should be an important reference group in occupational choice no matter what that particular choice may be.

The data indicate quite strongly that the above is the case. Table IV-1 indicates that more than three-fourths of the respondents saw people in their chosen occupation as a reference group during the process of occupational choice. The percentage difference between the people in the chosen occupation as the first ranking reference group and the second is 20% indicating that this reference group is quite important (especially when we consider that the reference individual ranked second is the father who is found to be quite important by most studies).

A further indication of the importance of people in the chosen occupation as reference groups can be seen in Table IV-3. Here, the "influenced strongly" response category is shown for each of the potential reference groups and individuals and it is evident, again, that people in the chosen occupation are perceived as the most important reference group with half of the respondents rating them high as reference groups compared to only 26% so rating the second ranking reference individual.
TABLE IV-3

RANKING OF PERCEIVED REFERENCE GROUPS AND REFERENCE INDIVIDUALS BY ALL RESPONDENTS ON THE RESPONSE CATEGORY OF "INFLUENCED STRONGLY"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Reference Groups and Individuals</th>
<th>% of respondents rating reference groups and individuals as strongly influential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 People in chosen occupation</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 High School Teacher</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 College Professor</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Father</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Other influences</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Close friends same sex at college</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Mother</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Close friends of opposite sex</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 High School Counselor</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Other relatives</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 College Counselor</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Sister</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 Brother</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Other close friends same sex</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking more specifically at each of the choice categories lends more support to the hypothesis. Table IV-2 shows that 77% of the business choosers saw people in their chosen occupation as a reference group with 43% attributing to them a strong effect on their choice. It should be noted that the response category of "people in your chosen occupation" may not have been interpreted by the respondents as being mutually exclusive of some of the other ones and therefore fathers, other relatives, teachers, etc., may have been included here if they were in the chosen field of the respondent. However, even if some fathers or other reference individuals or groups were included in this category, they were
perceived of and identified with as people in the chosen occupation and not as relatives, etc., which stresses the importance of this reference group.

The scientific-esthetic and general cultural categories also saw people in their chosen occupation as the most important reference group for occupational choice. Seventy percent of the scientific-esthetic category and 79% of the general cultural perceived such persons as reference groups for their occupational choice with 48% and 55% respectively saying this reference group had a strong effect. The hypothesis is therefore strongly supported by the data.

Simpson and Simpson, on the other hand, found a significant difference between the three categories when mentioning persons in the occupation as a source of influence or, in this study's terms, as a reference group, with the scientific-esthetic group being the most likely to mention this source. Simpson and Simpson interpreted this finding as an indication of greater occupational commitment on the part of the scientific and esthetic category compared to the others. This might possibly better be construed as an indicator

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9loc. cit., 123.

10To briefly pursue the idea of occupational commitment it should be noted that this data does agree with Simpson and Simpson's on one indicator of occupational commitment. A good indication of the occupational commitment of the scientific and esthetic fields reveals itself in answers to the "fantasy occupation" question. The respondents were asked the following question: "If you had the ability and the luck to choose absolutely any occupation or job in the world, with a guarantee of success in this occupation, what
of the highly self-conscious in-group feeling by which persons intending to enter scientific and esthetic occupations are characterized. If they distinguish themselves from outsiders on the basis of work skills, they might be more cognizant of persons in their chosen occupation at a given time. However, this does not necessarily speak to whether other persons choosing different occupations did or did not use persons in their chosen occupation as a reference group. A more feasible interpretation might be that due to the unique talents and skills involved in scientific-esthetic types of occupations, aspirants to these occupations keep practitioners foremost in their minds as role models in Kemper's sense of using them concerning "how" to develop and obtain these skills.

The above discussion is put forth due to a difference in methodological technique between the present study and Simpson and Simpson's. Simpson and Simpson did not have "persons in the occupation" specified on their questionnaire and therefore only occupation would you choose?" Similar to the Simpson and Simpson findings, it was found that the scientific and esthetic fields had the highest percentage of correspondence between the "fantasy" and "realistic" choices of occupations. Eighty-six percent of the scientific-esthetic category chose the same fantasy occupation as the one they realistically expected to enter in comparison with 78% of the business category and 48% of the general cultural category. This suggests greater occupational commitment by the scientific and esthetic category.


12op. cit.
received this response if the respondent thought to write it under the "other" category; in contrast, this response was specified in the questionnaire for this study. Thus, the Simpson and Simpson finding was serendipitous and did not have the benefit of a theoretical statement directing their attention to the potential importance of this group as a reference group. One of the major reasons for this study was the seeming incongruence between reference group theory and the Simpson and Simpson finding concerning persons in one's chosen occupation. The difference between our findings and their's indicates the value of a theoretical statement which may aid in hypothesis formation and interpretation.

Business Choosers: Fathers as Reference Individuals

The fourth hypothesis concerns itself with those students choosing business occupations, as compared to the other two categories, and states that students anticipating business occupations will perceive their fathers as reference individuals more than will students anticipating either scientific and esthetic or general cultural occupations. Earlier research pointed out in Chapter I, found that men were more extrinsic-reward oriented than women and that business choosers were more extrinsic-reward oriented than either scientific-esthetic or general cultural choosers. Perhaps, therefore, fathers might be important reference individuals for the business choosers.

Table IV-2 indicates that the hypothesis is supported. Sixty-seven percent of the business choosers perceived their fathers as
reference individuals compared to 48% of the scientific-esthetic and 53% of the general cultural categories. Even more impressive are the differences between the categories when we look at fathers as reference individuals with a strong effect on occupational choice. Thirty-two percent of the business choosers see their fathers in this light as opposed to 19% and 12% respectively of the scientific-esthetic and general cultural choosers. It is concluded, therefore, that fathers become more salient as reference individuals for students choosing business occupations than for students choosing either scientific and esthetic or general cultural occupations.

Scientific-Esthetic Choosers: Professors and Teachers as Reference Individuals

The fifth hypothesis states that students entering scientific-esthetic types of occupations will perceive teachers and professors as reference individuals for occupational choice in addition to people in their chosen occupation which has already been discussed. This hypothesis is based largely on a contention by Simpson and Simpson13 that the aspirant to a scientific or esthetic occupation seeks to join "a highly self-conscious occupational group which distinguishes itself from outsiders on the basis of work skills." It has also been found that values of this group center on the occupation itself, on self-expression, and on success among colleagues.14 Therefore, those persons embodying these skills

13loc. cit., 117.
14See, Simpson and Simpson, ibid.
should be important reference individuals or groups (this was true for people in the occupation); this group might include teachers and professors as well as persons in the occupation.

Simpson and Simpson\textsuperscript{15} used a combined category of "teacher or professor" in their research and found that the scientific and esthetic choosers said teachers or professors had influenced their decision more often than did business choosers and equally as often as did the general cultural choosers.

In an attempt to delineate further and specify reference individuals, the present study separated the response categories into "high school teacher" and "college professor." As may be seen from Table IV-2, the scientific and esthetic category was much more likely than the businessmen to name "high school teacher" as a reference individual with 48% so stating compared to only 20% of the business category. Sixty-two percent of the general cultural choosers also named teachers as a reference individual.\textsuperscript{16} If we look further at the strong effect of this reference individual we see that only seven percent of the business choosers versus 26% and 38% of the scientific-esthetic and general cultural ones, respectively, saw "high school teacher" in this capacity.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{15}loc. cit., 123

\textsuperscript{16}A high incidence of selection was also hypothesized for the general cultural group and will be discussed later in terms of another hypothesis.

\textsuperscript{17}Looking at "influenced strongly" category only.
This hypothesis could also be analyzed from within the scientific and esthetic category as regards the relative ranking of various reference groups and individuals. If a comparison is drawn between different reference groups and individuals for the scientific-esthetic choosers, support is gained for the hypothesis, especially if we look at reference groups and individuals seen as strong in their effect. High school teacher was ranked second only to people in the chosen occupation, and college professor was tied with father as the third ranking reference individual for this choice category.

Thus, in agreement with Simpson and Simpson,18 we found that scientific and esthetic choosers saw teachers as reference individuals moreso than did business choosers. However, professors were seen as reference individuals by both groups in approximately equal proportions. The general cultural choosers saw both teachers and professors as reference individuals to a greater extent than did either the business or scientific and esthetic choosers. If we concentrate on reference individuals seen as having a strong effect on their choice, both teachers and professors ranked high in the list of reference groups and individuals for the scientific-esthetic category tending to support the hypothesis.

General Cultural Choosers: Teachers, Professors, Mothers as Reference Individuals

The sixth hypothesis states that general cultural choosers

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18op. cit., 123.
will perceive college professor, high school teacher, and their mother as reference individuals. As pointed out while discussing the fifth hypothesis, both "high school teacher" and "college professor" were perceived as reference individuals by the general cultural choosers. Since differences between the three choice categories concerning teachers and professors have been alluded to in the analysis of the previous hypothesis, an analysis of the relative rating of these reference individuals within the general cultural category will be undertaken here.

High school teacher was selected by 38% of the general cultural choosers as a reference individual with a strong bearing on their occupational choice. Correspondingly, "college professor" had a strong effect as a reference individual on 28% of this same category. Thus, high school teacher and college professor ranked second and third respectively behind "people in the chosen occupation" as either a reference individual or group with a strong bearing on occupational choice. If we look at the overall effect of these two reference individuals their importance is likewise discernable with high school teacher being a reference individual for 62% of the general cultural choosers and college professor playing the same role for 50% of the category. The high rating attributed to these reference individuals appears to be an indication of a usage of the concept of reference group termed anticipatory socialization or, in our case, a group in which one desires to gain acceptance.
The composition of the general cultural group may explain to an extent why "high school teacher," "college professor," and "people in the chosen occupation" were seen as reference individuals and groups to such a high degree. Since 60% of the general cultural group, 55 out of the 92 so categorized, intended to enter either elementary or high school teaching as an occupation, this may explain the use of "high school teacher" as a reference individual if the premise of anticipatory socialization is accepted for these respondents. Another 9% intended to become college professors. Thus, 69% of the general cultural group intended to go into teaching at the primary, secondary, or college level, explaining at least in part the perception of "college professor" and "high school teacher" as reference individuals. "People in the chosen occupation" fit the pattern of anticipatory socialization or a type of group in which one desires to gain acceptance for all of the general cultural choosers whether they intend to become teachers or ministers, or whatever. Thus, it appears that teachers and professors are chief reference individuals for the general cultural group as hypothesized.

The sixth hypothesis also states that students anticipating a general cultural occupation will look to their mothers as an important reference individual. This hypothesis evolves largely from a contention by Simpson and Simpson19 that if "social

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19loc. cit., 118.
contribution" is a value of students selecting general cultural occupations, then the mother might be expected to be an important reference individual as the main transmitter of this kind of value in most families. "Social contribution" has been designated a strong value of the general cultural category from previous research; the following discussion will examine this supposition.

The data in Table IV-2 does not support the hypothesis. Within the "influenced strongly" category, the general cultural group rated second among the three categories which saw mothers as reference individuals with a strong effect on occupational choice. Twelve percent of the general cultural group perceived of their mothers in this light compared to 3% of the business students and 15% of the scientific-esthetic students. If choice categories are collapsed into "some influence" and "no influence" as are Simpson and Simpson's, the general cultural category at 49% is the least likely of the three to perceive of mothers as reference individuals for their occupational choice as compared to 56% of the scientific-esthetic category and 60% of the business category. With a similar choice category delineation, Simpson and Simpson also found the general cultural category the least likely to rank their mothers high in influence.

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20 This view is also held by: Erickson, E. H., *Childhood and Society*. New York: Norton (1950).
21 op. cit., 121.
22 loc. cit., 124.
In light of Simpson and Simpson's contention, it is interesting to observe the low percentage of general cultural respondents who saw their mothers as being reference individuals with a strong effect on their occupational choice. A much higher percentage should have been anticipated if the "social contribution" value flows largely from the mother. Perhaps, as alluded to earlier, the mother is more of a supportive type rather than a determinative type of reference individual (especially since occupational choice is a developmental process). More specifically, while the person may not see the mother as the determining factor in his choice, many of the underlying value orientations developed in the gradual process of occupational choice may come from the mother. This idea of a supportive type of reference individual may apply to all three categories in that approximately one-half or more of each of the three groups saw their mothers as having at least some influence on their occupational choice.

Occupational Choice Categories and Values

Prior sections of this chapter used the three occupational choice categories to look at reference groups and reference individuals. We will now look at the values of the three occupational choice categories as these values impinge upon reference group theory. Reference group theory would suggest that identification with reference groups and reference individuals would be likely to have an effect on one's values. The reasons certain persons were
perceived to be reference individuals may be partially interpreted via a consideration of values held by the choice categories.

The relationship among values, occupational choice, and reference individuals may be viewed in several ways. It could be argued that certain individuals affect a chooser in such a way as to lead toward a particular choice characterized by values which the chooser may perceive and subsequently adopt. It could also be argued that the values of the chooser may affect the selection of reference individuals who then affect the nature of the occupational choice. Or, the chooser may adopt the values of his reference individuals and, on this basis, select an occupation. It is here suggested that, in fact, the relationship among values, reference individuals, and occupational choice is an interdependent one. In other words, each may both act upon and be acted upon by the others. This study cannot empirically verify that a particular value came from a particular reference individual because the data for the selected reference individuals is lacking. However, the explication of the values of the three occupational choice categories may provide one interpretive device for looking at the selection of particular reference individuals.

Previous research indicated that business choosers tended to be extrinsic-reward oriented -- i.e., valued relatively high income,

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This section of the chapter deals only with certain reference individuals that were indicated to be most important for each of the occupational choice categories in relation to the others, i.e., fathers for business choosers, teachers and professors for scientific and esthetic, and mothers for general cultural choosers.
opportunity for rapid advancement, stable, secure future, and a high standard of living. Scientific and esthetic choosers appeared to value an opportunity for self-expression and values which inhered in the nature of the occupation. General cultural choosers seem to prefer occupations characterized by an opportunity to help people in society and a chance to work with people rather than things. This study attempted to ascertain the values sought by choosers in their occupational choices by posing two questions (Part VI -- 12, 16 of the questionnaire) about the kinds of features necessary to qualify a given career as being satisfying.

The value preferences of the business choosers agree completely with the findings of previously cited research. Extrinsic-reward types of values were stressed by business choosers as shown in Table IV-4. The data indicate a greater concern on the part of business choosers for advancement, money and what money can buy. For example, forty-seven per cent of the business choosers valued earning a good deal of money compared to 39% and 19% of the scientific-esthetic and general cultural choosers respectively. Likewise, 59% of the business choosers compared to 50% of the scientific-esthetic and 38% of the general cultural choosers expressed a desire for a stable, secure future. The same pattern holds regarding a desire for rapid advancement and a high standard of living with more business choosers valuing these than either the scientific-esthetic or general cultural choosers. The percentages show that 65% of the business choosers consider rapid advancement as very
TABLE IV-4

EXTRINSIC OCCUPATIONAL VALUE PREFERENCES
OF CHOOSERS BY THREE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Scientific and</th>
<th>General Cultural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Esthetic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earn good deal of money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 3 ranks</td>
<td>47 30</td>
<td>39 11</td>
<td>19 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>53 34</td>
<td>61 17</td>
<td>81 73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable, Secure Future</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 3 ranks</td>
<td>59 38</td>
<td>50 14</td>
<td>38 34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>41 26</td>
<td>50 14</td>
<td>62 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid Advancement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>65 41</td>
<td>46 13</td>
<td>16 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>32 20</td>
<td>36 10</td>
<td>66 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>3 2</td>
<td>18 5</td>
<td>18 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard of living high</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>46 29</td>
<td>29 8</td>
<td>21 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>44 28</td>
<td>57 16</td>
<td>62 56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>10 6</td>
<td>14 4</td>
<td>17 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

important versus 46% of the scientific-esthetic and 16% of the general cultural choosers. Concerning the importance of a high standard of living, 46% of the business choosers see this as very important compared to 29% and 21% of the scientific-esthetic and general cultural categories.

Thus, as previous research has found, business choosers were extrinsic-reward oriented in their values. One reason for business choosers preferring fathers as reference individuals may be an identification with extrinsic-reward values typical of males.
TABLE IV-5

SELF-EXPRESSION OCCUPATIONAL VALUE PREFERENCES
OF CHOOSERS BY THREE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Business %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Scientific and Esthetic %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>General Cultural %</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Abilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 3 ranks</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative and Original</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 3 ranks</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, it is additionally suggested that the reasons for selecting fathers as reference individuals were multiple and beyond the capacity of the data collected for this study to identify and explicate. It would seem to be worthwhile to suggest that additional investigation into the use of fathers as reference individuals for business choosers is warranted in order to substantiate the notion that one of their merits as reference individuals lies in their possession of a set of extrinsically oriented values.

According to the related literature, scientific-esthetic choosers tend to value the occupation itself and seek an opportunity for self expression. Value statements from the questionnaire associated with "work skills" include statements about the chance to be able to use one's special abilities and the chance to be creative and original.

Table IV-5 indicates that 82% of the scientific-esthetic
choosers attached high value to the chance to use their special abilities compared to 61% of the business choosers and 58% of the general cultural choosers. If it is assumed that teachers and professors embody certain talents and abilities which scientific and aesthetic choosers desire to develop, then the high value placed on being able to use one's special abilities may serve as a partial explanation of the selection of teachers and professors as reference individuals.

If we look at the chance to be creative and original as an indication of a self-expression type of value we see that the scientific and aesthetic category rated this higher than business choosers. Thirty-nine per cent of the scientific and aesthetic choosers saw it as a high ranking value compared to only 20% of the business choosers. Forty-two per cent of the general cultural category perceived of it as a high ranking value. The slightly higher proportion of general cultural choosers who ranked this value high in comparison to the scientific and aesthetic category might be partially attributed to the composition of the general cultural category. The general cultural category was composed of a high number of students who intended to enter teaching. Teachers may feel that it is important that they be allowed to be creative and original in the classroom and this would increase the number of general cultural respondents who saw this as an important value. Nevertheless, this characteristic in certain teachers or professors may have been a reason for their use as reference individuals by
TABLE IV-6

SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OCCUPATIONAL VALUE PREFERENCES OF CHOOSERS BY THREE OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Business %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Scientific and Esthetic %</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>General Cultural %</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work with people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 3 ranks</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful to others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top 3 ranks</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other ranks</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whether work helpful to others and society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat important</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

those who placed a high priority on the value of creativity and originality.

Literature has tended to suggest that mothers are likely to provide a value complex which may be described as a "social contribution" orientation. The general cultural choosers of this sample ranked the social contribution types of values higher than did either the business or scientific-esthetic choosers. It can be seen (Table IV-6) that 59% of the general cultural category valued highly an opportunity to work with people rather than things. In contrast, only 20% of the business and 14% of the scientific-esthetic choosers so ranked it. Being helpful to others also received higher priority by a greater number of
general cultural choosers with 49% ranking it high versus 25% and
21% of the business and scientific-esthetic choosers so ranking it.
Likewise, the degree to which their chosen work could be expected
to help others and society was also more important for the general
cultural choosers. Fifty-eight per cent saw this feature as very
important compared to only 21% of the business choosers and 32% of
the scientific-esthetic choosers.

It was hypothesized that mothers would be selected as reference
individuals by the general cultural choosers. From the postulations
of Simpson and Simpson and Erickson, then, mothers might be im-
portant reference individuals due to their position as transmitters
of social contribution value complexes. This explanation did not
seem to be operant in the sample considered. Thus, it would appear
that the general cultural portion of the sample does hold a "social
contribution" value orientation and the non-selection of mothers as
reference individuals is not due to the lack of this type of value.

This failure to select mothers as reference individuals con-
trasts with the contention previously cited and would seem to
indicate the need for additional research along the following
lines -- the nature of mothers as reference individuals for occupa-
tional choice, reasons for selecting mothers as reference individu-
als for occupational choice, and their position as a potential
source of social contribution values.

\[^{24}\text{Simpson and Simpson, ibid.; Erickson, op. cit.}\]
The explication of the predominant values for each of the occupational choice categories may serve at least three functions. It was suggestive of one potential factor, values, to be used in the selection of a reference group or reference individual and it provides a basis for further research ideas. Looking at the values has also demonstrated that the values of this sample essentially agree with previous research in this area. Thus, as an additional aid in interpreting the selection of certain reference groups and reference individuals, the value preferences prevalent for each of the occupational choice categories were of assistance as a superficial interpreting and sensitizing device.

Discussion

Most of the hypotheses of the study were supported or, at least partially supported. Parents ranked no lower than third among the choice categories as reference individuals ("influenced strongly" and some influence combined) which tends to support their hypothesized importance for occupational choice regardless of the type of choice. Friends were seen as reference groups by some 30 to 40% of the respondents offering partial support to the second hypothesis.

The interesting point of discussion concerning both parents and friends as reference groups is the type they seem to be or more

25Except for fathers as a reference individual for business choosers.
TABLE IV-7

RANKING OF PERCEIVED REFERENCE GROUPS
AND REFERENCE INDIVIDUALS BY ALL RESPONDENTS
ON THE RESPONSE CATEGORY OF "INFLUENCED SOMEWHAT"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived Reference Groups and Individuals</th>
<th>% of respondents rating reference groups and individuals as somewhat influential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Mother</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Father</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Close friends of same sex at college</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Other close friends of same sex</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 People in chosen occupation</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 College Professor</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Close friends of opposite sex</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 High School Counselor</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 High School Teacher</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Other relatives</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Sister</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Brother</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 College Counselor</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 Other influences</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

specifically the type of relevance they have for occupational choice. As mentioned earlier, they seem to have a more generally supportive type of relevance. Table IV-7 indicates the ranking of reference groups and individuals on the basis of only some influence from these sources. This table indicates approximately the same ranking sequence described in various other research reviewed earlier with the parents first and then friends second in importance for occupational choice. However, choosers do not see them as reference groups or individuals with a strong effect but with only some effect, which might point to a qualitatively different type of relevance for occupational choice on the part of
various reference groups and individuals. A supportive reference
group or individual might offer encouragement, uphold an interest,
espouse general guidelines, or simply offer no negative comments
concerning an occupational interest and his overall effect may be
rather nondescript. Thus, parents and friends may not be seen by
most as having a strong effect, but their general relevance is
perceived by a large proportion.

People in one's chosen occupation were the most important
reference group for the great majority of respondents regardless of
their occupational choice. Some comments on the various type or
types of reference group one's occupational category might logically
serve may be informative here. It seems feasible that before entry
into one's occupation, his anticipated occupation group may serve as
an audience group. The occupational group is not promulgating norms
for the chooser to follow and is not necessarily even cognizant of
the chooser. However, the chooser may follow what he understands
the norms of this group to be due to the sanctioning technique of
hypothesized rewards accruing to him once he is in the occupation.
Once a person is in an occupation, the group has the capacity to
become a normative group in that the sanctioning technique of
punishment is now available to them.

One's occupational group or a particular member thereof, may
also serve as a role model. This is the comparative type of
reference individual that shows the person "how" to do something.
Surely, all the choice categories use someone in this manner but
perhaps especially scientific and esthetic choosers. The data indicate that these choosers rate people in their chosen occupation high as do the other choice categories. However, scientific-esthetic choosers do not see as much effect from other sources, especially friends. Thus, perhaps due to the technical skills required in these types of occupations they use those in the occupation as role models.

The segmental relevance of certain groups was at least indirectly pointed out by the data especially when we look only at reference groups and individuals who had a strong effect on occupational choice. The top ranking reference groups and individuals become persons one might not expect to be relevant for other types of behaviors but who are relevant for occupational choice. Thus, as far as being what might be termed a "determinative" reference group or individual or one that was perceived as having a strong effect, people in the occupation, teachers, and professors were all higher than a parent. This should be a fruitful area of further research to see under what conditions various reference groups and individuals may be relevant.

The hypotheses concerning specific reference individuals for specific choice categories were pretty much supported. Fathers were important reference individuals for business choosers; professors and teachers for both scientific-esthetic and general cultural choosers. However, mothers were not as important for general cultural choosers as had been hypothesized perhaps due to the
supportive nature of the mother as a reference individual.

It seems interesting to note, considering the lack of mechanisms for disseminating occupational knowledge and matching interests with certain occupations, that one of the structural mechanisms did not appear to be very pertinent as a reference individual. I refer to the low ranking of counselors. This low ranking, if correct, may have implications for the educational system that would require new or additional means of matching interests and various occupational areas.

The low ranking of counselors may also be an example of an "interaction reference individual." As will be recalled, "interaction groups or individuals" were discussed earlier and are reference groups or individuals who are taken into account while working towards one's goals but they do not become very important.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The main objective of the present study was to see who the perceived reference groups and reference individuals were for persons during the process of occupational choice. Using the general framework of reference group theory, two questions and the replication of some of the findings of a study by Simpson and Simpson\(^1\) were looked at in an attempt to achieve this objective. The two questions asked: Are there general reference groups or individuals that all individuals use during the process of occupational choice? and, Are there differences in the choice of reference groups or individuals for different types of occupational choices? Six hypotheses, three dealing with each question, were tested and will be reviewed below after a brief summary of the methodology and sample of the study.

The data were collected at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan. A self-administered structured questionnaire was given to a sample of male dormitory residents living on randomly selected dormitory floors. The list of potential reference groups and reference individuals was adapted from Simpson and

The respondents were categorized into three occupational choice categories, adapted from Simpson and Simpson, for purposes of replication and answering the question about different reference groups and individuals for different choices. Percentages were then used to determine whether or not the hypothesized patterns were supported by the data.

Compared to the social background of a national sample of college students, this sample came from families with a greater concentration in the middle ranges of both education and income and fewer cases at both the high and low extremes. Within the sample, there were no significant differences among the choice categories on either income or education of parents.

The first three hypotheses were designed to look at the question of reference groups and individuals for all choice categories or all respondents. A majority of the respondents saw their mothers and fathers as reference individuals and as having at least some effect on their choice. However, even though parents had at least some effect on a large portion of all the occupational categories, they seldom exerted a strong effect on a particular choice, except for fathers of business choosers. Similarly, friends did not serve as reference groups with a strong effect on occupational choice.

\[2^{ibid.}\]
\[3^{ibid.}\]
although they were seen as reference groups by a fair portion of the respondents. Every choice category and therefore an overwhelming majority of all respondents rated people in their chosen occupation as reference groups and as the highest ranking reference group.

The latter three hypotheses specified particular reference individuals for the various choice categories. Business choosers saw their fathers as reference individuals. The scientific-esthetic category rated high school teachers as reference individuals more so than did the business category and were approximately equal with the business category in rating professors as reference individuals. The general cultural category rated both teachers and professors as reference individuals more than either the scientific and esthetic or business categories. The last part of the sixth hypothesis was not supported in that mothers were not seen as reference individuals to any great extent by the general cultural category. The values of the three occupational choice categories were suggested to be a possible interpretive device for understanding the selection of particular reference individuals.

Conclusions

The study supports the relevance of general reference groups and individuals for the process of occupational choice. Not surprisingly, parents and to a lesser extent, friends fall into this role. Other studies, reviewed earlier, have also found parents and
peers to be important for occupational choice. However, an interesting finding of the present study which has been absent from the others is that parents and friends do not seem to have a strong effect on occupational choice but rather only some effect. Thus, although a large proportion of the respondents saw parents and friends as reference individuals or groups they do not seem to be determinative reference individuals or groups but rather supportive ones.

There also seem to be specific reference individuals as well as general ones for occupational choice. Certain persons do seem to be perceived as reference individuals according to different types of occupational choices. The pattern found here tended to support the findings of the previous research effort in this area. Fathers were reference individuals for business choosers and teachers and/or professors were the perceived reference individuals for the scientific-esthetic and general cultural choosers. Thus, it seems that there isn't a linear ranking of reference groups and individuals for all occupational choices as other studies might have us believe, but instead one must speak of different reference groups or individuals for different choices.

Reference group theory was a valuable framework for the present study. First, the theory acted as a sensitizing mechanism in the formulating stages of the research when a finding of a study by Simpson and Simpson did not seem to coincide with what one might

4loc. cit., 123.
expect within a reference group framework. Second, a particular type of potential reference group -- a group in which one wishes to gain acceptance -- predicted quite accurately that people in one's chosen occupation would be important for all the choice categories and not just for the scientific-esthetic choosers as Simpson and Simpson had found. At a more general level, this finding also indirectly points out the value of a theoretical framework directing areas of inquiry.

The study also indirectly touched on an area of reference group theory that requires more work. This is the area of "segmental relevance": when are particular reference groups or individuals relevant or for what behaviors or situations? This study provided an example of this by looking at the strong effect of various reference groups and individuals. It was shown that people in one's chosen occupation, professors, and teachers all outranked parents as reference groups or individuals with a strong effect on occupational choice. Thus, it appears that these reference groups and individuals might be more determinative for occupational choice. But, are they relevant for other areas of behavior and if so, what areas? This study cannot answer these questions but it does point to an area where reference group theory requires some further research.

Another area for additional work is suggested to be the use of values to interpret the selection of reference individuals. Such research should be conducted to determine the effects of values of
the three categories of occupational choice as they may bear on
reference group theory.

In summary, it appears that reference group theory was a fairly
useful framework for the present study. The theory was especially
valuable in pointing to a group which empirically proved to be the
most important reference group for all choice categories, namely,
people in one's chosen occupation. The theory is weak in the area
of the selection of reference groups and reference individuals pro­
viding little direction as to the conditions or behaviors for which
certain reference groups or reference individuals may become rele­
vant. In relation to the process of occupational choice, the study
empirically showed that there are certain general reference groups
and individuals with possibly a different type of relevance than
had heretofore been thought and that there are patterns of reference
individuals for various types of occupational choices.

Evaluation of Techniques

The techniques used in the study seemed necessary considering
the manpower and financial resources available to the researcher.
Certain of the strengths and weaknesses will be briefly spelled out
here to aid potential future researchers in this area.

Some of the weaknesses included the questionnaire length and
the procedure for the collecting or return of the completed ques­
tionnaires. The length of the questionnaire probably had the
effect of causing some respondents to delay completing it under the
assumption that it would be a time consuming process. In actuality, the questionnaire only required approximately thirty minutes to complete and this was emphasized in the instructions. However, there were a number of different sections in the questionnaire allowing for various contingencies and even though no one had to complete all the sections, the bulk of the instrument may have deterred some from completing it.

The inter campus mail procedure for the return of the questionnaire appeared straight-forward and convenient, but a central point for the collection of the instruments on each floor of each dormitory may have been more convenient. Another alternative would have been personal collection of the questionnaire by the same people that distributed them. The latter procedure would have also offered another chance to personally remind the respondent about the importance of completing the instrument if he had not already done so.

The strengths of the study's techniques lie in the method of questionnaire distribution and in the transfer of data to IBM cards. The personal distribution of the questionnaire afforded an opportunity to stress the importance of completing and returning the instrument and it is felt that this procedure is preferrable to simply sending the questionnaire to the sample. One source of error was reduced in this study in that the key punching was done automatically. The errors, if any, that did occur had to be in the coding of information onto the punching sheets thus reducing the
potential error from the key punching operation.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study is found in the number of returns. Since fewer than half of the original sample returned their questionnaires, this raises certain questions about the randomness of the final sample subjected to analysis. Further, this low percentage of returns suggests a need for caution in the interpretation and generalization of the findings.

A second limitation also concerns the sample. The size of the sample available for analysis was too small to allow for the application of simultaneous controls which would allow further specification of the conditions under which certain relationships hold. Few studies are able to apply all the controls desirable; however, a larger sample would have permitted the application of at least some.

Further Research

Topics

One area of potential sociologically fruitful future research would consider Kemper's concepts of audience group and role model. Looking at persons in one's chosen occupation, it would be

interesting to see if they are used as audience groups where one follows the perceived norms of an occupational group because of the rewards that may be forthcoming, or whether one looks to such persons as role models to determine "how" to succeed in and/or how to do a particular type of work.

Further research could also focus on the occupational choice category of general cultural choosers. Both Simpson and Simpson's research and this study found that this group was the least likely to see their parents as reference individuals with a strong effect on their occupational choice. Why is this? Are these occupations (except possibly for lawyer) "outside" the American value system?

While the above two areas of further research would be interesting and potentially fruitful, probably the most important area of research stimulated by this study would be to pursue the type of reference individuals or groups parents and friends are for occupational choice. This study unexpectedly showed that parents and friends were not seen consistently by a large proportion as reference individuals or groups having a strong effect on occupational choice although their incidence of being a reference individual or group with some effect was quite high. Questions arise as to what type of reference individuals or groups parents and friends actually are or how they are used in relation to occupational choice.

*p. cit., 124.*
Methods

In an attempt to ascertain the quality or type of reference individuals and groups parents and friends might be, perhaps in depth interviewing would be a better approach than a structured questionnaire. Also, more generally, longitudinal studies should be conducted to see if and how reference groups or individuals change over a period of time.

Future research should also consider changes in sample design in addition to the change in techniques mentioned above. For example, a general sample of college males might be used instead of only dormitory residents because it is unknown if dormitory residents differ in their perceived reference groups and reference individuals from students not living in dormitories. Another sample with potential sociological benefit might be one stratified by social class to discern class differences, if any, in the perception of reference groups and reference individuals.
APPENDIX A

THE STUDY'S QUESTIONNAIRE
AND ITS COVER LETTER
April 4, 1966

Dear Student:

Over the past several years, students at Western Michigan University have been asked to cooperate in a number of research projects dealing with various aspects of student attitude and student experience, and they have always responded overwhelmingly. This semester students are again being asked to contribute a short period of time, in their own residence hall room, for another such project carried out through the auspices of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

This survey deals with the major fields of specialization and the occupational choices of male students on campus. Since it would be impossible to study the attitudes of all male students, only a relatively small group has been selected. Residence hall floors were chosen randomly to represent as closely as possible a cross-section of the male residence hall student population. Your residence hall floor was included in the sample of floors. Since this is only a small cross-section, your cooperation in the study is very important. This is the only way the results of the study can be representative.

This is a request for your cooperation in the project. All that is required from you is that you fill out the attached questionnaire and, for your convenience, the questionnaire has been stamped on the back allowing you to drop it in any department's inter-campus outgoing mail tray and it will be returned to the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. No stamps are required for inter-campus mail, so if you would simply fold the questionnaire in half and staple it, it will be returned. As you are walking by any departmental office during the day, just drop it in the inter-campus mail tray which is usually located on each secretary's desk.

As in all research, the questionnaires are in no way analyzed on an individual basis, so all the information you give is strictly confidential. Filling out the questionnaire will only require between 20 and 25 minutes of your time, and I think you will find the questionnaire quite interesting to complete.

Once again, your cooperation is absolutely necessary if the study is to be representative, so I hope you will take the short amount of time required to complete and return the questionnaire. If there are any questions, please call Mr. Stephen Vargo at 383-1742. Mr. Vargo will be analyzing this data as part of his Master's thesis requirements in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Sincerely yours,

Helenan S. Lewis
Assistant Professor of Sociology
It is very important to the study that you try to answer each and every question that pertains to you. THANK YOU.

Room Number: _____

PART I.

1. What is your age? _____

2. What year in school are you?
   _______ Freshman
   _______ Sophomore
   _______ Junior
   _______ Senior
   _______ Graduate Student

3. What is your overall grade point average? ________
   (If graduate student, put both undergraduate and graduate G.P.A.)

4. What is your present curriculum? ________________

5. What is your present major? ______________________

6. What is (are) your present minor(s)? ____________________

7. How important is it for you to have your plans for the future rather clearly known to you in advance?
   _______ a. Very important
   _______ b. Fairly important
   _______ c. Not very important
   _______ d. Not at all important
8. What 3 things or activities in your life do you expect to give you the most satisfaction?

Please write 1 in the space preceding the most important; 2 in the space preceding next most important; 3 in the space preceding third most important.

RANK three:

1. Career or occupation
2. Family relationships
3. Leisure-time recreational activities
4. Religious beliefs or activities
5. Participation as citizen in affairs of your community
6. Participation in activities directed toward national or international betterment

9. College students have different ideas about the MAIN PURPOSES OF COLLEGE EDUCATION. Some of their ideas are listed below. As you read this list, consider what educational goals you think the IDEAL college or university OUGHT TO EMPHASIZE. Indicate your opinion by writing:

H (high) next to the goals you consider highly important
M (medium) next to the goals you consider of medium importance
L (low) next to the goals you consider of little importance, irrelevant, or even distasteful to you (indicate H, M, or L)

Bank H,M,L.

1. "Provide vocational training; develop skills and techniques directly applicable to your career."

2. "Develop your ability to get along with different kinds of people."

3. "Provide a basic general education and appreciation of ideas."

4. "Develop your knowledge and interest in community and world development and problems."
e. "Help develop your moral capacities, ethical standards and values."

f. "Prepare you for a happy marriage and family life."

Now GO BACK and rank the ones you rated H by writing next to each H:

1 for the most important
2 for the second most important
and so on for all the H's on your list. Do NOT rank the M's and L's.

PART II.

1. What was your first major in college?

2. Before choosing your first major, did you consider any other majors?
   ____ Yes  ____ No
   If yes, list the other ones you considered:

3. At approximately what age had you decided on your first major in college?

4. Did your parents encourage you to go to college?
   ____ Yes  ____ No

5. Did you discuss your choice of major with your parents?
   ____ Yes  ____ No

6. How did your parents feel about your choice of major? Were they:
   ________ a. In favor of your choice
7. How strongly do you think you were influenced in your choice of a major by each of the following?

Indicate with a "1" those who influenced you strongly; "2" those who influenced you some but not strongly; 3 those who influenced you not at all.

- a. Close friends of same sex at college
- b. Other close friends of same sex (high school friends, etc.)
- c. Close friends of opposite sex, or fiancee
- d. Mother
- e. Father
- f. Brother
- g. Sister
- h. Other relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.) (Specify) ________________________________
- i. High school teacher
- j. High school counselor
- k. College professor
- l. College counselor
- m. Reading
- n. People in a field associated with your major
- o. Other influences (Specify) ____________________________

8. Have you changed your major field of study since you entered college?

- a. Yes, I have changed my major.
b. No, but I am considering changing my major.

c. No, and I am not considering changing.

NOTE: If you checked "a" of question number 8 on the preceding page, that you HAVE CHANGED your major, PLEASE answer the questions in the YELLOW section of the questionnaire starting on page 5. Skip the Green section.

If you checked "b" above, that you haven't changed majors as yet but you are CONSIDERING a change, PLEASE answer the questions in the GREEN section of the questionnaire starting on page 7. Skip the Yellow section.

If you checked "c" above, PLEASE continue with the WHITE section starting on page 9. Skip the Yellow and Green sections of the questionnaire.

All respondents should continue with the WHITE section of the questionnaire after completing the special section that applies to them.

PART III.

Yellow Section: For those who have changed their major.

1. What was your previous major?

2. Would you please state the reasons for your dissatisfaction with your previous major.

3. Other students have given the following reasons for dissatisfaction with a major. Would you please use a "1" to indicate the reasons that were very important; a "2" for those that were somewhat important; a "3" for those that were not at all important.

   a. The complexity or difficulty of the subject matter.

   b. The courses didn't seem to be related to the job I want to get.

   c. The courses weren't interesting.
d. I didn't like working in a laboratory.

e. I'd have to go to graduate school to get a good job, or to advance in this field; and I don't want to.

f. I became more interested in another field.

g. There were too many required courses.

4. How do you think your previous major compares with your new major?

a. Previous major more difficult

b. New major more difficult

c. Both are about the same in difficulty

5. Were low grades in your previous major one of the reasons for changing majors?

Yes No

6. Did you discuss your change of major with your parents?

Yes No

7. How do you think your parents felt about your change of major?

a. In favor of the change

b. Indifferent about the change

c. Opposed to the change

8. How important to you was your parents' opinion about changing your major?

a. Very important

b. Somewhat important

c. Not at all important

9. Did you discuss your change of major with any of your friends?

Yes No
10. How important to you were your friends' opinions about your change of major?

______ a. Very important
______ b. Somewhat important
______ c. Not at all important

11. How strongly do you think you were influenced in your change of major by each of the following?

Indicate with a "1" those who influenced you strongly; "2" those who influenced you some but not strongly; "3" those who influenced you not at all.

______ a. Close friends of same sex at college
______ b. Other close friends of same sex (high school friends, etc.)
______ c. Close friends of opposite sex, or fiancée
______ d. Mother
______ e. Father
______ f. Brother
______ g. Sister
______ h. Other relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.)
   (Specify)________________________________________
______ i. High school teacher
______ j. High school counselor
______ k. College professor
______ l. College counselor
______ m. Reading
______ n. People in a field associated with your major
______ o. Other influences (Specify)___________________
CONTINUE WITH WHITE SECTION STARTING ON PAGE 9.

PART IV.

Green Section: For those who are considering changing their major.

1. What major are you thinking of changing to?__________________

2. Would you please state the reasons for your dissatisfaction with your present major?

______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

3. Other students have given the following reasons for dissatisfaction with a major. Would you please use a "1" to indicate the reasons that were very important; a "2" for those that were somewhat important; a "3" for those that were not at all important.

_____ a. The complexity or difficulty of the subject matter.

_____ b. The courses didn't seem to be related to the job I want to get.

_____ c. The courses weren't interesting.

_____ d. I didn't like working in a laboratory.

_____ e. I'd have to go to graduate school to get a good job, or to advance in this field; and I don't want to.

_____ f. I became more interested in another field.

_____ g. There were too many required courses.

4. How do you think your present major compares with your anticipated new major?

_____ a. Present major more difficult

_____ b. Anticipated new major more difficult

_____ c. Both are about the same in difficulty
5. Are low grades in your present major one of the reasons for considering a change of major?

____ Yes   ____ No

6. Have you discussed your proposed change of major with your parents?

____ Yes   ____ No

7. How do you think your parents feel about your proposed change of major?

_______ a. In favor of the proposed change

_______ b. Indifferent about the proposed change

_______ c. Opposed to the proposed change

8. How important to you is your parents' opinion about changing your major?

_______ a. Very important

_______ b. Somewhat important

_______ c. Not at all important

9. Did you discuss your proposed change of major with any of your friends?

____ Yes   ____ No

10. How important to you are your friends' opinions about your proposed change of major?

_______ a. Very important

_______ b. Somewhat important

_______ c. Not at all important

11. How strongly do you think you were influenced in your proposed change of major by each of the following?

Indicate with a "1" those who influenced you strongly; "2" those who influenced you some but not strongly; "3" those who influenced you not at all.

_______ a. Close friends of same sex at college.
b. Other close friends of same sex (high school friends, etc.)

c. Close friends of opposite sex, or fiancee

d. Mother

e. Father

f. Brother

g. Sister

h. Other relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.)

(Specify)

i. High school teacher

j. High school counselor

k. College professor

l. College counselor

m. Reading

n. People in a field associated with your major

o. Other influences (Specify)

CONTINUE WITH THE WHITE SECTION STARTING ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.

Continuation of White Section: For ALL students to complete.

PART V.

1. Would you please list your best friends at Western (One friend per line, so each friend can be identified as friend A, B, C, D, or E):

A. _________________________________________________________

B. _________________________________________________________

C. _________________________________________________________
For questions 2 through 8, please refer to your friends in the same order as you listed them above.

2. Where do each of your best friends live? (Check appropriate box)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In same room of dorm</th>
<th>In same suite but not in same room</th>
<th>In the same dorm, but not on same floor</th>
<th>In another dorm</th>
<th>Off campus or married housing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. About how much time do you spend per week with each of your best friends?

**HOURS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1-2</th>
<th>3-4</th>
<th>5-6</th>
<th>7-8</th>
<th>9-10</th>
<th>11 or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D.</td>
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<td>E.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. What type of activities do you do together?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.</th>
<th>Double Date</th>
<th>Attend University sponsored functions</th>
<th>Eat together</th>
<th>Discuss courses</th>
<th>Discuss future plans</th>
<th>Discuss social functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
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<td>C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What are the majors of each of your best friends?

A. ____________________________________________

B. ____________________________________________

C. ____________________________________________

D. ____________________________________________

E. ____________________________________________

6. What occupations do each of your best friends intend to go into?

A. ____________________________________________

B. ____________________________________________

C. ____________________________________________

D. ____________________________________________

E. ____________________________________________

7. What organizations do each of your best friends belong to?

A. ____________________________________________

B. ____________________________________________

C. ____________________________________________

D. ____________________________________________

E. ____________________________________________
8. What year in school is each of your best friends? (Circle 1 for Freshman; 2 for Sophomore; 3 for Junior; 4 for Senior; 5 for Graduate student; 6 if the friend is not in school.)

Friend A.  1 2 3 4 5 6
Friend B.  1 2 3 4 5 6
Friend C.  1 2 3 4 5 6
Friend D.  1 2 3 4 5 6
Friend E.  1 2 3 4 5 6

PART VI.

1. If you had the ability and the luck to choose absolutely any occupation or job in the world, with a guarantee of success in this occupation, what occupation would you choose?

2. What business, profession, or occupation do you realistically expect you will go into? (Be as specific as possible, e.g. manufacturer's representative.)

   a. Same as above
   b. Other (Specify)

3. About how much money do you expect to earn per year about ten years after you're through with school (assuming the present buying power of the dollar continues)?

4. What did your father do for a living at the time you were born? (Name the occupation and what the job actually entailed.)

5. What does he do for a living now?  
   a. What exactly does this job entail?

6. About how much was your father's income last year as far as you know? (If your father is not the chief breadwinner in the family, indicate income of main earner.)
   a. Less than $3,000.
b. $3,000. to $4,999.
c. $5,000. to $6,999.
d. $7,000. to $8,999.
e. $9,000. to $10,999.
f. $11,000. to $14,999.
g. $15,000. to $19,999.
h. $20,000. to $24,999.
i. $25,000. to $29,999.
j. $30,000. and over.

7. Is your mother employed?
   a. Not employed
   b. Employed

   a. If your mother is employed, please name her occupation and what the job entails:

   b. Mother's annual income:

8. How do you expect your own future standard of living (economic income) to compare with that of the family in which you were brought up?
   a. Higher standard
   b. About the same
   c. Lower standard

9. Do you think that when you are your father's age, you will probably rate above, below, or the same as he now rates in prestige of your occupation in the community.
   a. Above in prestige
   b. About the same in prestige
   c. Below in prestige
10. Please indicate the highest educational attainment of your father and your mother:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Father</th>
<th>Mother</th>
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<tr>
<td>8th grade or less</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some high school</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>High school graduate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical or trade school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some graduate or professional training</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate or Professional degree beyond the bachelors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Do you have any brothers and/or sisters who are presently attending college or are college graduates?

______ Yes  ____ No

If so, how many?__________________________________________

12. When they reported their requirements for an IDEAL job or profession, students said it would have to satisfy certain requirements. Some of these requirements are listed below. As you read the list, consider to what extent a job or career would have to satisfy each of these requirements before you could consider it IDEAL. Indicate your opinion by writing:

H (high) next to the requirements you consider highly important

M (medium) next to the requirements of medium importance

L (low) next to the requirements of little or no importance, irrelevant, or even distasteful to you

The IDEAL job for me would have to ..... (Indicate H, M, or L)

Rank H,M,L

_______ a. "Provide an opportunity to use my special abilities or aptitudes."
b. "Provide me with a chance to earn a good deal of money."

c. "Permit me to be creative and original."

d. "Give me social status and prestige."

e. "Give me an opportunity to work with people rather than things."

f. "Enable me to look forward to a stable, secure future."

g. "Leave me relatively free of supervision by others."

h. "Give me a chance to exercise leadership."

i. "Provide me with adventure."

j. "Give me an opportunity to be helpful to others."

Now go back and look at the requirements you rated "high." Rank them in the order of importance to you by writing next to each H:

1 for the most important

2 for the next in importance

and so on, for all the H's on your list. Do NOT rank the M's and L's.

13. Do you think the job or career you have selected as your life work will satisfy most of the requirements you marked H, some of them, or only a few?

_______ a. Will satisfy most of them

_______ b. Will satisfy some of them

_______ c. Will satisfy none of them

14. Do you know anyone in the occupational field you have chosen?

____ Yes  ____ No

If yes, who?__________________________________________________
15. How strongly do you think you were influenced in your choice of an occupation by each of the following?

Indicate with a "1" those who influenced you strongly; "2" those who influenced you some but not strongly; "3" those who influenced you not at all.

________ a. Close friends of same sex at college
________ b. Other close friends of same sex (high school friends, etc.)
________ c. Close friends of opposite sex, or fiancee
________ d. Mother
________ e. Father
________ f. Brother
________ g. Sister
________ h. Other relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins, etc.) (Specify)
________ i. High school teacher
________ j. High school counselor
________ k. College professor
________ l. College counselor
________ m. People in your chosen occupation
________ n. Other influences (Specify)

16. Once you have already started work in your occupation, how important do you think the following features of the job will be in determining how satisfied you will be with the job?

Indicate with a "1" if very important, "2" if somewhat important; "3" if not at all important.

________ a. General prestige of the occupation compared with other occupations.
________ b. Kinds of tasks involved in the work.
c. Whether I am held in high esteem by others in the same occupation.

d. How well I get along with co-workers, bosses, and others on the job.

e. How rapidly I advance within the occupation (promotions, growing income, etc.)

f. Whether my parents are proud of my success.

g. Whether my work leaves me enough time to spend with my family, on vacations, etc.

h. Whether the work is as helpful to others or to society as I had hoped.

i. Whether my standard of living is as high as I had hoped.

PART VII.

1. How do you rate yourself in academic ability compared with your close friends?

   a. I am the best
   b. I am above average
   c. I am average
   d. I am below average
   e. I am the poorest

2. How do you rate yourself in academic ability compared with other students in your major?

   a. I am among the best
   b. I am above average
   c. I am average
   d. I am below average
   e. I am among the poorest
3. Where do you think you rank at present in your class in college?

________ a. Among the best

________ b. Above average

________ c. Average

________ d. Below average

________ e. Among the poorest

4. Where do you think you will rank in your graduating class?

________ a. Among the best

________ b. Above average

________ c. Average

________ d. Below average

________ e. Among the poorest

5. In order to become a doctor, lawyer, or university professor, work beyond four years of college is necessary. How likely do you think it is that you could complete such advanced work?

________ a. Very likely

________ b. Somewhat likely

________ c. Not sure either way

________ d. Unlikely

________ e. Most unlikely

6. Forget for a moment how others grade your work. In your own opinion, how good do you think your work is?

________ a. My work is excellent

________ b. My work is good

________ c. My work is average

________ d. My work is below average

________ e. My work is much below average
7. What kind of grades do you think you are capable of getting?

_____ a. Mostly A's

_____ b. Mostly B's

_____ c. Mostly C's

_____ d. Mostly D's

_____ e. Mostly E's
APPENDIX B

FOLLOW-UP LETTER
Dear Student:

A couple of days ago you received a questionnaire concerning major fields of specialization and occupational choice. Your floor in the dorm was randomly selected and therefore you fell into the small sample for the study. To have the study be meaningful and representative, it is imperative that you complete and return the questionnaire through inter-campus mail.

An attempt was made to make it as convenient as possible for you to complete the questionnaire and return it. This questionnaire is the basis for a Master's thesis, and the thesis cannot be written without your kind cooperation. So, come on guys, take the 20 to 30 minutes necessary to complete the questionnaire and return it, PLEASE!!

If you have misplaced your copy of the questionnaire or, for some reason, you didn't receive one, please contact Steve Vargo in Room 2511, Sangren; phone, 383-1742.

Thank you very much,

Stephen M. Vargo
Graduate Assistant
Department of Sociology
and Anthropology

SMV:jad
APPENDIX C

MAJORS OF SAMPLE CLASSIFIED INTO OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE CATEGORIES

139
### MAJORS OF SAMPLE CLASSIFIED INTO OCCUPATIONAL CHOICE CATEGORIES

<table>
<thead>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<td>No major chosen but gave occupational choice</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Management</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Paper Technology</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>Political Science</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial Supervision</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>No response on major but gave occupational choice</td>
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APPENDIX D

OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES
CLASSIFIED INTO CHOICE CATEGORIES
OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES CLASSIFIED INTO CHOICE CATEGORIES

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<th>Scientific and Esthetic Choices (N = 28)</th>
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<td>Aeronautical Engineering Technology</td>
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<td>Airplane Pilot</td>
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<td>Dentists</td>
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<td>Armed Forces, Career in</td>
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<td>&quot;Business&quot;</td>
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<td>Paper Technologist</td>
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<td>Pharmacist</td>
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<td>Engineers, Technical</td>
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<td>Research Biologist</td>
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