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Student Leaders as Interpreters of High School Student Opinion

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STUDENT LEADERS AS INTERPRETERS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT OPINION

by

William Gerard Mulcrone

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of The Graduate College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education Department of Educational Leadership

Western Michigan University Kalamazoo, Michigan April 1983
STUDENT LEADERS AS INTERPRETERS OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT OPINION

William Gerard Mulcrone, Ed.D.
Western Michigan University, 1983

This study was designed to investigate the accuracy with which selected student leaders from 30 public high schools in Macomb County, Michigan, reflected the opinions of the general student population of high school seniors in the same county. Specifically, data were collected which would determine the advisability of implementing change suggested by the opinions of the student leaders.

A survey of the literature suggested differences between the general student body and student leaders in opinions about school, courses offered, values, and plans for the future. The literature also showed demographic differences such as disproportionate distribution among student leaders of the traits of socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and gender.

Data were collected from 90 elected high school student leaders selected by faculty and administration to represent their schools on the Student Commission on Public Education (SCOPE), and a systematic random sample of 607 high school seniors using portions of the "Macomb Student Survey." Analyses by t tests for independent means showed no significant difference between the two groups in opinions about school, but significant differences in opinions about courses offered and values. Significant differences in the proportions of students from each group indicating future plans for college and full-time
work were found using a normalized z. Chi Square analyses revealed significant differences in the proportional distribution of socio-economic status, academic achievement, and gender.

Though student leaders have been chosen by their peers to represent them, and their opinions about school are similar, they formulate their opinions from a different perspective. They come from homes with a higher socioeconomic status than their average classmate, they make better grades, and they include proportionately more females. They are interested in a more expanded curriculum than are their average student counterparts, and they have more clearly formed ideas about values. Their opinions about future plans are almost exclusively those of the college-bound, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the majority of high school students.

Because of current challenges to public education caused by decreasing enrollment, declining resources, and technological innovation, the opinions of students are increasingly sought for suggestions about improving schools. Student advisory groups, such as the SCOPE population used in this study, are often comprised only of student leaders. The results of this study suggest that the advice of selected student leaders is not necessarily an accurate interpretation of student opinion.
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The world is full of mostly invisible things . . .
Such things are said to be Good For You,
And you will have to learn from them
In order to become one of the grown-ups
Who sees invisible things neither steadily nor whole,
But keeps bravely the grand confusion of the world
Under his hat, which is where it belongs.

Howard Nemerov

Many people have helped me to see the invisible things, and I am grateful to them all, but I wish to express very special thanks:

to my advisor, Dr. Mary Anne Bunda, who possesses the leadership skill of Joan of Arc, the wisdom of St. Teresa of Avila, the compassion of Eleanor Roosevelt, the humor of Lily Tomlin, and the guiding light of the Statue of Liberty. How lucky can you be? I was looking for an advisor and I also found a friend;

to my teacher and committee member, Dr. Uldis Smidchens, for his patience, sincerity, and his ability to cajole the sleeping mind into an alert understanding of the incomprehensible;

to my colleague and committee member, Dr. Ronald Pollack, for his insight, inspiration, integrity, and intelligence;

to my mentor, Dr. William Banach, for giving me a chance to achieve, and for providing a constant model of superb leadership;

to my wife, Christine, for her words of support;

to my typist, Jean Kasprzyk, for her efficiency, attention to detail, good humor, and inexhaustible patience;

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to my friends, fellow students, and professors at Western—and particularly Ed. Leadership's secretaries Nellie Stell and Cindy Mizikar—for making the Selfridge II program a stimulating and fulfilling experience;

to my special friends—the "Three Musketeers"—Terri Voit, Mike Bugenski, and Peggy Kennard for all the laughs, the "carfares," the hugs, and the support. Hey, guys—"we are the champions!";

and finally . . . to my favorite commentator, Roseanne Roseanna-dana, who kept everything in perspective for me during the past three years by continually reminding me that "it's always something!"

William Gerard Mulcrone
DEDICATION

To my mother, my first and best teacher, who read to me when I was little, and made me love to learn;

and

to my father, who always urged me to at least try, and supported me with double handfuls of love and encouragement.
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CHAPTER I

OVERVIEW AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Public schools and the people they were created to serve are facing some difficult challenges. Student enrollment is down, mandated programs have strained school personnel, and declining resources have led to battered educational budgets.

All of these adversities are present at a time when the challenge of the future is greater than ever. Today's students need an educational program built for success in a world which has been considerably changed by the advent of the computer, robots, and other technological innovations.

To address some of these needs, educators have turned to taxpayers, parents, media, and legislators for advice on how to improve the public schools. Only recently have students—the primary consumer group—been consulted.

The opinions of students about their schools are important to educators because they represent a unique perspective. The consumers who are in daily contact with their public schools are particularly qualified to offer opinions about how well the public schools are performing in delivering an educational program which has relevance and true applicability to the perceived needs of the students.

Several different programs have been implemented to address the concerns of students, most notably the University of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future" project (Johnston, Bachman, & O'Malley, 1981), the
National Center for Education Statistics' "High School and Beyond" study (1981), and the Michigan State Department of Education's "Project Outreach" (Fortino, 1982). Methods of acquiring students' opinions have taken the form of surveys of student attitudes, and forums for student leaders.

Because attitudes reflected in student survey results are sometimes unclear or surprising to adult educators, a need is seen to garner clarification and expansion of the opinions expressed. The student forums have provided an opportunity for communication between those educators with the authority to make changes aimed at improvement of the schools and those students with suggestions for such changes.

When the selection of the participants for these student forums is considered, educators often turn to elected student leaders as the logical choice for the composition of the advisory groups. These students are easily identified, often intelligent and articulate, and have been chosen by their peer groups.

Each of the factors which makes the students desirable choices also makes them distinct and unique. The question which arises then is, if these students are unique, how well do their opinions represent the opinions of high school students as a whole? Are the selection processes which attracted them to student government positions and the qualities which caused their fellow students to elect them so discriminating as to make them atypical?

Research, particularly that of Buser, Long, and Tweedy (1975) and Cuccia (1981), has indicated that there is a difference between
students who participate in extracurricular activities and those who don't. Their research, as well as that of others, has included, but not been limited to, student government leaders. It would seem, from their conclusions, that the tendency by student leaders to consistently hold different opinions about school, course work, values, and their plans for the future than the general student population might color its opinion about the types of changes students want.

Differences in socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and the proportion of gender distribution also appear to further separate high school student leaders from the student population they are elected to represent (Humm & Buser, 1980).

Indeed, until recently, student government leaders were not usually charged with responsibility for decisions more serious than where to hold the class dance or what gift to present to the school. If educators are going to rely on the opinions of students for advice on how to improve the delivery of a relevant educational program, care must be taken to assure that the suggestions presented are truly representative of the opinions of the mainstream of student consumers.

The purpose of this study was to determine how well the opinions of student leaders about schools, courses, values, and future plans parallel the opinions of the secondary student body as a whole. Used properly, these data will help educators to determine how best to assess the opinions of students, and how to determine the composition of student advisory groups.
The ability of elected student leaders to correctly reflect the opinions of their peer groups was explored with the following questions:

1. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about school the same as those of the general student population?
2. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about courses offered the same as those of the general student population?
3. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about values the same as those of the general student population?
4. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about future plans the same as those of the general student population?
5. Is the socioeconomic status of selected student leaders proportionate to that of the general student population?
6. Is the academic achievement level of selected student leaders proportionate to that of the general student population?
7. Is the distribution of gender for selected student leaders proportionate to that of the general student population?

Summary

In this chapter, an overview of the status of high school students as opinion brokers for the public schools was presented, and the problem was stated. The questions addressed by the study were recorded.

In the next chapter, the review of the related literature is presented. The review explores various phenomena related to adoles-
ence, including the ways in which opinions are formed during the teenage years. Particular attention is focused on how adolescents develop opinions about school, courses offered, values, and plans for the future, the dependent variables for this study. A discussion of peer influence on attitude formation is presented as an overall concern of adolescents, with the exception of student leaders who appear uniquely independent of it. Other factors which distinguish student leaders, including socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and proportion of gender distribution are examined. The role of the student leader in school government is discussed, and the views of the general student population toward school government and student leaders are explored.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Overview

In this chapter, a review of the literature related to the adolescent is presented. The ways in which adolescents form opinions and attitudes are explored, and particular attention is given to the attitudes of adolescents toward their schools and course work. The development of adolescent values is discussed, along with the eventual formation of plans for the future which arise from value decisions. The relatively high degree of influence which peers have over adolescents is presented as an overall concern in the consideration of any study of adolescent attitudes or opinions. A group of adolescents who appear to be uniquely independent of peer pressure are identified as student leaders. Leaders are also shown to have higher academic achievement levels and to be from higher socioeconomic backgrounds than those students who make up the general student body population. Also, a tendency for disproportionate gender distribution among elected student government positions is presented. The role of student government in the high school is explored, and the relative lack of satisfaction by the general high school student body with student government and the availability of participation opportunities for all extracurricular activities is discussed. The question
of the appropriateness of high school leaders as sources of direction for student-desired change is raised.

The High School Student

Adolescence

Contemporary American culture is often depicted in popular media as being preoccupied with youth. Yet writers from many cultures, including those of the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, have portrayed adolescence as a time of special poignancy and unpredictability. An explanation of this fascination by mankind with youth is offered by Conger:

Adolescence is remembered as the time when our identities were established, when potentialities for accomplishment—though not the accomplishments themselves—were at their height. For many, it is remembered as the period of being most alive. The friendships formed in those years, and the first loves, have a kind of special permanence in our minds. (1973, p. 20)

This romantic interest in youth would raise speculation that, like the popular literature, the professional literature would also abound with studies which attempt to define the various elements which characterize the adolescent phenomenon. But unfortunately, there is a paucity of information, and much of the research which has been done attempts to generalize the opinions of samples from a single high school to all adolescents.

Adelson (1979) points out that the limitation is compounded by the fact that the information which does exist tends to focus on adolescents who are not representative of the majority:
We tend to take as our subjects those youngsters who are most like us (and hence, more easily seen), those who clamor for our attention because they are in distress, or those we find exotic or interesting for some reason.

The youngsters who gain our attention are found among the following: the upper-middle class and the lower class rather than the blue collar lower-middle class; the emotionally disturbed rather than the adjusted; the secular or the eccentrically religious rather than those conventionally so; the politically fractious rather than the contented. . . .

What we do not know—what we have not yet even begun to study—far outweighs what we do know about normal adolescence. (p. 34)

The research of anthropologists, initiated by Mead (1928), defines adolescence as a phenomenon of modern culture and of a civilization that has enough machines for purposes of production to make the labor of young people unnecessary. It is only recently that education has been prolonged and marriage postponed until a true period of adolescence has emerged.

Thus, in our society, educators have been left with the primary responsibility for guiding the adolescent through a period of growth which is characterized by physiological, psychological, and sociological complexities. And, because adolescence is such a relatively new phenomenon and empirically proven methods are scarce, educators have had to resort to a "hit-or-miss" experimental style with the high school as laboratory, and the student-adolescent as subject.

For the past 20 years, the most noted researcher of adolescence was Coleman (1961). Though his findings were later refuted by Boyle (1966), Cohen (1976), and others, his study of ten midwestern high schools received national attention and is widely quoted in the literature. Through an instrument which asked students how they wished
to be remembered, he determined that the nation's high schools were producing a separate subculture "whose habitats are the halls and classrooms of the school, the teen-age canteens, the corner drug-store, the automobile and numerous other gathering places" (p. 6). This subculture was directed by a "leading crowd" which, in Coleman's opinion, aspired to athletic prowess and popularity instead of academic achievement. Coleman's pessimistic conclusion was that:

The implications for American society as a whole are clear. Because high schools allow the adolescent subcultures to divert energies into athletics, social activities, and the like, they recruit into adult intellectual activities people with a rather mediocre level of ability. (1961, p. 70)

This attitude seems to have pervaded the research through the mid-1970's. At that time, the appearance of the social phenomenon of high school student protest and drug use encouraged researchers to more carefully examine secondary school youth.

Perhaps the most definitive studies are those implemented by the University of Michigan's (U of M) Institute for Social Research in 1975. Though focused primarily on drug use, the longitudinal studies, which are repeated each spring, present a comprehensive overview of the values and attitudes of high school seniors. The Institute surveys 17,000 students in over 300 high schools across the U.S. Contrary to the foreboding findings of Coleman which warned of a rebellious and resistant adolescent subculture threatening adult-ordered society, U of M's Bachman (Bachman & Johnston, 1979) tells of the Institute's discovery that today's adolescents are a microcosm of adult society—complete with its complexity and diversity. "Our
research suggests that no single label—conservative or liberal, conventional or radical, 'turned off' or 'turned on'—fits college freshmen" (p. 79).

This opinion is shared by Adelson (1979) who suggests that those who are tempted to label adolescents

examine the studies that have looked fairly closely at ordinary adolescents. . . . Taken as a whole, adolescents are not in turmoil, not deeply disturbed, not at the mercy of their impulses, not resistant to parental values, not politically active, and not rebellious. (Adelson's emphasis, p. 36)

The University of Michigan studies which began in 1975, and later, the National Center for Education Statistics' "High School and Beyond" studies conducted yearly since 1980, were designed to determine high school students' attitudes and opinions about a variety of topical areas. The four areas which spark the greatest interest are discussed in the next section.

Attitudes and Opinions

About school. In American culture, the high school has become the center of the adolescent's social as well as educational world. Therefore, interest is naturally drawn to adolescents' opinions about school. The University of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future" studies (Johnston et al., 1981) determine the attitudes of students to their high schools through a series of Likert-type items which adapt well to comparison with other studies in related areas. When asked their opinions about the performance of the public schools as an institution of our social system, 41% of the U of M subjects gave one of the
two favorable responses. This is of particular interest when compared to the responses of adults to a similar question asked the same year by Gallup (1979). Only 35% of the respondents in the national sample indicated they would give the public schools a letter grade of "A" or "B."

High school students' attitudes toward their schools were further examined in another study conducted by Bills (1982) who determined that

four factors are present in students' descriptions of their schools. The first factor is a negative attitude students hold toward some teachers. A second is a positive attitude toward selected aspects of schools. The third factor is a positive attitude students have toward most of the teachers and their school in general. The fourth is a negative attitude toward the compulsory and impersonal aspects of school. (Bills' emphasis, p. 88)

These selective attitudes toward school, characterized by liking some aspects and teachers and disliking others, is consistent with the earlier findings of Harris (1969). He maintained, "It appears that neither revolution nor profound alienation characterizes the reactions of a majority of students. In fact, a majority of adolescents express general satisfaction with the schools and their programs" (p. 324).

This moderate approval of schools was also noted by Leidy and Starry (1967) in some longitudinal comparisons of Purdue Opinion Poll results over a period of 14 years. They reported:

Although the percentage of youngsters who claimed to "like school very much" had declined from 32 percent to 16 percent in recent years, the percentage who declared that they "didn't like it very much" or that they just plain disliked it had remained constant at 27 percent. The slack had been
taken up largely by those who said they like school "most of the time," who constituted 43 percent of the sample in 1953 and 57 percent in 1967. This mild increase in dissatisfaction scarcely amounts to a vote of no confidence. (p. 9)

Bachman (1970) found similar results in his longitudinal study of tenth grade boys. A four-point scale to measure agreement with 23 statements expressing either positive or negative attitudes about school resulted in a preponderance of agreement with the 15 positive statements and disagreement with the 8 negative.

Opinion about school is a complex phenomenon including several component areas or segments. An overview of the various instruments which measure opinions about school reveals the emergence of four areas which appear in most of the instruments cited above, including those of the University of Michigan (Johnston et al., 1981), the National Center for Education Statistics (1981), Harris (1969), and Bachman. The four component segments can be divided into general items about school; items dealing with school personnel, such as teachers and administrators; items dealing with the school environment, including facilities and emotional climate; and items dealing with expectations for performance and success. A more detailed discussion of the components is presented below.

About courses. The writings of Conant (1959) were highly successful in encouraging the cooperation of school districts in order to provide large, fully equipped, consolidated high schools. Coinciding, as they did, with the increased awareness of technology caused by Sputnik and the pressure on American high school students
to "stay in school" instead of dropping out, Conant's arguments highlighted the need for a revamping of the secondary curriculum. As more students with no intention of pursuing college careers completed their high school studies, an increased emphasis on vocational and career readiness appeared in the public high schools.

Not until the social turmoil of the late 1960's and 70's did students begin to expect a voice in the development of their secondary courses of study. It soon became a widely accepted practice to consult students about the relevancy and practicality of the course work offered to them. Cole and Hall (1969) maintained:

Students in any high school have their own opinions about the usefulness of what they are studying, about its interest for them, and about its appropriateness. Their ideas may be vague, impractical or founded on misconceptions and general inexperience; the youngsters are, however, worth consulting. (p. 621)

One of the first of the large national opinion polls to include items relating to course work was the Purdue Opinion Poll (1965) which included questions on the practicality of high school courses in preparing pupils for future life. The results showed that about 75% of the 4,000 students in the sample had favorable opinions about their course work.

Harris (1969) found that while 63% of the students in his sample believed that students should have more say in deciding on curriculum, this opinion was shared by only 47% of their teachers and 35% of their parents. He maintained that "the widespread student demand for scholastic relevance frequently carries with it contempt for learning in any traditional sense" (p. 325).
Silberman (1970) added to this opinion an anecdote about a large suburban high school which informed its junior students that they could pursue a course of independent study on a topic of their own choosing, in lieu of a conventional course. Only three out of nearly 900 students applied for the course.

While many would assume that instructional variables, such as textbooks, class structure, and objectives, etc., would play a major role in determining students' attitudes toward course work, the research does not bear this out. McMillan (1976) reviewed 124 dissertation abstracts in order to assess recent research concerning factors which affect student attitudes toward school subjects. He found that "noncurriculum related variables may have as much, if not more, impact on attitude formation" (p. 324). Seventy percent of the studies he examined showed significant findings for student-related variables, such as self-concept, background, parents, and previous attitudes.

Though no empirical data is yet available, it is anticipated that changes in the job market—particularly those related to the advent of the computer—will have an increasing effect on the opinions of high school students about the courses they are offered.

About values. The interest in society in the formation and perpetuation of values has led to considerable study in the area. These studies have naturally focused on the formation of values which, some claim, occurs during the adolescent period. Thus, the relative abundance of information on adolescent values is rooted not
In an interest in adolescence, per se, but in values themselves. Nonetheless, the existence of studies on values has afforded a favorable starting point for those who wish to explore the adolescent phenomenon, and nearly all studies of adolescents include some exploration of value formation and retention.

An interesting commentary on adolescent value formation is provided by Gallatin (1975) in her study of the Danish psychiatrist Erikson's work:

In order to rank himself solidly in his community, in order to bring his past and present experiences firmly in line with his future aspirations, the adolescent must enjoy what Erikson terms a feeling of ideological commitment. He must believe that what he has done, what he is doing and what he plans to do are all compatible, that they may all be measured against the same yardstick. He must also believe that his own goals make sense within the context of a larger society, that his society approves these goals, and that it will, as it governs, provide him with the necessary support. Just as it can help him to overcome a sense of authority confusion, this "personal ideology" can help the adolescent to avoid a confusion of values. (Gallatin's emphasis, p. 202)

In early studies, the most frequently used method for determining adolescent values was to present subjects with a list of value-laden goal statements and ask them to rank order them. This technique was employed by Richards (1965) in his study of 12,432 college freshmen. Of the 35 possible goals, he found "being a good parent," "finding a real purpose in life," "being a good (husband) (wife)," "becoming a mature and well-adjusted person," and "becoming happy and content," as the top goals. He expressed surprise at finding great similarity in the responses of males and females. Not until much further down on the list did differences begin to occur.
Characteristically of the time, he attributed them to "items where the sexual role was of importance" (p. 18).

The social changes of the late 1960's and early 70's led some observers to speculate that adolescent values were undergoing radical changes with an increasing emphasis on liberalism. Yankelovich (1969) found that the widely publicized views of some deeply disenchanted young people did not necessarily constitute an overall change. "Although significant, and possibly growing, minorities of contemporary adolescents have become profoundly disillusioned with contemporary society, the average adolescent still retains many traditional values" (p. 69). His nationwide study revealed a majority of adolescents who subscribed to such beliefs as "competition encourages excellence"; "the right to private property is sacred"; "depending upon how much character a person has, he can pretty much control what happens to him"; "society needs some legally based authority in order to avoid chaos"; and "compromise is essential to progress." Approximately two out of three of his respondents expressed the view that hard work leads to success, and that success is worth striving for (pp. 71-73).

The technique employed by Yankelovich to measure values is also utilized in the U of M "Monitoring the Future" studies. Instead of asking the respondent to rank order values statements, the instrument allows the respondent to indicate degree of agreement with each statement. The U of M studies allow trends to emerge; a longitudinal look, provided by Bachman and Johnston (1979), of the same questions.
over a period of years reveals some interesting patterns: "Having a good marriage and family life" (p. 82) is rated higher than all other goals. "Finding purpose and meaning in my life" is consistently mentioned as "extremely important" by approximately two-thirds of the respondents (p. 82).

Though not noted for its sampling validity, the results of the mail-in questionnaire from the 11th national opinion survey of Who's Who Among American High School Students (1980) offers some interesting comparisons to the U of M results. The 24,000 high school juniors and seniors who returned the questionnaires were reported as having "set fairly high standards for themselves and lived by rather rigid personal codes. Traditional relationships were attractive to the teenagers for dating, friendships, sex and marriage" (p. 2).

The value statements used in the majority of these studies indicate that most adolescents have already begun to develop opinions about marriage and career. Thoughts on these life-style and career decisions are often the seeds for the making of definite plans. The opinions and attitudes of adolescents toward plans for their futures are discussed in the next section.

About plans for the future. Most studies focusing on the future plans of high school students have been conducted by colleges and universities interested in determining the composition of their future freshmen classes. For this reason, the researchers concerned themselves primarily with those respondents who were contemplating
college. All other respondents were characteristically combined into a group of "non-college bound" or some similarly labeled designation.

In the fall of 1957 and spring of 1958, Cutright (1960) asked 8,500 high school students about their future plans. College prospects were those who stated intentions to go to college or indecision about college in both questionnaires. Results showed that for all high school students, freshmen through seniors, males outnumbered females in plans to attend college. Fifty percent of the 1,029 seniors in the sample were included in the college prospect group. A later investigation of the subjects, conducted in 1959, showed that only one-third of them actually was attending college.

Stice, Mollenkopf, and Torgerson (1956) identified several factors influencing decisions to enter college. They included: IQ, father's professional status, financial ability, high school academic achievement, peer influence, high school guidance and counseling availability, socioeconomic status, and number of younger siblings in the family. The factors emerged as the result of their study of 35,000 high school seniors. The following year, a longitudinal comparison revealed that 36% of the males and 27% of the females were actually enrolled in college. These included 65% of the group who, as seniors, had indicated plans to attend college, plus an additional 7% of the group who had indicated no college plans. Of the "best prospects," those with high general intelligence and high academic performance and test scores, 78% were in attendance.
The Purdue Opinion panel (1965) surveyed 4,000 high school seniors about their future plans. Results showed 53% intending to enter college, and 17% planning to continue their education in some type of special school.

The major conclusion drawn by Coleman (1961) was that high school experiences have little, if any, effect on students' attitudes. He was, however, willing to assign some degree of influence to the school system in shaping plans for further education. Whether or not a youngster plans to go to college, he declared, depends far more on the type of high school he goes to (e.g., urban and upper class vs. rural and lower class) than his father's education.

Boyle (1966) also concluded that high school can have some impact on college plans. Though his study, conducted in Canada, included only girls, his results were nonetheless interesting. He found a relationship between the type of high school the student was attending and her stated intention to enroll in college, even when other factors, such as socioeconomic status, were held constant. Though research comparing the attitudes of Canadian students to Americans is not readily available, it might be posited that the cultural similarities between the two countries allow an inference from the Canadian work to American students.

Of course, as is only too evident, the high school is not alone in determining the nature of an adolescent's choices for the future. Intelligence, social class, and gender all enter the picture as well. For reasons that are not altogether clear, social class has received
the most attention, perhaps because it is easily measured, is often a part of studies conducted by social science researchers in other disciplines, or because researchers assume, simply as a matter of common sense, that the more intelligent students will enroll in college. A whole host of investigators, including Boyle, have pointed to the substantial relationship between a student's socio-economic standing and his educational objectives—or lack of them.

Until the late 1960's, researchers including Hollingshead (1949), Nelson (1963), Sewell, Haller, and Straus (1957), Thomas (1956), and Youmans (1956) concluded that, in general, teenagers from more affluent and educated families make up a disproportionate percentage of the student body at any given college, and those from less privileged backgrounds are more likely to either opt for trade schools or end their training altogether after the 12th grade.

Rosenberg (1965) found a relationship between self-esteem and career choice. His studies of 1,200 high school students showed that those with high degrees of self-esteem sought careers that would offer challenges and the opportunity to exercise leadership. Those with low self-esteem (labeled "egophobes") desired to "get ahead in life" but expected that they would "never get as far ahead in life" as they would wish (p. 233). He further concluded that "egophobes are more inclined than others to avoid positions which will make them (1) subordinate to others, (2) superordinate to others, or (3) place them in competition with others" (p. 224).
The National Center for Education Statistics' "High School and Beyond" (1981) studies attempted to determine if the age at which a student made the decision to attend college had an effect on behavior.

Sample sophomores were asked whether they had planned to go to college in each of the past four years. For sophomores these four years primarily refer to the time before high school. Therefore, these responses indicate the student's early educational expectations. (p. 59)

Perhaps the clearest picture of the expectations of high school students is provided by the U of M's "Monitoring the Future" study (Johnston et al., 1981) which explored a variety of post-high school options with its 17,000 respondents. When asked what they would want to do if nothing stood in their way, the responses indicated that 27% would like to attend a technical or vocational school, 13% would serve in the armed forces, 26% would graduate from a two-year college program, 61% would graduate from a four-year college, and 40% would attend graduate or professional school after college (p. 21).

As has been seen in earlier longitudinal studies, the college expectations of high school students are not always brought to fruition. Many researchers attribute this strong desire to attend college on the part of high school students to the influence of their peers.

As adolescents achieve greater independence from their parents, ties with them become progressively looser, and dependence upon peers assumes a special importance. According to Conger (1973):

Relationships with family members are so frequently charged with conflicting emotions during the adolescent period--
dependent yearnings existing alongside independent strivings, hostility mixed with love, and conflicts over cultural values and social behavior—that many areas of the adolescent's inner life and outward behavior become difficult to share with his parents. (p. 286)

The importance of the influence of the peer group is included in the literature as an influence over all adolescent opinions and attitudes. For this reason, a discussion of peer influence is included in this section.

**Peer Influence**

Rosen (1970) warned, "The importance of the peer group, even in situations where parents and peer group conflict, must be taken into account in any study of adolescent attitudes" (p. 273). Her study of 50 Jewish adolescents and their views toward eating kosher meat, based upon the opinions of their referent group, revealed that in cases where parent–peer groups have conflicting attitudes on an issue, the adolescents tended to agree with their peers rather than with their parents.

Braham (1965) attempted to define the social significance of the adolescent peer group:

The majority of adolescents identify (a) with a reference group from which they obtain their ideals, goals and aspirations and (b) a membership group with whom they share common patterns of action. If the membership group is of sufficient attraction and strength, it may also function as the individual's reference group. Peer groups tend to comprise both reference and membership group functions. (p. 298)
Conger (1973) pointed out the almost universal need of adolescents to belong to a peer group, and to conform to its norms and pressures: "In their desire for popularity and their conformist attitude they are like as one: low income or high income, their concern is to be liked" (p. 289).

He divided the peer group relationships into three subgroups: the "crowd" (essentially an association of cliques), the "clique" (smaller in size with an upper limit of nine members), and the individual friendship (p. 295). These divisions appear quite consistent with other writers, though most are not quite as definitive. Conger further indicated that the majority of peer relationships are formed through socioeconomic status, but may also be formed on the basis of ethnic background, common interests and hobbies, residential proximity, personality characteristics, degree of social and personal maturity, and the degree of heterosexual interest.

Damico (1976) noted that another basis for clique or peer group membership appeared to be academic achievement. Her study of 89 high school students at a university laboratory school used observations and interviews. She found that even though clique members did have similar degrees of academic achievement, "achievement followed clique membership more than achievement predetermined clique membership" (p. 33). Her correlational analysis allowed her to conclude that "clique membership is related to academic performance but not attitude toward school" (p. 34).
Conger (1973) attributed strong adherence to the peer group's attitudes to three out of every four of the 267 adolescents that he studied. But what of the other 25%? What characteristics allow some adolescents to resist the appeal toward group norms which apparently characterizes the majority of their age group?

A description of the adolescent who is able to maintain individuality, particularly in terms of attitudes, is offered by Sebald:

This nonadolescent teen-ager may be well integrated in his family, may have clear perceptions of his future occupation, may have satisfactory access to adult models which he accepts and emulates, and may freely adhere to the value orientations of the adults with which he has close contact. His participation in the teen-age subculture is therefore merely perfunctory and of superficial significance to his personality development. This type of youth is the minority. (1968, p. 204)

The tendency of those adolescents who are independent of peer group influence to adhere to the value systems of adults caused Gifford and Colston (1975) to speculate that these same adolescents would be found among the group which teachers perceive as leaders. They asked teachers to rate the leadership qualities of the students in their experimental group. All the subjects were then exposed to peer pressure to change their attitudinal opinions. They concluded that "the subjects representing the group classified as leaders remained significantly more independent while under group pressure than did those subjects classified as non-leaders" (p. 371).

The study for the validation of an instrument developed by Karasick (1968) to identify student leaders for the Purdue Opinion Poll led to the assumption that the same qualities which teachers
look for in identifying student leaders are used by students in selecting leaders from among their fellow students for elected leadership positions. Karasick found that high school student leaders were distinguished from their peer groups by the fact that they "did not mind being lonesome, and felt that running with a gang was foolish" (p. 41).

The element which consistently appears in these studies as separating one group of students from the others is leadership. Student leaders, so distinguishable from the general student population that they are readily identified by both teachers and students, appear to have qualities that make them unique. These characteristics include not only a resistance to peer influence, but, as can be seen in the next section, a variety of other identifiable qualities.

Student Leadership

Definition

A great deal has been written about student leadership, both formal and informal. Informal leadership is exhibited in situations in which, as described by Boles and Davenport (1975), there are "usually no designated leaders, and in some, no designated positions" (p. 4). In the school setting, this would include leadership cliques or other casual groups whose influence is exerted without any positional power. The leadership in these cases is primarily personal and can be readily changed. For purposes of this review, the focus is upon formal student leadership.
The term "formal student leadership" was defined by Folkemer (1974): "A position of authority in the student government, an extracurricular activity or athletic program. This position was held by a student who was either elected by his peers or selected by one or more staff members" (p. 11).

Traits

Early studies of student leaders were conducted by researchers whose major interest was the leadership phenomenon, per se, and not as it applied to adolescents. They were primarily concerned with attempting to generalize their findings about high school leaders to adults. The apparent reason for the choice of high school leaders as subjects, as opposed to leaders from industry or government, was the accessibility of high school students, and the controls which could be imposed upon them during the course of the study. Nonetheless, these early studies do give some interesting views of the subject of student leaders, particularly in terms of how their findings have been upheld and supported through the years.

General Explorations

The majority of the studies prior to World War II were concerned with the identification and enumeration of traits which characterized leaders. Much of the methodology was primitive, and some of the contradictions of traits which emerged from the early research are even comical by today's standards. The reports by Bellingrath (1930) de-
terminated that high school leaders were older and taller, while Garrison (1935) found that they were younger and shorter. But some of the findings were remarkably accurate and still hold true after subjection to more sophisticated analytical scrutiny.

Caldwell (1926) studied 113 college-age student teacher leaders at Columbia University. He found that characteristics such as physical achievement, scholarship, and age varied with the type of activity in which the leaders were engaged. For example, he found that those leaders who were elected as captains of sports squads tended to excel in physical achievement, but not necessarily in scholastic pursuits.

Wetzel's (1932) findings supported those of Caldwell, and also revealed a propensity for initiative and a willingness to accept responsibility. His study of 56 elected or appointed student leaders was conducted in a modern comprehensive high school. He was one of the first to determine that both students and faculty perceived elected student officers as having leadership characteristics.

Remmelin (1938) determined that extracurricular office-holding did not necessarily constitute leadership. His study of 783 student office holders revealed that leaders achieved high academically, participated in more group activities, and displayed dominance.

Reynolds (1944) reaffirmed that teachers and students perceived the same students as school leaders. In addition to finding academic achievement and personality characteristics similar to other researchers, he was one of the first to eliminate height as a significant
leadership trait. His study at a high school in Oklahoma divided 888 seniors into leaders and nonleaders. The leaders' group was noticeably more intelligent, and excelled in scholarship.

Stogdill (1948) surveyed the findings of 124 leadership studies from 1904 through 1947, including 34 studies of high school leaders. He concluded that the factors which had been found to be associated with leadership could be classified under the headings of "capacity, achievement, responsibility, participation and status" (p. 66). He disliked the tendency to list traits, however, and maintained that leadership was rather a working relationship among group members in which the leader established the leadership position through the demonstration of a capacity for carrying cooperative tasks through to completion.

After World War II, the government's interest in technological growth opened the doors of industry to federally funded research. Though great strides were made in the study of the phenomenon of leadership as it applied to adults, little attention was paid to the high school student leader until the social unrest of the late 1960's.

The one exception was Coleman (1961) who, despite much refutation of his findings, is still one of the most widely quoted researchers in the area of adolescence. He is responsible for coining the term "leading crowd" which is still used in the literature to describe that group of students which tends to become actively involved in extra-curricular activities, including student government. Coleman's contention that the balance of the high school students tends to emulate
the "leading crowd" (which he characterized as frivolous, superficial, and anti-intellectual) was refuted by Cohen (1976) who concluded:

Coleman's views of student culture may overestimate the unity of the leading crowd. The leading crowd may exert very little peer influence. Coleman never really showed that the leading crowd did influence their peers. . . . Few of the traits stressed by Coleman set a majority of school elites apart from other students. (p. 379)

Purnell (1970) released the transcripts of some interesting dialogue he initiated with a small sample of high school juniors. Though unsupported by further study, some of their comments are consistent with the findings of the past decade. A student identified as Greg gave his perceptions of the leaders in his high school:

And then there's the kids in the lower college group, they have control of the student council and what's the big stuff like that--mixed in with others. I don't think they really lead the school in the sense that everyone looks up to them. Everyone has their own idea and they try to follow it themselves. (p. 8)

Willems (1970) attempted to determine if choice of student leaders was affected by school size. His findings had implications for the group that he referred to as "marginal students"--those whose academic abilities called into question their suitability for high school and its activities. He found that in large schools these students were excluded from activities and often dropped out of school. But in small schools where there were relatively fewer students available for activities, these marginal students reported a sense of obligation that was similar in magnitude to the "regular" students'.
Snyder (1972) collected data from 320 members of the junior class in a high school in the midwest in order to identify high school perceptions of criteria for prestige. He maintained that "the criteria students perceive important for prestige within a school are closely related to adolescent values. We should think of prestige as a specific representation of more generalized adolescent values" (p. 130). He found that personal qualities and material possessions ranked first and second in importance and that having the "right friends" was the least important criterion.

Burbach (1972) studied powerlessness among 565 high school students in the rural region of the southeast. He found that "those individuals who held school-related offices felt more in control of events" (p. 351) in both the specific context of their school and in the larger society as a whole. He maintained that those "who are involved in the control of a smaller social system" (p. 351), such as a high school student council, are also likely to believe that they can generally exert influence over events at varying levels of social organization.

A comparison of formal student leaders to informal was conducted by Folkemer (1974) who studied 308 students and 84 faculty members at a high school in Rockland County, New York. He found a small group of students who dominated both groups. They were perceived to be influential because of their personal and positional influence. He reaffirmed that student perceptions of leaders matched those of faculty and that "both groups perceived formal as well as informal
leaders as performing leading roles in situations associated with
decision-making, policy-making, and goal implementation, and in
situations associated with group cohesion, identity and sentiment" (p. 120).

The elevation to leadership positions by one's peers would most
certainly result in a positive self-concept. This hypothesis was
tested by Yarworth and Gauthier (1978) using 459 students from five
central Pennsylvania high schools. They concluded:

Not only are academic achievement and participation related, there is also a strong relationship between both academic achievement and participation (in extracurricular activities including student government) and the scores of students obtained on four separate measures of self-concept. (p. 342)

The renewed interest in student leadership which has characterized the past decade has also resulted in efforts to bring leaders together and augment their skills. This has been attempted by the Project Outreach leadership forums in Michigan (Fortino, 1982), and on the national level by the National Leadership Conference conducted by the University of Minnesota's Center for Youth Development and Research (Conrad, 1980). The directors of the Minnesota project noted significant positive change among the participants in the areas of personal and group efficacy, social and personal responsibility, self-esteem, and notions of leadership. But when the conference led to a close, the organizers wondered to what ends their efforts had been directed. According to Conrad:

There appears to be more opportunity to hear and talk about leadership than to practice it; more emphasis
is on the general predispositions of leadership than on its requisite strategies and skills; more stress that one can and should be a leader than on just what one might be a leader of or to what specific ends. (p. 10)

In summary, early studies of student leadership were conducted by researchers with a primary interest in the leadership phenomenon as opposed to an interest in students, per se. Studies in the first half of this century usually resulted in the listing of traits which the subjects were found to possess. Because these early studies lacked sophistication, traits often contrasted with those being listed in concurrent studies. With the social unrest of the 1960's, a new interest in adolescents led to many studies which included the student leadership phenomenon.

It appears that, at least for the time being, the leadership qualities of the formal high school leader are most often exercised in the offices of the school governments, and most specifically, in the student council.

Of the numerous variables which have been included in the studies conducted of student leaders throughout this decade, there appear to be some which continually recur. These variables are dealt with in greater detail in the following section.

Academic achievement. Most of the earlier researchers cited in the section above, including Caldwell (1926), Wetzel (1932), Remmelin (1938), Reynolds (1944), Stogdill (1948), and Coleman (1961), identified scholastic aptitude and performance as a recognizable characteristic of student leaders.
Stogdill (1948) offers some interesting commentary on the possible reasons for high academic achievement of leaders. He first points out that high academic achievement is not surprising since leaders are also known (as shown by the research of Caldwell, 1926, and others) to be more intelligent than average. But, Stogdill reasons, "Superior scholarship may not be a mere byproduct of superior intelligence, but may possess direct value for leadership status when it comprises one aspect of a general ability to get things done" (p. 52).

In his discussion of student prestige, Snyder (1972) reported that "data suggests that students who are high in social participation are likewise high in academic achievements" (p. 135).

Yarworth and Gauthier (1978) also reported a relationship between academic achievement and school activities, including student government and class office. "Not only are academic achievement and participation related, there is also a strong relationship between both academic achievement and participation (in school activities) and the scores of students on self-concept" (p. 342).

Willems (1970), referred to in the section above, found that students in small schools who did not excel in scholastic achievement were still able to attain positions of leadership in student government when the lack of enough high-achieving students made offices available to them. This would appear to reinforce a correlational relationship between achievement and leadership rather than a causative relationship. This is further complicated when rules determine eligibility.
Allen and Gansneder (1976) found that such rules create a tendency toward intellectual elitism in high school government resulting in participation by few "average" high school students. (Buser et al., 1975, estimate that only five percent of high school students are involved in student government.) They surveyed 383 students from six different high schools, and found that in all of the schools, minimum grade point averages were required for membership in student activities. They concluded that "many of the students do not participate in student activities for this reason. Sixty-three percent agreed that the policy of excluding students from the activity program because of low grades should be eliminated" (p. 14).

The practice appears to be widespread. Weber and McBee (1981) conducted a mail survey of several hundred high schools and found that 40% of the responding schools indicated a policy of denying access to student activities to students with low scholastic standings. "Two-thirds of those specifying said that a grade of C would be required, and 28 percent indicated B or better" (p. 96). The writers likened the practice to requiring literacy tests for voters or elected officials.

Purnell and Lesser (1970) studied stereotypes about vocational students in comprehensive high schools. They found that:

Academic students, more than commercial or general students, report belonging to leading crowds in their comprehensive high schools. Much lower leading crowd memberships are reported among vocational high school students. . . . Vocational students, in interviews, have expressed their distaste for the leading crowd conditions of neighborhood comprehensive high schools and have cited these conditions as part of their reasons for preferring vocational high schools. (p. 247)
Thus, even though it is apparent that high academic achievement can be found among student leaders, it is unclear whether the lower achieving students who do not participate in student government and other school activities do so out of preference, or because they are prevented from doing so by rules or feelings of nonbelonging.

Another characteristic which frequently appears in leaders, but is not an indicator of leadership, is socioeconomic status.

Socioeconomic status. Many studies of leadership indicate that leaders tend to come from a higher socioeconomic background than do their followers. Some attribute this to the high correlation between socioeconomic status and educational attainment, and maintain that it is a tendency to continue in the academic tradition of one's parents.

The most definitive study of the effects of social class on adolescents is the classic "Elmstown Youth" study of Hollingshead (1949). The study included all 16-year-old youth in a small city in the midwest. All of the families with 16-year-old adolescents were classified into five socioeconomic classes. The researchers then administered several kinds of instruments, and conducted interviews with the youngsters. Intelligence showed a rough relationship to class. No students in Classes I and II had an IQ below 90. The bulk of the lowest IQ's was found in Class V. Half of the members of Class I and II were high in academic achievement, and none of them were failing. In Class V, nearly a third were failing, and less than a tenth were performing well. Three colloquial labels were used by the students in referring to one another: the "elite,"
the "good kids," and the "grubbies" (p. 43). The elite set the tone for the school and furnished the leadership. The grubbies were rejected. No one in Class I or II was characterized as a grubbie. Eighty-five percent of Class V were grubbies, and none of them were elites.

While not using high school students, Boss, Wurster, and Doll (1953) studied leadership among sorority women, and developed a list of personal and situational factors which they noted. Among the background factors of the leaders were "better than average social status, better than average income, and membership in families which already had leaders in them" (p. 22).

Winterbottom (1958) posited that the "motive to achieve" is more readily instilled in adolescents by middle class parents than by lower class parents. "Middle class families are more likely to be concerned about having their children 'move up in the world' and are perhaps better versed as well in the general tactics of competition" (p. 234).

Douvan (Douvan & Adelson, 1956) conducted an experiment with middle and lower class teenage boys. The subjects were given a test which was merely an experimental task. Some of them were offered a financial reward for high achievement. The lower class subjects who had been offered the reward scored relatively high, while their lower class counterparts who had not been offered a reward scored relatively low. The scores of the middle class boys remained high whether or not they had been offered a reward. The conclusion drawn was that
middle class youngsters have a more global need to achieve than do lower class adolescents.

Snyder (1972), whose study of prestige was mentioned in the previous section, attempted to assess what attributes adolescents used in determining the members of their peer group whom they hold in prestige. He found that "material possessions" ranked second after "personal qualities" as the most important quality for prestige (p. 134).

Like academic achievement and socioeconomic status, the next trait which often occurs in formal high school student leaders is not an indicator of leadership.

Gender. Though the gender of leaders has rarely been the focus of studies of leadership, it is often mentioned as a demographic variable. Two schools of thought seem to prevail regarding the gender of student leaders, both related to attitudes about sex roles. The first is that more leaders are male because the leadership role is a "natural" one for males. The second is that student leaders are more likely to be female because girls tend to perform better scholastically, and leadership, as reported in the section above, is related to academic achievement. While these explanations seem to be contradictory, they do allow any researcher to explain his or her own data set.

Wetzel's (1932) study of 56 elected high school leaders identified leadership characteristics. He reported that "chances were three to two" that the leader was a male (p. 532).
Tryon (1939) and Ackerson (1942) each conducted studies to identify traits in adolescent leaders. Ackerson reported correlations of .32 for boys, and .40 for girls between leadership and popularity. He also found a slight correlation (.13) between fighting and leadership for 12-year-old boys, and a negative (-.17) correlation for 12-year-old girls. Tryon's study found that trait clusters which characterize boy and girl leaders at 12 years of age differ from those which are found with 15-year-olds. She reported that "this is especially true for girls, who appear to mature somewhat more rapidly in social interest than do boys" (p. 4). Her leadership cluster for 12-year-old boys included the items "daring, leader, active in games and friendly," while for the 15-year-old boys, "friendly" was replaced by "fights" (p. 7). The leadership trait cluster for 12-year-old girls included "daring, leader, and humor about jokes," and for 15-year-old girls traits were "popular, friendly, enthusiastic, happy, humor about jokes, daring and leader" (p. 8).

The research of Buser has contributed the most information about the types of students who participate in extracurricular activities. In his study with Humm (1980), Buser reported that "females represented the majority participation in governance related activities" (p. 670).

Though the amount of research on the role of gender in the composition of those students who are elected as leaders is small, the few conclusions which are available raise it as an interesting question.
Summary

It has been demonstrated and reported that those students who are elected as student leaders tend to have characteristics which distinguish them from the general high school student body. Student leaders come from higher socioeconomic backgrounds, on the average, than those whom they lead. They often have higher scholastic achievement records than the average student. Research has, over the years, also indicated that gender is somehow related to leadership, and that in groups of leaders a disproportionate distribution can be expected. No decisive direction (e.g., more male or female) emerges, however.

In the next section, the effects of these differences as they relate to the role of student government are explored.

The Elected Student Leader and the General High School Student Body

Student Government in the High School

History. The foundations for student councils as a part of the secondary extracurriculum appeared in 1918 as part of the Cardinal Principles of Secondary Education promoted by the National Education Association's Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education. The two major themes of these guidelines were (a) the promotion of individual talents developed by specialized training through differentiated curricula, and (b) the development of a sense of national unity that would give students "common ideas, common
ideals, and common modes of thought, feeling, and action that made for cooperation, social cohesion, and solidarity" (in Cuccia, 1981, p. 99). These principles were to be effected by encouraging pupils to participate in school-sponsored athletic games, social activities, and government of the school as vehicles for strengthening national ideals of American democracy.

The niche of student government in the secondary structure was secured in 1943 when the National Association of Secondary Principals established and supported the National Association of Student Councils. This organization now boasts about 10,000 member high schools across the United States.

Today, student government organizations are most often called the student council, but may also be called a student cabinet, student congress, student legislature, or G.O. (general organization). Students generally elect representatives from their homerooms to represent them on the student council. The council, usually under the sponsorship of a faculty advisor, makes recommendations to the administration about curriculum, social activities, alumni relations, and anything else which is of general interest to the students. Student government activities usually include sponsoring assembly programs, and coordinating student activities. The student council is sometimes supplemented or replaced by individual class governance groups which attend to the specific interests of the students in a particular class.
Whatever the system, the student government usually serves as a model of the democratic process. Students are able to nominate from among their peer group, and to participate in the campaigns and election processes.

Perceptions by students. Gugel, Scheid, and Thompson (1970) surveyed all 17,700 high school students in Columbus, Ohio, to determine what kinds of changes they believed were needed in their schools. Though the predominant response was that student participation in making school rules was needed, the students expressed the opinion that "student government is not doing a good job" and that the actions already taken by their student governments had "brought about few important changes" (p. 21).

An attempt to answer the who, what, why, and why not of student participation in government and other extracurricular activities was conducted by Buser et al. (1975). Their findings supported those of Bourgon, Goller, and Jones (1967) who reported that the amount of student participation is not very high. Bourgon et al. determined that those students who participate in school activities, especially student government, are the school's "elite" who are high in academic as well as social achievement. They concluded that "students who participate in student activities do so for their own personal reasons more than for reasons of civic and social responsibility" (p. 100).

This contention is supported by Allen and Gansneder (1976) who observed that "many students did not participate because the activi-
ties do not contribute to their daily living . . . the students who
do participate, participate in activities which serve their indi-
vidual needs" (p. 14).

Keith (1971) characterized student leaders as "the prominent
[who are] quite at home with recognition, accomplishment, good grades
and promising futures. They take their task seriously and do it well.
In society's eyes, they are the most valuable and promising part of
the school. And who's to argue" (p. 6)? He refers to "the silent
Majority" of students who go through school without participating in
any of the school activities, and who look for their pleasures and
interests outside of school. He suggests that "in student council
circles we speak of apathy as being the failure of the student body to
appreciate or participate in what the student council is doing. The
problem of apathy is thus a problem of the relevance of the student
council" (p. 1).

This attitude would be reflected in the response Buser et al.
(1975) got when they asked students to select which attributes were
most likely to establish status and acceptance among students. Though
"popularity" was the most often mentioned, only 13% cited "active in-
volvement in student government" as a characteristic deemed desirable
(p. 124).

Purnell and Lesser (1970) examined youth in vocational programs
in high school. They reported that not only did work-bound youth feel
removed from the extracurricular activities which were dominated by
students from academic programs, but they also held some resentment
for these "leading crowd" members.
Other reasons why students do not participate in activities were revealed by Buser et al. who cited jobs, social group/clique domination, and transportation problems listed by the 80% of students who have not experienced student government through student council membership or a class office.

Weber and McBee's (1981) disdain for the tendency to deny students membership in the student government because of low grades was reported above in the section on leaders' academic achievement. The problems presented by this practice are found by Allen and Gansneder (1976) in all of the schools they studied:

Grade averages were required for membership in student activities. Many students do not participate in student activities for this reason. 63 percent agreed that the policy of excluding students from the activity program because of low grades should be eliminated. (p. 13)

Their study also revealed that "75 percent agreed that many students do not participate because of the problem of transportation and 65 percent did not think that strictness of rules for membership kept many students from participating" (p. 13). These rules may contaminate the relationship mentioned earlier between academic achievement and leadership. One could conclude that leaders make higher grades not because leadership is characterized by high scholastic performance, but because those leaders who exist among the ranks of lower achieving students are barred from exercising their natural leadership abilities.

Perhaps the most convincing argument to point out the wide range of opinion differences between leaders and the average high
school student is presented by Cohen (1976) in his refutation of Coleman's "Adolescent Subculture" study. "The leading crowd seems unsuited for providing clear unidirectional change forces that could produce large net changes in the student body as a whole" (p. 377).

In summary, the student council program was founded on ideals of promoting democratic principles through participation by high school students in the process of governing their schools. The student governments today are comprised primarily of student elites characterized by high academic achievement and personality traits which are attractive to other adolescents and to adults. The majority of the high school students do not participate for one reason or another, and generally believe that the student government does not perform satisfactorily. Furthermore, the practice of relying on the opinions of student leaders as a reflection of general student body attitude is questionable.

Summary

In this chapter, a review of the literature related to the adolescent has been presented. The ways in which adolescents form opinions and attitudes were explored, and particular attention was given to the attitudes of adolescents toward their schools and course work. The development of adolescent values was discussed, along with the eventual formation of plans for the future which arise from value decisions. The relatively high degree of influence which peers have over adolescents was presented as an overall concern in the consider-
ation of any study of adolescent attitudes or opinions. A group of adolescents who appear to be uniquely independent of peer pressure were identified as student leaders. Leaders were also shown to have a higher academic achievement level, to be from a higher socioeconomic background than those students who make up the general student body population, and to have a disproportionate gender distribution. The role of student government in the high school was explored, and the relative lack of satisfaction by the general high school student body with student government and the availability of participation opportunities for all extracurricular activities was discussed. The question of the appropriateness of high school leaders as sources of direction for student desired change was raised.

**Hypotheses**

Given what the literature says about how adolescents formulate opinions, how student leaders differ from the general student population, and how particular characteristics are likely to be found among student leaders, it seems reasonable to propose the following as hypotheses:

1. The opinions of selected student leaders about school are different than those of the general student population.

2. The opinions of selected student leaders about courses offered are different than those of the general student population.

3. The opinions of selected student leaders about values are different than those of the general student population.
4. The opinions of selected student leaders about future plans are different than those of the general student population.

5. The socioeconomic status of selected student leaders is not proportionate to that of the general student population.

6. The academic achievement level of selected student leaders is not proportionate to that of the general student population.

7. The distribution of gender for selected student leaders is not proportionate to that of the general student population.

In the next chapter, the methodology for addressing these hypotheses is presented.
In this chapter, the methods employed in the study are presented. Two populations were studied. The first, consisting of selected student leaders, was studied in its entirety; the second, of general high school students, was represented by a proportionate sample of seniors. The instrument used to collect the data is reviewed, and the variables used in the design are named. The procedure for the administration of the instrument is outlined. The dependent variables are presented, and the procedures for the statistical analyses applied to the data are described.

Populations

Two populations were studied and the opinions of their members compared. As indicated by the research questions presented in Chapter I and restated as hypotheses in Chapter II, the populations consisted of selected student leaders and a larger population consisting of general high school student body seniors. The selected student leaders population was studied in its entirety; a systematic random sample of the general senior population was drawn with proportionate representation from each of the 30 high schools in the study.
Selected Student Leaders Population

The first population consisted of the members of the Student Commission on Public Education (SCOPE). SCOPE consisted of 90 elected student leaders representing the 30 high schools in Macomb County, Michigan. Each high school was invited to select three members to represent it on the commission. Representation from each high school was equal and not proportional to the size of the student population of the high school.

The members were selected by their building principals and student government faculty advisors from all students in their school elected to student government positions by their peers for the 1982-83 school year. The criterion for selection was the ability, as perceived by principals, to represent the students of their high school at the county level.

The student commission met four times during the 1982-83 school year, and discussed problems of mutual concern to high school students throughout Macomb County. Their discussions led to the proposal of some recommendations and solutions which they presented to various professional organizations for approval. The solutions were intended to address the interests of all high school students.

Members of SCOPE included 38 juniors and 52 seniors. The inclusion of juniors as well as seniors was requested by advisors to assure that a group of experienced members would sit on the commission with each successive year. While the first meetings of SCOPE were held during the 1982-83 school year, the county plans to re-
convene the group on an annual basis. Thus a 1983-84 SCOPE would have experienced members. However, no student in the 1982-83 group had previous experience. Junior members are asked to sit on the commission during their senior year as well. It is hoped that their experience will expedite the actions of the commission. The researcher recognizes that the ideal composition for this study would be an all senior leadership population, since the general student body sample was drawn from seniors. However the composition of the population was determined independent of this study.

Some support for the inclusion of juniors in the SCOPE decision-making body is offered by Lewis (1981). Her research tested the differences of approach to decisions by students in grades seven through twelve. Her study is unique in that it analyzed the effects of peer pressure on adolescents faced with making serious decisions, such as whether or not to have cosmetic surgery. Much of the literature on peer influence deals with relatively insignificant decisions, such as which style of clothing is preferred. Lewis reported that "no differences between grade levels are found in the incorporation of negative information about a trusted adult or in recommendations that peers or parents be consulted about a decision" (p. 539).

Nothing in the literature indicated that a difference would be found between the responses of juniors and seniors. It should be further noted that the experience of SCOPE was the same for both junior and senior students. Thus, no student had been previously influenced by being in the group. The entire census of the SCOPE population was studied and utilized for data collection.
High School Seniors Population

The second population consisted of the 11,832 public high school seniors in Macomb County, Michigan. They attended 30 public high schools located in 21 districts serving a total of 36,470 students in grades 10 through 12. The largest high school had 2,180 students, and the smallest had 240. There were 12 high schools with enrollments of 1,000 or less, 17 with enrollments between 1,000 and 1,750, and one with an enrollment of over 2,000. The size of the senior classes ranged from 81 to 631, with 19 schools having senior classes of 500 or less, and 11 having over 500 (Macomb ISD, 1982).

The rationale for selecting seniors is best presented in the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research's "Monitoring the Future" studies (Johnston et al., 1981), reviewed in Chapter II:

The completion of high school represents an important developmental stage in this society, since it demarcates both the end of universal public education and, for many, the end of living in the parental home. Therefore, it is a logical point at which to take stock of the accumulated influences of these two environments on American youth. The completion of high school represents the jumping off point from which young people diverge into widely differing social environments, including college, business firms, military service, and home-making. (p. 2)

Macomb County was chosen for the study because it offered a wide cross-section of socioeconomic groups within a manageable geographic area. Had one high school been chosen, the attitudes might have more accurately reflected the particular community in which it was set than high school students as a whole. The inclusion of opinions from an entire state or geographic region would not have

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added dimensions not already available in this cross-cultural county, and would have introduced factors of time and cost outside the range of this study. Macomb County, which is approximately 550 square miles, included 17 high schools located in areas that could be considered urban (i.e., heavy industrial plants surrounded by commerce and residential areas). Ten of the high schools were in areas considered suburban, and three were in primarily rural areas.

The racial/ethnic breakdown for the county's schools was 96% white, 1.7% Black, 1% Asian or Pacific Island, .09% American Indian or Alaskan Native, and .05% Hispanic (Macomb ISD, 1982).

Sample

A systematic random sample was drawn from the population of high school seniors. The entire census of the SCOPE population was included in the study. The procedures which were followed in selecting the high school senior sample are presented in this section.

Sampling Procedure

The sample of high school seniors was a systematic random sample with proportional allocation, as defined by Hinkle, Wiersma, and Jurs (1979), for each of the implicit strata, e.g., high schools. Babbie (1973) advises the researcher to be aware of implicit strata which exist in any sampling frame from which a systematic random sample is drawn. The researcher was aware of the subgroups because the 21 district superintendents who authorized the study were par-
ticularly concerned that each of their high schools be proportionately represented in the study. This is consistent with the definition provided by Gay (1981):

Stratified sampling is the process of selecting a sample in such a way that identified subgroups in the population are represented in the sample in the same proportion that they exist in the population. . . . That is the purpose of stratified sampling, to guarantee desired representation of relevant subgroups. (Gay's emphasis, pp. 90-91)

The individual strata were not variables in the study since the survey of the literature did not indicate that important differences of opinion would necessarily be found among various high schools. In addition, the size of some of the high schools was so small that the temptation for local administrators to draw conclusions about an individual school from the sample was discouraged. Thus, the decision not to cross-tabulate results from single high schools was made in order to avoid any debate over the question.

The sampling frame was a computerized list of student names arranged in alphabetical order by high school. The list was maintained at Macomb Intermediate School District (the liaison between local Macomb County districts and the Michigan State Department of Education) for the purpose of grading report cards. A random number program was used to generate random number \( k \). The program for sample selection instructed the computer to begin with the \( k \)th name on the list, and to select only seniors. Based on a formula of \( \frac{N}{n} \), where \( \frac{N}{n} \) = the skip interval, \( N \) = population size, and \( n \) = desired sample size, (e.g., \( \frac{11,832}{650} \)), the skip interval was 18. The
computer began at \( k \), and selected every 18th senior from each of the 30 lists until a total sample of 650 was drawn.

**Sample Size**

Krejcie and Morgan (1970) recommend a sample of 384 for a 99% confidence level and a 1% sampling error for a population of 12,000. In this study, a sample of 650, which is approximately 5% of the population, was drawn. Thus the sampling error in the senior group is well below the 1% level.

**Intersection of Population Sets**

Because some members of the SCOPE population were also members of the senior classes in Macomb County high schools, the possibility of a SCOPE member being chosen in the senior sample was predicted. The intersection of the sets is illustrated in Figure 1. The shaded area indicates those students in the intersection set.

The intersection set consisted of 52 students who were members of both SCOPE and the senior high school classes. They composed .005% of the senior population, and as the sample was proportionate, .005% of the sample, or 3.25 persons, by chance, could be SCOPE members and chosen in the senior sample. Analysis of the senior sample revealed that two students were included in both SCOPE and the senior sample. Their membership in the SCOPE group was considered as tantamount based on the small size of the SCOPE population as compared to the senior sample, and the relative exclusiveness of membership in SCOPE. Their responses were included in the SCOPE results only. Be-
cause the senior sample was larger than required, the exclusion of the SCOPE members should not adversely affect the conclusions of the study. Thus, the senior sample was 648 seniors after the two SCOPE members were dropped.

![Diagram of populations](image)

**Figure 1**

Intersection of the Populations

**Measurement of Variables**

The variables to be observed in this study were embedded in a larger study conducted by the Communication/Management Training De-
partment of the Macomb Intermediate School District (ISD). The researcher was a member of the Communication Department staff, and, therefore, had some responsibility in the development of the design of the larger study, and of the three instruments which were used: one which measured the opinions of community members, one of school employees, and the third—the instrument used in this study—the opinions of high school students. Though the Macomb ISD study was much larger in scope than the present study, the researcher recognized that the general theses and the methodologies of the two studies were highly compatible, and seized upon the opportunity to use portions of the Macomb ISD study in the present study of student leaders.

Because the Macomb ISD study was much broader than this study, the instrument to measure the opinions of students included variables which were not applicable here. In some cases, items were not in the order which would have been most efficient for the tabulation of the data needed for this study of student leadership. Many of the questions included in the instrument were designed for the special purposes of the Macomb ISD study, but did not measure the variables of interest in this study. The reader will note that the responses to these questions were not included in the data presented here.

Development of the Instrument

The instrument used in this study was the 1982 "Student Survey," a revision of an instrument developed in 1981 by the Communication/
Management Training Department of Macomb Intermediate School District with the cooperation of the Intermediate's Department of General Education.

The Macomb instrument determined high school students' attitudes toward school in general, the courses offered, how leisure time was spent, and opinions about teachers, values, and the future. A copy of the Macomb instrument may be found in Appendix B.

The instrument consisted of 70 items, including 52 Likert-type or yes/no response questions like those found in the University of Michigan instrument; eight open-ended questions, like those found in the Gallup instrument; and nine demographic questions. It was a written instrument, designed to be completed in the presence of a proctor in approximately 30 minutes.

Codes for the open-ended questions broke the responses into seven or eight categories each. Codes were not available to the respondents during the administration of the instrument.

Drafting

The Macomb instrument was modeled after three national studies: the University of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future" instrument designed by the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research (Johnston et al., 1981); the National Center for Education Statistics' "High School and Beyond" instrument (1981); and Gallup's "Annual Poll of Attitudes of the American Public Toward the Public Schools" (1981).
The University of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future" study was discussed in Chapter II. It was primarily a study of drug use and related attitudes, but the questionnaires also dealt with a wide range of other subject areas including attitudes about government, social institutions, race relations, changing roles for women, educational aspirations, occupational aims, and marital and family plans, as well as a variety of background and demographic factors.

The specific parts of the Macomb instrument which were adapted from the "Monitoring the Future" instruments were the questions on values and plans for the future. (See items 31 through 40 in Appendix B.)

The National Center for Education Statistics' (NCES) "High School and Beyond" study is a longitudinal study of U.S. high school seniors and sophomores conducted at the University of Chicago. The specific parts of the Macomb instrument which were adapted from the NCES instrument were the questions on academic achievement, and the coding procedure and questions on socioeconomic status. (See items 65 and 68 in Appendix B.)

The Gallup Poll has been measuring the attitudes of the American public since 1968. The questionnaire included attitudes about confidence in public education, degree of satisfaction with the schools, and an identification of strengths and weaknesses, as well as demographic variables. The specific parts of the Macomb instrument which were adapted from the Gallup studies were opinions about school. (See Tables 3 through 6 for item numbers which may be found in Appendix B.)
The focus of the Macomb study was directed by a committee consisting of six local district superintendents, six teacher leaders, and six high school students who met during the fall and winter of 1980-81. They indicated to the instrument development staff the general areas of attitude and opinion which they wished to see explored, but did not select specific items. They can be considered a panel used for validation in that they verified the content as locally useful.

Pilot Procedures

The instrument was field-tested in three county-wide studies in Michigan which surveyed the opinions of a total of approximately 900 high school seniors during the 1981-82 school year. In addition, the following Macomb County, Michigan, high schools administered the instrument to groups of seniors numbering approximately 250 each: Romeo High School, Braeblec (Roseville), Roseville High School, Center Line, East Detroit, New Haven, L'Anse Creuse High School North (Mt. Clemens), and Clintondale High School. The instrument was also used in a parish-wide survey of high school seniors in Louisiana, in a county-wide survey in northeastern Illinois, and in a metropolitan urban area of Alaska.

The analyses of data for all of these studies were coordinated by the Communication/Management Training Department of the Macomb ISD. Therefore, the analyses, though not identical in every case, were similar.
The instrument used in this study was the second revised edition. Revisions included the addition of several questions in the section dealing with attitudes toward school. The questions were the result of research conducted by the Macomb Intermediate School District Department of General Education on the subject of effective schools. (See items 41 through 63 in Appendix B.) Some of these items are included in the variables of this study.

The revised edition of the instrument was pretested by 59 high school students in Oxford (Oakland County), Michigan, on October 14, 1982. At the conclusion of the pretest, the students were asked to indicate any areas of difficulty which they encountered with the instrument regarding clarity of questions, instructions, or response choices. Four participants indicated confusion over the inclusion of a decimal numerical score for grade-point average on the question about academic achievement. Since this method of calculation was not universally used in high schools, it was deleted from the instrument. The academic achievement question, therefore, included only letter grades and respective percentage score ranges.

Results from the pretest were used to calculate alpha reliability coefficients. Each of the variables measured with interval data, that is the variables on opinions about school, opinions about courses offered, and opinions about values, was tested for reliability. Complete elaboration of these variables is given below. The results showed that for the items measuring opinions about school, alpha is .78. For items measuring opinions about
courses offered, alpha is .56. For items measuring opinions about values, alpha is .46. Reliability of the scores is illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Variable</th>
<th># of Items</th>
<th>Alpha Reliability Coefficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opinions about school</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>alpha = .78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions about courses offered</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>alpha = .56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opinions about values</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>alpha = .46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that, as can be expected, those variables which are measured with the larger item sample result in the best reliability coefficient.

Variables of Interest

Seven dependent variable measures were used in this study. The dependent variables were opinions about school in general, course offerings, values held, future plans, socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and gender.

Opinions About School

The variable, Opinions About School, reflected the student-subjects' attitudes about the performance of the public school system in general, and more specifically, about relevancy and activities.
As noted in Chapter II, the literature on opinions about school appeared to be segmented into four distinct areas: general, school personnel, environment, and expectations. As in the U of M (Johnston et al., 1981), National Center for Education Statistics (1981), Harris (1969), and Bachman (1970) instruments discussed in Chapter II, each of these component levels was addressed in the Macomb instrument, and were measured as indicated in Table 2.

The variable, **Opinions About School**, was measured by 18 items on an interval scale. The items were presented in four components as shown by Table 2.

**Table 2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Variable</th>
<th>Number of Items</th>
<th>Range of Scores</th>
<th>Highest Possible Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0 - 10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School personnel</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0 - 12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0 - 8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0 - 6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total for Opinions</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0 - 36</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**General.** General opinions about school measured the students' overall emotional and judgmental opinions about the school he or she attended. It measured how much confidence the student had in the school to provide an education, whether or not the student enjoyed attending the school, and if the student felt some allegiance.
to the school. General opinions about school were measured in five items and measured on an interval scale as illustrated in Table 3.

The item numbers refer to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B. Scores of two are given to the most positive item response so that each item has an equal impact on the total score.

School personnel. Opinions About School Personnel measured how the student perceived the efficiency, professionalism, and dedication of those school employees with whom she/he dealt. Particular attention was given to opinions about principals and teachers. The six items on opinions about school personnel were measured on an interval scale as illustrated in Table 4.

The item numbers refer to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B. Scores of two are given to the most positive item response so that each item has an equal impact on the total score.

Environment. Questions about Environment measured the general ambience which the student felt for the school, including whether or not the school was a pleasant place to be both emotionally and physically, whether the atmosphere was conducive to learning, and what fellow students thought about spending several hours there each day. Opinions about environment were determined by four items and measured on an interval scale as illustrated by Table 5.

The item numbers refer to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B. Scores of two are given to the most positive item response so that each item has an equal impact on the total score.
Table 3
Opinions About School
The General Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Word Description of Item</th>
<th>Possible Responses</th>
<th>Score for Response</th>
<th>Highest Possible Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Do you like school?</td>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely/never</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Give your school A, B, C, D,</td>
<td>A or B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>or E?</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D or E</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Want to attend different</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>school?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Can grads. read, write,</td>
<td>Agree/probably</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>do math?</td>
<td>probably agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree/probably</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Proud of your school?</td>
<td>Agree/probably</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>probably agree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree/probably</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4

Opinions About School
The School Personnel Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Word Description of Item</th>
<th>Possible Responses</th>
<th>Score for Response</th>
<th>Highest Possible Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Teachers expect students to do well?</td>
<td>Agree/probably agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree/probably disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Principal expect best from staff, students?</td>
<td>Agree/probably agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree/probably disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Staff warm, cares?</td>
<td>Agree/probably agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree/probably disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Teachers assign too much homework?</td>
<td>Agree/probably agree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree/probably disagree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>School run in orderly manner?</td>
<td>Agree/probably agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree/probably disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>Receive enough individual attention?</td>
<td>Agree/probably agree</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Disagree/probably disagree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#</td>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Key Word Description of Item</td>
<td>Possible Responses</td>
<td>Score for Response</td>
<td>Highest Possible Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Most students here like school?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Your school a good place to learn?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Most classrooms well disciplined?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>School pleasant place to be?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Expectations. Expectations measured how the school encouraged the student to perform optimally. Questions determined if students were advised of their progress in academic pursuits, if goals were clearly communicated, and high achievement encouraged. This component was measured by three items on an interval scale as illustrated in Table 6.

The item numbers refer to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B. Scores of two are given to the most positive item response so that each item has an equal impact on the total score.

Table 6
Opinions About School
The Expectations Component

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Word Description of Item</th>
<th>Possible Responses</th>
<th>Score for Response</th>
<th>Highest Possible Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Students know how well they're doing?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>I know what I'm expected to learn.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Students encouraged to do their best?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Opinions About Courses Offered

The variable, Opinions About Courses Offered, reflected the students' attitudes about the classes, programs, and services offered by the public high schools. This variable was an indication of
course work emphasis and practicality. Because students were asked to indicate whether "more" or "less" of a particular course content area was preferred, this group of questions also gave insight into the degree of relevancy with which the student viewed the curricular offerings of the high school. Eleven items measured on a three-point interval scale were used to determine whether a student believed that "more, less or the same amount" of emphasis should be placed on particular areas of the curriculum. The numerical scores measured satisfaction with the course offerings.

An illustration of the measure of the variable, Opinions About Courses Offered, is presented in Table 7.

The item numbers refer to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B. Scores of two are given to the most positive item response so that each item has an equal impact on the total score.

Opinions About Values

The variable, Opinions About Values, reflected the importance with which students viewed traditional values. The questions explored such areas as personal relationships including family, marriage, and friendships; material acquisitions including job and money; community involvement and leadership; and aspirations for success. The variable was measured by nine items on a three-point interval scale in which the respondent indicated whether a particular value statement was "very important, somewhat important or not important."
Table 7
Opinions About Courses Offered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Word Description of Item</th>
<th>Possible Responses</th>
<th>Score for Response</th>
<th>Highest Possible Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Should reading be emphasized?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>mathematics?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>speaking and listening skills?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>writing skills &amp; grammar?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>foreign language?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>training for jobs?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>preparing for college?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>extracurricular activities?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>problem solving?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>substance abuse?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>computers?</td>
<td>more</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>less</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>same</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 (11) TOTAL 22 22
Measurement of the variable, *Opinions About Values*, is illustrated in Table 8.

The item numbers refer to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B. Scores of two are given to the most positive item response so that each item has an equal impact on the total score.

**Opinions About Future Plans**

The variable, *Opinions About Future Plans*, reflected how a student intended to occupy the first few years following high school. The variable was measured by one item on a nominal scale which asked the respondent to indicate whether future plans included college, part-time or full-time work, vocational school, or the military.

Measurement of the variable, *Opinions About Future Plans*, is illustrated in Table 9. The item number refers to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B. Responses were tabulated for each population. The ability to check more than one response was present in each group. Thus, the frequency distribution of responses contain data which were not independent.

**Socioeconomic Status**

The variable, *Socioeconomic Status*, was measured by a single item which indicated, on a nominal scale, the occupation of the father, mother, and/or guardian. The responses were coded into four categories developed by the National Center for Education Statistics' "High School and Beyond" studies (1981): blue collar, white collar, professional, and other.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Word Description of Item</th>
<th>Possible Responses</th>
<th>Score for Response</th>
<th>Highest Possible Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>making a contribution to society</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>having lots of money</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>having strong friendships</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>finding purpose &amp; meaning in life</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>being successful in life</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>having a good marriage</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>being a leader in the community</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>finding steady work</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>having a good family life</td>
<td>very important, somewhat important, not important</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
<td>2, 1, 0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (9)</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0 - 18</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9
Opinions About Future Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Word Description of Item</th>
<th>Score if checked</th>
<th>Score if blank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>When you graduate will you:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- work part-time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- work full-time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- attend technical or trade school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- attend community college</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- attend four-year college</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- join the military</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- other</td>
<td>recorded</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Measurement of the variable, Socioeconomic Status, is illustrated in Table 10. The item number refers to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B.

**Academic Achievement**

The variable, Academic Achievement, was measured on a five-point ordinal scale which asked the student, in one item, to indicate the average letter grade for high school performance thus far. This measure was employed by both the University of Michigan and the National Center for Education Statistics.

Because the students were asked to self-report the data for this variable, the question of the validity of such reporting was raised. The data could not be checked against school records as this would have constituted a violation of confidentiality. The question of validity of self-report data has been addressed by the University of Michigan researchers when faced with the sensitive problem of validating information about drug use which is, of course, illegal. The researchers determined that, "Like most studies dealing with these areas, we have no direct objective validation of the present measures; however, the considerable amount of inferential evidence which exists strongly suggests that the self-report questions produce largely valid data" (Johnston et al., 1981, p. 7).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description of Item</th>
<th>Possible Areas of Response</th>
<th>Coding of Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>What do your parents/guardians do for a living?</td>
<td>Craftsman, laborer, military, operative, and protective service</td>
<td>Blue collar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Clerical, proprietor or owner, sales, service, technical</td>
<td>White collar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Manager, administrator, professional</td>
<td>Professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Farmer, farm manager, unemployed, laid-off, homemaker in one-parent family, retired</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10
Socioeconomic Status
Measurement of the variable, Academic Achievement, is illustrated in Table 11. The item number refers to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Key Word Description of Item</th>
<th>Possible Responses</th>
<th>Score for Response</th>
<th>Highest Possible Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>Which best describes your high school grades: A, B, C, D or below?</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D or below</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 - 4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender

The variable, Gender, was measured on a two-point nominal scale; the respondent indicated male or female. The measurement for the variable, Gender, is illustrated in Table 12. The item number refers to the Macomb instrument found in Appendix B.

Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Possible Responses</th>
<th>Score for Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>Are you male or female?</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Administration of the Instrument

The administration of the instrument is discussed for both groups. However, several common practices were used since every effort was made to assure that the administration of the instrument to each of the populations was carried out in a similar manner. Therefore, the directions given, the instruments used, and the testing conditions were identical.

SCOPE

On October 20, 1982, the first session of the Student Commission on Public Education met in LeFevre Hall in the Service Center of Macomb Intermediate School District. As a part of the day's activities, the members completed the Macomb Student Survey.

Because the goals of SCOPE (a copy of which is in Appendix A) encouraged the student participants to think in county-wide terms as opposed to a local orientation to their individual high schools, it was considered likely that the commission would soon assume an identity of its own. Because a county-wide identity and the opportunity for exchange with students from other schools could potentially alter the opinions of the student leaders about their own high schools, it was considered important that the instrument be administered at the first meeting in October 1982.

Instructions. The same instructions which counselors followed in the administration to the senior sample, and which are discussed
below (see Appendix C), were followed in the administration to the SCOPE population, e.g., a suitable area and materials were provided for the completion of the instrument, the introduction was read aloud to all students, confidentiality was stressed, no questions were interpreted for the students, and instructions to follow directions were given. Four students in various locations about the administration room were designated to collect the completed instruments. The designated students sealed the instruments in envelopes provided for that purpose, and delivered the sealed envelopes to the Communication/Management Training Office.

Eighteen members of SCOPE were not present at the October 20, 1982, session. Reasons for absence varied from involvement in homecoming activities to illness. All 18 members were present at the second SCOPE session held at the Service Center on December 9, 1982. At the beginning of this session, the 18 students were taken into an adjoining room, and the instrument was administered. All of the procedures used in the first administration were replicated. By December 9, 1982, 100% of the SCOPE population had been surveyed.

High School Senior Sample

During the week of November 22, 1982, the instrument was administered to those students selected in the senior sample. Administration took place in each of the high schools under the proctorship of the high school counselors. Counselors were chosen to administer the instrument for several reasons. Administration of various stan-
standardized tests is part of the duties of a high school counselor. The graduate work which counselors are required to complete always includes course work in testing which makes counselors aware of the need for strict adherence to the procedures described in testing instructions. When Macomb Intermediate first presented the proposal for a student sample to the Macomb County Curriculum Directors Association, it was the recommendation of this professional group that administration duties be entrusted to the professional expertise of counselors. Counselors were prepared for their roles with written instructions (a copy of the instructions is in Appendix C). Completed instruments were sealed by designated students and returned to the Intermediate School District via the Intermediate van mail.

Counselors were instructed to plan a second administration date for approximately one week after the initial administration, and to inform the Intermediate of the date. All but two of the high schools complied with the request. These two were telephoned and indicated their follow-up dates over the telephone. Through telephone communication with the counselors, the importance of surveying each of the selected students was established. By December 17, 1982, when most of the schools dismissed for the holidays, all of the available and testable students had been surveyed. Exceptions included the following: 34 students who had not been attending school and were either chronically truant or perhaps had moved, 2 students who were out of the country, 3 students who did not speak English and for whom no suitable translation could be found, and 2 students who were severely retarded and were unable to complete the instrument even
with the assistance of a reader. Thus, the response rate was 607 out of 648, or 94%.

**Quality control.** Each high school was required to furnish the Intermediate School District with the time and place of the initial administration and of the follow-up administration. Two high schools were randomly selected for validation of the administration procedures. On-site visits were made to each of these schools during the times that had been indicated. In both cases, the administration was being carried out according to the instructions which had been provided.

The first school, in northern Macomb County, was visited on November 22, 1982. The administration was held in the cafeteria room which had been closed off for the survey. Students were seated at tables. Three counselors were involved in the administration. The atmosphere was businesslike, and the instructions were followed as written.

The second visitation was conducted at a high school in the central part of the county on November 23, 1982. The administration was conducted in a large study-hall-type classroom equipped with desks. The administration was overseen by a counselor and the assistant principal. As in the first case, directions were carried out as they had been indicated in the instructions to administrators.

**Special considerations.** Counselors were instructed to notify the Intermediate School District if visually impaired or nonreading
students were selected in the sample. A braille or large-print copy of the instrument was to be prepared for sight-impaired students. The instrument was to be read aloud to students who, due to learning disabilities, were nonreaders. Though no requests for either of these services were submitted to the Intermediate, five counselors did call to indicate that learning disabled students had been selected. In one case, the student was deemed able to read the instrument himself; in two cases, special education staff members were available on site to assist the nonreading students; and in the two cases referred to above, readers attempted to administer the instrument but were unable to make the severely disabled students comprehend the type of responses that were required of them, so the students were dropped from the sample.

All completed instruments were forwarded to the Data Processing Department of Macomb Intermediate School District for data analysis.

Every effort was made to insure that those students who were randomly selected for the sample completed the instrument. Each high school was instructed to schedule a second testing session for approximately one week after the initial administration session. At that time, students who, due to absence or whatever reasons, had not completed the instrument completed it.

Data Analysis

Dependent upon level of measurement, data were analyzed by using one of three tests.
Data for the variables of opinions about school, courses offered, and values were measured on an interval scale. A t test for independent means was used to analyze the mean scores for the SCOPE membership as compared to the mean scores for the senior sample.

Data for the variable measuring opinions about plans for the future were measured on a nominal scale, and analyzed using hypothesis testing for the difference between proportions of two independent samples. The proportion of SCOPE members choosing each of the possible post-high school options was compared to the proportion of senior sample members choosing the same option.

Data for the variables of socioeconomic status and gender were measured on a nominal scale, and the variable on academic achievement was measured on an ordinal scale. Each of these data were analyzed using a Chi Square test for two independent samples. The values of the observed scores from the SCOPE group were compared with those scores expected from the senior sample. According to the null hypothesis, no difference was expected to be found.

These analyses were used to determine the responses to the seven research questions first stated in Chapter I, or the hypotheses as stated in Chapter II. The method of operationalization for each hypothesis is provided above in the section on the corresponding dependent variable.

For the convenience of the reader, the questions are restated below:

1. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about school the same as those of the general student population?
2. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about courses offered the same as those of the general student population?

3. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about values the same as those of the general student population?

4. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about future plans the same as those of the general student population?

5. Is the socioeconomic status of selected student leaders proportionate to that of the general student population?

6. Is the academic achievement level of selected student leaders proportionate to that of the general student population?

7. Is the distribution of gender for selected student leaders proportionate to that for the general student population?

The analyses presented above determined whether any differences noted were true differences or the result of sampling error. Each statistical test was performed with a 1% probability of committing a Type I error.

A summary of the analysis of data applied to the various data is presented in Table 13.

Summary

In this chapter, the methods employed in the study were presented. The two populations, SCOPE and the general student population, of high school seniors were described. The proportionate systematic random-sampling procedure used for the high school seniors was described. The instrument used in this study, the "Macomb Student Sur-
vey," was described, and evidence of validation was presented. A conceptual and operational definition of the dependent variables of opinions about school, courses offered, values, the future, socio-economic status, academic achievement, and gender was given. Analytical procedures applied to the various levels of measurement were explained, and the seven research questions were repeated.
Table 13
Data Analysis for the Comparison of the SCOPE Population to the General Senior Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variable</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th># of Items</th>
<th>Level of Measurement</th>
<th>Statistical Procedure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE vs. gen. student pop.</td>
<td>Opinions about school</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>interval</td>
<td>t test for independent means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE vs. gen. student pop.</td>
<td>Opinions about course work</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>interval</td>
<td>t test for independent means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE vs. gen. student pop.</td>
<td>Opinions about values</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>interval</td>
<td>t test for independent means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE vs. gen. student pop.</td>
<td>Opinions about future plans</td>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td>z test for differences in proportions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE vs. gen. student pop.</td>
<td>Socioeconomic status</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td>Chi Square for independent samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE vs. gen. student pop.</td>
<td>Academic achievement</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>ordinal</td>
<td>Chi Square for independent samples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE vs. gen. student pop.</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td>Chi Square for independent samples</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>6 categories.
CHAPTER IV

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

In this chapter, the findings of the study are presented. Each of the research questions is reviewed, and the essence of the null and nondirectional alternate hypotheses are discussed. Tables display the results of the data analyses which were performed, and interpretations of the data are presented.

Respondents

Ninety members of the Student Commission on Public Education (SCOPE) responded to the study by completing the "Macomb Student Survey." The SCOPE respondents represent the entire census of the SCOPE population. Six hundred and seven of the 648 high school seniors drawn in the senior sample responded to the study by completing the instrument. The 607 senior respondents represent a 94% return rate.

Hypothesis Testing--Research Questions 1, 2, and 3

The data analysis techniques used for Research Questions 1, 2, and 3 (and their respective hypotheses) consisted of testing for differences between means for each of the populations on the scale of the dependent variable measured for each respective research ques-
tion. The test statistic used was the standard \( t \) test for independent means. An alpha of .01 was used which indicated a 1% chance of committing a Type I error.

**Research Question 1: Opinions About School**

The first research question suggested a difference between the opinions of selected student leaders about school and those of the general senior population. The dependent variable was composed of opinions about school in general, about school personnel, about the environment of the school, and the expectations for student success and achievement. The null hypothesis \( (H_{01}) \) indicated that no difference exists in the means representing the opinions of the two groups. The nondirectional alternate hypothesis \( (H_{a1}) \) indicated that a difference does exist.

The statistical analysis data shown in Table 14 indicate that the \( t \) test resulted in a value of -1.49, which is less than the critical value of 2.58, and greater than -2.58, and within the area of nonrejection of \( H_{01} \). Therefore, the null hypothesis of no difference between means cannot be rejected.

The mean score for the SCOPE population (28.16) shows a slightly more positive attitude toward school than that of the senior sample (26.71). But the observed difference between the two groups' means (1.45) is not sufficiently large, using an alpha of .01, to support \( H_{a1} \) which indicated a difference in the SCOPE and the seniors' opinions.
Table 14
Research Question 1: Opinions About School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>$\bar{X}$</th>
<th>$\sigma$</th>
<th>$t$ Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior sample</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>26.71</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>-1.49</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>28.16</td>
<td>6.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 2: Opinions About Courses Offered

The second research question suggested a difference between the opinions of selected student leaders about courses offered and those of the general senior population. The dependent variable was composed of opinions about the various content areas of the high school curriculum, and asked the respondent to indicate whether current course offerings in a given area should be offered more, less, or about the same. The null hypothesis ($H_{02}$) indicated that no difference exists in the opinions of the two groups. The nondirectional alternate hypothesis ($H_{a2}$) indicated that a difference does exist.

The analysis of the data shown in Table 15 indicates that the $t$ test resulted in a value of -4.87, which was less than the critical value, -2.58, and outside of the area of acceptance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

These data demonstrate that the SCOPE population is less satisfied with the current course offerings than their counterparts in the senior sample, and that they are interested in seeing more course
offerings in a variety of content areas. The mean score for the SCOPE population (17.18) shows more dissatisfaction with the current course offerings than that of the senior sample (15.68). The observed difference between the two groups' means (1.50) is sufficiently large that there is a difference between the mean of SCOPE and the mean for the seniors using an alpha of .01.

Table 15
Research Question 2: Opinions About Courses Offered

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>σ</th>
<th>t Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior sample</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>15.68</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>-4.87</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>Yes. Reject H₀²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>17.18</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 3: Opinions About Values

The third research question suggested a difference between the opinions of selected student leaders about values and those of the general senior population. The dependent variable was composed of values which were considered by the respondent to be very important, somewhat important, or not important. The null hypothesis (H₀₃) indicated that no difference exists in the opinions of the two groups. The nondirectional alternate hypothesis (Hₐ₃) indicated that a difference does exist.

The analysis of the data shown on Table 16 indicate that the t test resulted in a value of -4.14, which is less than the critical
value, -2.58, and outside of the area of acceptance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

These data demonstrate that the SCOPE population has a larger set of values which they consider important than do the students in the senior sample. The mean score for the SCOPE population (15.10) shows a more advanced development of value systems than does the mean score for the senior sample (14.15). The observed difference between the two groups' means (.95) was sufficiently large that there is a difference between the mean for SCOPE and the mean for the seniors using an alpha of .01.

Table 16
Research Question 3: Opinions About Values

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>σ</th>
<th>t Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Significant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior sample</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>14.15</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>-4.14</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>Yes. Reject H₀³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>15.10</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Hypothesis Testing—Research Question 4

The data analysis technique used for Research Question 4 and its corresponding hypothesis was hypothesis testing for the differences between proportions for independent samples. In order to provide the most statistically accurate interpretation of the data and its relevancy to this study, the data on this variable were analyzed in
each of their separate component parts. The respondents were instructed to select as many post-high school categories as applied. Thus, the two groups were compared in their proportion of selection for each of the categorized choices.

The test statistic \( z \) is calculated by dividing the difference between the observed sample proportions and the estimated difference in the population proportions by the estimated standard error of the difference between the independent proportions (Hinkle et al., 1979, p. 217):

\[
z = \frac{(p_1 - p_2) - (P_1 - P_2)}{(sp_1 - p_2)}
\]

The value of the test statistic, \( z \), was compared to the critical value for an alpha of .01.

**Research Question 4: Opinions About Future Plans**

The fourth research question suggested a difference between the opinions of selected student leaders about future plans and those of the general senior population. The items indicated what plans the respondent had for the years immediately following high school graduation. The null hypothesis \( H_{04} \) indicated that no difference exists in the proportion of students who selected any one of the six future plan categories presented to the two groups. The nondirectional alternate hypothesis \( H_{a4} \) indicated that a difference in the proportions does exist.
The analysis of the data shown in Table 17 indicates differences in the proportions of SCOPE and the seniors in plans to work full-time, attend four-year college, and attend a community college. The data showed no significant differences between the two groups in plans for part-time work, trade school, or the military.

The null hypothesis was rejected for the response "work full-time" with the proportion of seniors being .20, and the proportion of SCOPE being zero, thus producing a test statistic of \( z = 4.64 \). The null hypothesis was rejected for the response "attend 4-year college" with the proportion of seniors being .32, and the proportion of SCOPE being .76, thus producing a test statistic of \( z = 8.00 \). The null hypothesis was rejected for the response "attend community college" with the proportion of seniors being .29, and the proportion of SCOPE being .12, thus producing a test statistic of \( z = 3.27 \). Each of the test statistics for these three items (work full-time, four-year college, and community college) exceeded the critical value of 2.58 for an alpha of .01.

The null hypothesis was not rejected for the response "work part-time" with the proportion of seniors being .23, and the proportion of SCOPE being .17, thus producing a test statistic of \( z = 1.39 \). The null hypothesis was not rejected for the response "attend technical or trade school" with the proportion of seniors being .11, and the proportion of SCOPE being .02, producing a test statistic of \( z = 2.51 \). The null hypothesis was not rejected for the response "join the military" with the proportion for seniors being .08, and the proportion for SCOPE being .03, thus producing a test statistic of \( z = 1.51 \).
Table 17
Research Question 4: Opinions About Future Plans

Hypothesis Testing for Differences Between Proportions for Independent Samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice for Future Plans</th>
<th>Proportion for Seniors</th>
<th>Proportion for SCOPE</th>
<th>z</th>
<th>Significant?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work part-time</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work full-time</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade school</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community college</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-year college</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \text{c.v.} = 2.58 \quad \alpha = .01 \quad N_{\text{seniors}} = 607 \quad N_{\text{SCOPE}} = 90 \]

\( ^a \) Respondents were allowed to make multiple choices. In the senior sample, 741 responses were reported. In the SCOPE population, 99 responses were reported.
Each of the test statistics for these three items (work part-time, trade school, and military) did not exceed the critical value of 2.58 for an alpha of .01.

These data indicate that the overwhelming majority of SCOPE members intend to enter four-year colleges after high school, and to postpone full-time employment. This is in contrast to the senior sample members whose post-high school plans span a number of employment and education choices.

Hypothesis Testing—Research Questions 5, 6, and 7

The data analysis techniques used for Research Questions 5, 6, and 7 (and their respective hypotheses) consisted of testing for differences in the proportion of responses between the senior sample and SCOPE. The test statistic used was the Chi Square ($\chi^2$) for two independent samples. An alpha of .01 was used in testing the null hypotheses. Tables 18 and 19 represent the data for Research Questions 5 and 6, using frequency tables. The data for Research Question 7, which has only one degree of freedom, are represented in a 2X2 contingency table in Table 20.

Research Question 5: Socioeconomic Status

The fifth research question suggested a difference between the socioeconomic status of students in SCOPE and those in the senior sample. The item asked respondents to indicate what their parents
did for a living. The responses were coded into four areas. The proportion of SCOPE students' parents in a particular employment area was compared to that of those students in the senior sample. The null hypothesis ($H_{05}$) indicated that no difference exists in the employment areas for the two groups. The nondirectional alternate hypothesis ($H_{as}$) indicated that a difference does exist.

The analysis of the data shown in Table 18 indicates that the Chi Square test for two independent samples resulted in a test statistic of 19.78, which is greater than the critical value (11.34), and outside of the area of acceptance for an alpha of .01. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

These data indicate that a larger proportion of SCOPE members come from families in the white collar and professional groups than do members of the senior sample.

Research Question 6: Academic Achievement

The sixth research question suggested a difference between the academic achievement levels of SCOPE members and those of the senior sample. The item asked respondents to indicate their approximate overall letter grade average for high school. The null hypothesis ($H_{06}$) indicated that no difference exists in the academic achievement levels of the two groups. The nondirectional alternate hypothesis ($H_{as}$) indicated that a difference does exist.
Table 18

Research Question 5: Socioeconomic Status

Chi Square Test for Two Independent Samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation Category</th>
<th>% of Seniors</th>
<th>Observed Frequency</th>
<th>% of SCOPE</th>
<th>Observed Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blue Collar</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Collar</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>546</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>87</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 19.78 \quad \text{c.v.} = 11.34 \quad \alpha = .01 \]

**Note.** Missing cases: Seniors = 61; SCOPE = 3.
The analysis of the data shown in Table 19 indicates that the Chi Square test for two independent samples resulted in a test statistic of 82.6, which is greater than the critical value (11.35), and outside of the area of acceptance using an alpha of .01. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. These data indicate that a larger proportion of SCOPE members reports academic achievement levels in the "A" and "B" range than those in the senior sample.

Research Question 7: Gender

The seventh research question suggested a difference between the proportion of gender composition in the SCOPE population and that in the senior sample. The item asked respondents to identify themselves as male or female. The null hypothesis ($H_{07}$) indicated that no difference exists in the gender distribution between the two groups. The nondirectional alternate hypothesis ($H_{a7}$) indicated that a difference does exist.

The analysis of the data shown in Table 20 indicates that the Chi Square test for two independent samples resulted in a test statistic of 8.31, which is greater than the critical value (6.64), and outside of the area of acceptance using an alpha of .01. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. These data indicate that the SCOPE population includes a larger proportion of females than does the senior sample.
Table 19
Research Question 6: Academic Achievement
Chi Square Test for Two Independent Samples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Grade</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>SCOPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Seniors</td>
<td>Observed Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D or below</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>When k is greater than 2 (and thus df is greater than 1), the \( \chi^2 \) test may be used if fewer than 20 percent of the cells have an expected frequency of less than 5 and if no cell has an expected frequency of less than one" (Siegel, 1956, p. 110).
Table 20
Research Question 7: Gender
Chi Square Test for Two Independent Samples
2X2 Contingency Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of Seniors</th>
<th>Observed Frequency</th>
<th>% of SCOPE</th>
<th>Observed Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>607</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 8.31 \quad c.v. = 6.64 \quad \alpha = .01 \]

Summary

This chapter contained the research findings of the study. The first three research questions were analyzed with a t test for independent means. The results did not support the hypothesis that differences existed between the opinions of selected student leaders and the general senior population in their opinions about school. However, differences were found in the opinions of the two groups about courses offered and values.

The fourth research question was analyzed with hypothesis testing for differences in the proportions of the responses of the two independent groups on each of a series of post-high school plans.
Differences were found in plans for full-time work, four-year college, and community college.

The fifth through seventh research questions were analyzed using a Chi Square ($\chi^2$) test for independent samples to determine if the proportions of characteristics were different for the two groups. The data revealed that there were differences in the proportions of socio-economic status, academic achievement, and gender distribution in the two populations.

In the next and final chapter, a summary of the entire study is presented, and conclusions and recommendations for further study are made.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter contains a brief summary of this study from its inception through the statistical analysis of the data, the statement of conclusions drawn as a result of the data analyses, discussions about these conclusions, recommendations of the researcher based upon the findings, and recommendations for further research.

Summary

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to determine whether the opinions of elected student leaders, who are often asked to interpret attitudes of high school students, are truly representative of the general high school student population.

The study compared the opinions of selected high school student leaders to a random selection of high school seniors. Opinions measured included opinions about school, courses offered, values held, and plans for the future. In addition, the study attempted to determine whether the characteristics of the elected student leaders were typical of those found in high school students. Characteristics measured included socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and gender distribution.
Specifically, the study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about school the same as those of the general student population?
2. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about courses offered the same as those of the general student population?
3. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about values the same as those of the general student population?
4. Are the opinions of selected student leaders about future plans the same as those of the general student population?
5. Is the socioeconomic status of selected student leaders proportionate to that of the general student population?
6. Is the academic achievement level of selected student leaders proportionate to that of the general student population?
7. Is the distribution of gender for selected student leaders proportionate to that for the general student population?

**Design of the Study**

The study measured opinions and characteristics from two populations. The first population was studied in its entirety, and included the members of the Student Commission on Public Education (SCOPE). SCOPE consists of 90 elected high school student leaders representing the 30 public high schools in Macomb County, Michigan.

The second population studied included the 11,832 public high school seniors in Macomb County, Michigan. From this population, a
systematic random sample of 650 students was drawn. Six hundred and seven of the seniors completed the "Macomb Student Survey" instrument, and were subjects for this study.

The complete census of the SCOPE population and those selected in the senior sample were administered the "Macomb Student Survey" in the late fall of 1982. The survey was developed by a communication research team which included this researcher. The instrument was developed as part of a larger annual study conducted by the Macomb Intermediate School District, which is an organization providing liaison services between local school districts and the Michigan State Department of Education. The instrument measured a number of student opinions about public education, including those opinions which were germane to this study.

The instrument was modeled after various national studies, including those conducted by the University of Michigan (1981), the National Center for Education Statistics (1981), and the Gallup Organization (1981). Only those portions of the instrument related to the variables for this study were considered. The instrument was pretested outside of Macomb County, and pretest results were used to determine the reliability for each of the scales which measured a variable comprised of more than one item.

The study measured the differences in the responses of the selected student leaders in SCOPE to those of the general student body members in the senior sample. The differences were compared on seven dependent variables: opinions about school, opinions about
courses offered, opinions about values, opinions about future plans, socioeconomic status, academic achievement, and gender.

Data were collected from the SCOPE population on October 20, 1982, and from the senior sample during the week of November 22.

Three statistical techniques were applied in the analyses of the data. Opinions about school, courses offered, and values were analyzed using a _t_ test for independent samples. Differences in proportions of future plan options were addressed using a _z_ statistic. Gender distribution, academic achievement, and socioeconomic status were analyzed using a Chi Square.

**Findings of the Study**

The following were the major findings of the study which correspond to the seven research questions:

1. There was not sufficient evidence to indicate that SCOPE members' opinions about school were different from those students in the senior sample.

2. SCOPE members showed less satisfaction with the current course offerings available than did the senior sample members. SCOPE members were interested in having more courses offered in a variety of academic disciplines.

3. SCOPE members had more values that were important to them than did the seniors.

4. SCOPE members planned, by a large majority, to attend college or community college after high school. While a large number of
the seniors planned to work in full- or part-time jobs, no SCOPE members planned to work except in conjunction with college.

5. SCOPE members tended to come from a higher socioeconomic background, on the average, than did the members of the senior sample.

6. SCOPE members reported having higher academic achievement records than did the members of the senior sample.

7. SCOPE members included a larger proportion of females than was found in the senior sample.

Conclusions

On the basis of the results of this study concerning the use of high school student leaders as interpreters of student opinion, the following conclusions are presented:

Research Question 1: Opinions About School

The first research question dealt with the difference which could be expected in the opinions of selected student leaders and general senior members about school. The null hypothesis indicated that no difference would be found between the two groups. The data, as analyzed by a t test for independent means, revealed a mean of 26.71 for seniors and 28.16 for SCOPE. The differences between the two sample means were not sufficiently large to reject the null hypothesis at the .01 level.
Conclusion 1. There is not sufficient evidence to conclude that elected high school student leaders who were selected to participate in the SCOPE activities differ in their opinions of their school from the average student body members they are elected to represent. This study does not support the contention that student leaders feel more favorable about how the public schools are educating them, are more favorable toward their teachers, the administration, the school environment, and the kinds of expectations that are set for them. The SCOPE group's opinions may or may not be considered as dependable reflections of high school students in general in regard to opinions about school.

Discussion. These findings support the earlier findings of Harris (1969), which were presented in Chapter II, that the majority of adolescents are moderately satisfied with their schools. The results of both of the populations' opinions indicate a general satisfaction and moderate approval, given that a perfect score on the variable is 36.

These data seem to indicate that even though the selected student leaders come from different backgrounds, hold different values, and have different plans for the future, they do not necessarily hold different opinions about their schools in general. Perhaps the changes which have occurred in public education in the past several years as the result of declining enrollment, increased financial pressures, and improved technology are causing student leaders' opinions to more closely mirror those of the students they are elected
to represent. However, it should be noted that these perceptions are at the general level.

Research Question 2: Opinions About Courses Offered

The second research question dealt with the differences which could be expected in the opinions of selected student leaders and the general senior population about courses offered. The null hypothesis indicated no difference would be found between the two groups. The data, as analyzed by a t test for independent means, revealed a mean of 15.68 for seniors, and 17.18 for SCOPE. The null hypothesis was rejected at the .01 level.

Conclusion 2. The high school student leaders who were chosen to represent their schools in SCOPE believe that their schools are not offering an adequate variety and/or depth of courses. By comparison to the seniors in the general student population, they are more interested in seeing job training, college preparation, substance abuse prevention, and computer literacy included in their schools' curricular offerings. They are also more interested than the senior sample in seeing current offerings, including reading, math, languages, and writing skills, expanded. The general high school student body member does not necessarily share the student leaders' zeal for curriculum expansion, and surely does not possess it to the degree as do these student leaders who were selected to interpret student wants. The mean differences show a request, on the average, for more
of at least one of the areas. It should be noted that more of everything would be a score of 22, and the status quo a score of 11.

Discussion. These data appear particularly meaningful when viewed in conjunction with the findings of Research Question 4 regarding plans for the future. It is not surprising that students who are setting their goals on further education after high school would be more demanding in terms of the courses they wish to be offered. As school districts attempt to meet budget and enrollment constraints, many are often forced to reduce offerings in the advanced sciences and foreign languages—the very course areas which appeal to college-bound students. These reductions in course offerings might also contribute to an explanation of the findings for Research Question 1, which discovered student leaders who were expected to be positive showing no more favorable opinions about school than other students.

However, it should be noted that the seniors also expressed an interest in curriculum expansion. Though the difference in the mean scores of the two groups was sufficient, from a statistical perspective, to conclude that their opinions were different, it is interesting to note that the mean score for seniors (15.68) is well above the center scale score (11) which would have indicated satisfaction with the status quo. It can, therefore, be seen that while seniors may not express their dissatisfaction with current course offerings to the same degree as do SCOPE members, they are still interested in seeing more emphasis placed on several curricular areas.
Research Question 3: Opinions About Values

The third research question dealt with the differences which could be expected in the opinions of selected student leaders and general senior members about values held. The null hypothesis indicated no difference would be found between the two groups. The data, as analyzed by a t test for independent means, revealed a mean of 14.15 for seniors, and 15.10 for SCOPE. The null hypothesis was rejected at the .01 level.

Conclusion 3. Those students who are in leadership positions in Macomb County high schools and who are selected by their teachers and administrators to represent their high school have a more firmly determined set of values than does the general student body. Their values encompass a wider range than the typical high school senior, and they are more certain of the importance with which they hold their values. While both groups are near the ceiling of the variable (18), the SCOPE group considered at least one of the statements as "very important" instead of "somewhat important."

Discussion. These data findings appear to be consistent with those of the University of Michigan's "Monitoring the Future" studies (Johnston et al., 1981) which were reviewed in Chapter II. Students continue to see the importance of personal and family relationships, and the students who would characteristically be included in the SCOPE group of elected student leaders are already broadening
their value systems to include community service and meaningful contributions to society.

These data do not indicate that students in the general student population don't care about societal contributions. Indeed, there is less than a full point separating the two mean scores (14.15 for seniors and 15.10 for SCOPE). Though it may be admirable that the SCOPE members are already considering most of the value statements as "very important," it calls into question how early in their lives we wish to encourage our adolescents to give very important consideration to such goals as having a good marriage, being a community leader, and having a lot of money. The early development of such concerns by student leaders was mirrored in the results of the Who's Who Among American High School Students (1980) studies which showed that high school student leaders often set more rigid standards for themselves, and live by more stringent personal codes than does the general student population.

Research Question 4: Opinions About Future Plans

The fourth research question dealt with the differences which could be expected in the opinions of selected student leaders and the general senior population about immediate plans for the future. The null hypothesis indicated that no difference would be found between the two groups. Hypothesis testing for differences in the proportions of independent samples was applied to the data for each of the post-high school plan options. The data revealed statis-
tically significant differences in the proportions of seniors planning to begin full-time jobs, to attend four-year college, and to attend community college from those of SCOPE members.

**Conclusion 4.** The selected student leaders who comprise the SCOPE population have more post-high school plans which involve continuing their education than do the general student body seniors. They plan to attend a community or four-year college, while many seniors plan to get full-time jobs or to enter some educational program. Any plans to work after high school are seen as being combined with education by SCOPE members, but not necessarily by the average high school senior.

**Discussion.** These data, particularly when combined with the data from Research Questions 5 and 6, support the findings of Hollingshead (1949); Nelson (1963); Sewell, Haller, and Straus (1957); Thomas (1956); and Youmans (1956) that students with the same characteristics which typified the SCOPE group are much more likely to plan to attend college than are their counterparts in the general student population. Nearly all of the studies cited in Chapter II with longitudinal results indicated that far fewer students actually proceed with their college plans than who indicate such aspirations. The highest actual attendance rate was among the group identified by Stice et al. (1956) as the "best prospects," e.g., those students with the same characteristics as the SCOPE population.
Though not hypothesized as a part of this study, it is interesting to note the plans for work which were revealed by the SCOPE respondents. Not one SCOPE member indicated any plans to work full-time immediately after high school. Of the 15 who indicated plans for part-time employment, all intended such employment to be combined with college attendance.

Research Question 5: Socioeconomic Status

The fifth research question dealt with the differences which could be expected in the socioeconomic status of selected student leaders and general senior class members. The null hypothesis indicated that no difference would be found. The data, as analyzed by a Chi Square test for two independent samples, revealed a test statistic of $\chi^2 = 19.78$. The null hypothesis was rejected at the .01 level.

Conclusion 5. The selected student leaders who comprise the SCOPE population are far more likely to come from homes where the principal wage earner is employed in a white collar or professional occupation than are the members of the general student population.

Discussion. These data describe a phenomenon which was supported in virtually every piece of literature reviewed for this study. The classic "Elmstown Youth" study (Hollingshead, 1949) described in Chapter II was one of the most detailed in its description of adolescent leaders emerging from a higher socioeconomic base than the peers whom they lead.
Research Question 6: Academic Achievement

The sixth research question dealt with the differences which could be expected in the academic achievement of the selected student leaders and the general senior class members. The null hypothesis indicated that no difference would be found. The data, as analyzed by a Chi Square test for independent samples, revealed a test statistic of \( \chi^2 = 82.6 \). The null hypothesis was rejected at the .01 level.

Conclusion 6. The selected student leaders who comprise the SCOPE population report a higher level of academic achievement than do their counterparts in the general student population. Far more SCOPE members report that their grades in high school have averaged in the "A's" or "B's" than do members of the senior sample. It is interesting to note that only three of the SCOPE members reported that they had a "C" average (which was the largest single reported group for the senior sample) and not one SCOPE member reported a grade average in the "D or below" category.

Discussion. These data support the findings of early researchers such as Caldwell (1926) all the way up to the recent research of Yarworth and Gauthier (1978) that student leaders earn proportionately higher grades than do the students they are elected to represent.

But the results of this study leave many questions unanswered about the relationship between academic achievement and high school student leadership. One such question was raised by Weber and
McBee (1981) and reported in Chapter II. Their research indicated that student government leadership may not necessarily be characterized by high academic achievement, but may be permitted to manifest itself only among the ranks of the academically successful because of rules or policies which require minimum grade-point averages of student leader candidates. There may be students with strong leadership skills and/or potential who, because of rules or prejudice, were excluded from elected student leadership (and thus, from SCOPE).

It is also possible that high academic achievement and leadership are indeed related. This point is particularly interesting in view of the comments posited by Stogdill (1948) and reviewed in Chapter II. He maintained that high scholastic achievement is not necessarily the result of superior intelligence. Therefore, student leaders may earn higher grades, not because they are smarter than the typical student, but because their leadership skills provide them with a propensity for getting things done.

Research Question 7: Gender

The seventh research question dealt with the differences which could be expected in gender distribution among the selected student leaders and the general student population. The null hypothesis indicated that no difference would be found. The data, as analyzed by a Chi Square test for independent samples 2X2 contingency table, revealed a test statistic of \( \chi^2 = 8.31 \). The null hypothesis was rejected at the .01 level.
Conclusion 7. The distribution of gender among the students of the SCOPE population is skewed toward females. While the senior sample showed a nearly even distribution between males and females, the SCOPE population revealed that twice as many females as males had been selected to represent their schools in the student government commission.

Discussion. These data support the findings of Humm and Buser (1980) as reported in Chapter II. Their research found that females represent the majority of student government representatives.

Earlier studies conducted by Tryon (1939) and Ackerson (1942) identified male leaders as more likely to fulfill their leadership instincts in sports and games, and female leaders, who they found to mature more quickly, to assume the social leadership roles which are often found in student government.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are made:

To Administrators and Faculty

It is recommended that administrators and faculty responsible for seeking the input of student opinion as a means of directing change should be made aware of some of the differences in the opinions of elected student leaders as compared to the "typical" high school student. Though student leaders have been chosen by their
peers to represent them, and their opinions about school are similar, they formulate their opinions from a different perspective. They come from homes with a higher socioeconomic status than their average classmate, they make better grades, and they include proportionately more females. They are interested in a more expanded curriculum than are their average student counterparts, and they have more clearly formed ideas about values. Their opinions about future plans are almost exclusively those of the college-bound, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the majority of high school students.

This recommendation is not intended to encourage administrators and faculty to avoid seeking the opinions of student leaders. On the contrary, it is believed that these young people have a valuable contribution to offer. It is recommended, however, that the opinions of high school student leaders not be taken in every case as mirror reflections of the wants and needs of high school students as a whole. An effort to weigh and interpret the opinions offered by student leaders is indicated.

To Elected Student Leaders

It is recommended that student leaders who are being consulted in an advisory capacity about the attitudes of those whom they represent be advised of the differences which may be expected in their opinions due to the presence of those qualities which identify them as leaders. Student leaders should be apprised of the necessity of interacting with those whom they represent in an ongoing effort to
ascertain the true wave of opinion. If student leaders can put their own biases aside and interpret opinion based on what they have heard and determined from interaction with their fellow students, they will be in a position to offer some unique assistance in making schools better tailored to the needs of their student clients.

It is recommended that those student government advisors and student government members who are in positions to determine the qualifications for election to student offices be cognizant of the consequences of limiting the opportunities to a minority of the student body. The studies cited in Chapter II, particularly those of Buser et al. (1975) and Weber and McBee (1981), are supported by the conclusions of this study. Students elected to serve as representatives in student government are often selected from a limited, elite, albeit talented and impressive, core of the student body. Grade-point-average minimums, in particular, seem to assure that those students chosen to represent the whole will be selected from a very few. Those in schools where these types of limiting impositions exist should examine the value of denying leadership roles to the majority of their students.

It is recommended that attention be given to the curriculum needs of college-bound students. Elected student leaders, the majority of whom plan to attend college, expressed dissatisfaction with the depth and breadth of current course offerings. They are interested in having more courses offered in areas currently available, and in expanding the curriculum boundaries to include subjects from a wider
array of disciplines. The importance of preparing students for their futures is stressed repeatedly by those who assess educational programs. It would stand to reason that those students who have already demonstrated leadership capabilities should be adequately prepared for the roles which they hope to assume after high school.

It is recommended that attention be given to drawing upon the potential leadership capabilities of those students who, for one reason or another, are not involved in student leadership activities. Students who come from homes with a low socioeconomic status, or students whose grade point averages are low, may nevertheless possess some leadership potential. If opportunities are presented for this potential to be cultivated, the schools and society would be the obvious benefactors.

Recommendations for Further Study

Because the scope of this study, like that of all studies, was limited for various reasons, the following recommendations are made for further study in the area of high school student leadership.

It is recommended that the ability of student leaders to assess the attitudes of their fellow students be measured through a study in which student leaders are asked not only for their own opinions, but to give the opinions which they think the majority of high school students possess. This would permit a comparison of actual opinions to perceived opinions, and would gauge the ability of student leaders to deny their own biases.
It is recommended that this study be replicated with a random sample of student leaders. Because this study looked at a nonrandom sample of student leaders, e.g., the Student Commission on Public Education (SCOPE), it would be interesting to determine whether the findings of this study would hold true for all student leaders, including those who were not chosen by faculty or administration to represent their school at the county level.

It is recommended that this study be replicated to compare the difference in the opinions and characteristics of elected student leaders and informal student leaders, e.g., those students who are recognized by their peers as being leaders in the informal adolescent structure, but who have not been elevated to any particular elected office.

It is recommended that this study be replicated in other parts of the country or on a state-wide basis in order to determine if the results of this study hold up under geographic and political differences.

It is recommended that a longitudinal study be conducted using the members of the 1982-83 SCOPE as a study panel. It would be interesting to follow the educational and political careers of these student leaders, and to determine if the leadership qualities they displayed during the course of this study are in evidence at later points in their lives.

It is recommended that some further investigation be conducted into the gender phenomenon which was observed in this study. It would
be interesting to determine how large a role gender plays in the formation of opinions, and if the opinions of female student leaders differ from those of male student leaders.

It is recommended that a study be conducted which would establish some type of causal explanation for a high school student's aptitude for leadership. It was not clear from the results of this study whether the leaders' opinions were the result of leadership, of high socioeconomic and academic achievement status, or a combination of all of these characteristics.
APPENDIX A

SCOPE Goals and Objectives
Student Commission On Public Education

Purpose: to create a forum—a group through which students and educators can work together to make Macomb County's public schools an even better place to learn.

Participants: three juniors or seniors from each of Macomb County's 30 public high schools are chosen by their principals to participate in SCOPE. Student participants are to be student government leaders who have been elected by their peers. One student government faculty advisor will represent each participating high school.

Staff: from General Education: Vic Dene Bernie Gucwa Dr. Ronald Pollack from Communication/Mgmt. Training: Bill Mulcrone (chair) Mike Bugenski Dr. William Banach

Goals: • To develop solutions to the problems identified by the High School Student Survey.
• To develop problem solving skills.
• To employ problem solving skills in the solutions to existing problems identified by the participants. (Solutions will be presented to appropriate professional groups in the county).
• To encourage student participants to become vehicles for articulating the success stories which each of them represent.
• To provide an active role for student participants in the activities of SCOPE.

Schedule: September 23, 1982 Planning meeting for advisors LeFevre A 213 3-4pm
October 20, 1982 SCOPE LeFevre A, B, & C 8:30-2
   Guest speaker: Dr. Richard Foster
December 9, 1982 SCOPE LeFevre A&B 8:30-2
   Guest speaker: Dr. Jim Huge
Spring 1983 To Be Arranged
(2 sessions)
APPENDIX B

Macomb Student Survey
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Your opinion is important. That’s why your schools are conducting this survey of high school students. The results will be used to make your high school a better learning place for all students.

You are one of several hundred students participating in this study. All of you have been randomly selected.

The survey questions which follow can be answered with a check mark or brief response. The answers you provide will remain confidential...all responses will be averaged to provide a general picture of student opinion.

Thanks for giving us your thoughts on how we can make your public schools a better place to learn.
INSTRUCTIONS

Put an X in the box next to the answer you believe is most correct.

Some questions require you to write a brief response in the space provided.

1. What grade are you in?
   - 9th
   - 10th
   - 11th
   - 12th

2. How many years have you lived in your school district?
   - less than one year
   - 1-3 years
   - 4-6 years
   - 7-10 years
   - 11 or more years

3. Do you like school?
   - most of the time
   - some of the time
   - rarely/never
   - can't say/no opinion

4. Students are given the grades A, B, C, D and FAIL to show how well they're doing in school. Suppose your school were graded in the same way. All things considered, what grade would you give your school...an A, B, C, D or FAIL?
   - A
   - B
   - C
   - D
   - FAIL
   - can't say/no opinion
5. What grade do you think your parents/guardians would give your school...an A, B, C, D or FAIL?

- A
- B
- C
- D
- FAIL
- can't say/no opinion

6. What do you like most about your school?

7. If you could do one thing to improve your school, what would you do?

8. If you could go to any other school you wanted, would you leave the school you are attending now?

- yes
- no (SKIP TO QUESTION 11)
- can't say/no opinion (SKIP TO QUESTION 11)

9. What is the name of the school you'd like to attend?

10. Why would you like to attend this school...that is, what does this school have that your present school doesn't have?
11. In your opinion, is student discipline and behavior a problem in your school?
   1. yes
   2. no (SKIP TO QUESTION 13)
   3. can't say/no opinion (SKIP TO QUESTION 13)

12. Please describe the student discipline and behavior problems you see:

13. In your opinion, which school courses or programs will best prepare you for what you want to do after high school?

14. Which school courses or programs, if any, have been "pretty much a waste of time" for you?

15. Sometimes students aren't able to take all the classes they want. List any courses or programs you wanted but could not take:
Listed below are programs and services offered by many schools. In your opinion, should your school give each of these programs more emphasis, less emphasis, or about the same amount of emphasis? (Circle the number that best describes your feeling.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>MORE</th>
<th>LESS</th>
<th>SAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16. reading...should your school give more, less or about the same emphasis to reading?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. mathematics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. speaking and listening skills</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. writing skills and grammar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. foreign language</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. training students for jobs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. preparing students for college</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. extracurricular activities like sports, band and clubs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. helping students learn how to think and solve problems</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. substance (drug and alcohol) abuse</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. use of computers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. Think of the teacher who has meant the most to you during your school career. What made this teacher special to you?

28. On the average, how much time do you spend on homework each day?

- [ ] less than 30 minutes
- [ ] 31-60 minutes
- [ ] 61-90 minutes
- [ ] 91-120 minutes
- [ ] more than 120 minutes

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29. Do you work now?

☐ yes
☐ no (SKIP TO QUESTION 31)

30. How many hours do you work during an average week?

☐ less than 5 hours
☐ 6-10 hours
☐ 11-15 hours
☐ 16-20 hours
☐ 21-30 hours
☐ 31 or more hours

31. When you graduate from high school, what do you plan to do?

☐ work part-time
☐ work full-time
☐ attend a trade or technical school
☐ attend a community college
☐ attend a four-year college or university
☐ join the military
☐ other______________________
☐ can’t say/no response

Think about your personal goals. Then indicate whether the statements below are very important, somewhat important, or not important to you. (Circle the number that best describes your feeling.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Not Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32. making a contribution to society...is that very important, somewhat important, or not too important to you?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. having lots of money</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. having strong friendships</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. finding purpose and meaning in life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. being successful in life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. having a good marriage</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. being a leader in the community</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. finding steady work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. having a good family life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### INSTRUCTIONS

After reading each statement below, decide if you:

1. agree
2. are unsure, but probably agree
3. are unsure, but probably disagree
4. disagree

#### EXAMPLE

Our school is in the United States.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Probably Agree</th>
<th>Probably Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you agree with the example statement, circle the number in the “agree column.”

If you feel you cannot answer a question, don’t mark anything in the column following that question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Probably Agree</th>
<th>Probably Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41. Most students here like school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Students here know how well they are doing in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. My school emphasizes reading, writing and arithmetic.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. My school can be described as “a good place to learn.”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. The teaching staff in my school expects all students to do well.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. I know what I'm expected to learn in my classes.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. My principal expects the best from staff and students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48. Administrators in my school won't tolerate poor teaching.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Students who have learning problems can get extra help in this school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. When students graduate from this school, most of them will know how to read, write and do arithmetic.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Class sizes in my school are too large.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Students in my school are encouraged to do the best they can.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. The staff in this school is &quot;warm&quot; and cares about students.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. My parents/guardians would like to know more about what I'm learning in school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55. Most classrooms in my school are well disciplined.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. My parents/guardians believe my school is doing a good job.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. I am proud of my school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. The teachers in my school assign too much homework.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. My school is a pleasant place to be.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. My school is run in an orderly manner.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. I receive enough feedback on how well I'm doing in my classes.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62. I receive enough individual attention from my teachers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. I would like to have regular &quot;learning conferences&quot; with my teachers so they could tell me how well I am doing in class.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
64. Do you live with...

1. your mother and father
2. your mother
3. your father
4. other ________________

65. What do your parents/guardians do for a living?

Mother ________________
Father ________________

66. Are your parents/guardians employed full- or part-time?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>full-time</th>
<th>part-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
<td>[ ]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

67. Did your mother have a paid job (part-time or more) while you were growing up?

1. no
2. yes, some of the time
3. yes, most of the time
4. yes, all or nearly all of the time

68. Students are often given the grades A, B, C, D or Fail. Looking back at your high school career, which of the following categories best describes your high school grades?

1. A (90–100)
2. B (80–89)
3. C (70–79)
4. D (69 or below)

69. Are you...

1. male
2. female
70. What is the name of your high school?

- Anchor Bay
- Armada
- Center Line
- Chippewa Valley
- Clintondale
- East Detroit
- Fitzgerald
- Fraser
- Lake Shore
- Lakewood
- L'Anse Creuse
- L'Anse Creuse North
- Mount Clemens
- New Haven
- Richmond
- Romeo
- Roseville
- Roseville Brablac
- South Lake
- Utica Eisenhower
- Utica Ford
- Utica Stevenson
- Utica
- Van Dyke Lincoln
- Warren Cousino
- Warren Mott
- Warren Sterling Heights
- Warren
- Warren Woods Tower
- Warren Woods

Thank you for helping make this a better place to learn. Please staple your survey booklet closed and return it to the address on the back cover.
January 20, 1983

William G. Mulcrone
Dept. of Educational Leadership
Western Michigan University

Dear Mr. Mulcrone:

The Communication/Management Training Department of Macomb Intermediate School District is pleased to comply with your request that a copy of the "Macomb Student Survey" instrument be included as an appendix to your doctoral dissertation.

We are glad that you have chosen to conduct your study of high school students in Macomb County, and we wish you the best of luck in the pursuit of your degree.

Sincerely,

William J. Banach Ed.D.
Administrative Director

School Board
Glen H. Peters, President • Harvey P. Haska, Vice-President • Charles C. Milosa, D.D.S., Treasurer • Roger J. Dingman, Trustee • John B. Bosyanski, Trustee

Administration
Dr. Robert G. Lutz, Superintendents
TO: Student Survey Administrators
FROM: William G. Mulcrone
DATE: November 16, 1982
RE: Instructions for administering the 1982 Student Survey

Thank you for agreeing to help with the administration of the 1982 Macomb County Student Survey. Your involvement will enable us to learn the opinions of high school students in Macomb County and to compare those results with other student opinion polls throughout the U.S.

Attached is a list of students from your high school who are to be surveyed. These students were randomly selected from all high school seniors in the county. Do not make any changes in the list. If a student is no longer registered at your school, call us and we will give you another name.

Choose a specific date and time for your survey session. The survey takes approximately 30 minutes to complete, so allow an extra ten minutes to explain and give directions. The survey should be administered in a quiet area equipped with desks or tables and pencils. (Please have a supply of sharpened #2 pencils available.)

The survey should be completed before Thanksgiving break.

At the time of the survey administration:

1. Read the introduction to all students.
2. Select a student to collect all surveys when everyone is finished. All surveys are to be placed in the envelope provided. Allow the student to return the envelope to the high school office and place it in the MISD van mail.
3. Stress confidentiality. Please state: "No one in this school district will see your answers. They will be combined with answers from hundreds of other students before anyone looks at them. No attempt will be made to match particular answers with any student."
4. Do not interpret any questions. This is very important. Your standard reply should be: "Answer this question based on what it means to you personally."
5. Ask students to follow directions for marking the survey.

School Board
Glen H. Peters, President • Harvey P. Haska, Vice-President • Charles C. Milonas, D.D.S., Treasurer • Roger J. Dangman, Trustee • John A. Barzynowski, Trustee
Administration
Dr. Robert G. Luiz, Superintendent

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Enclosed is a card which you should complete and return via van mail. Please use it to indicate the date, time, and location of your survey session. Members of the Communication staff from the Intermediate will be visiting survey sites throughout the week. Therefore, it is important that we know exactly where and when to find you.

Also, you should plan a second session for the week of November 30. This will assure that any student who misses the survey during the first session because of absence or any other reason will have an opportunity to complete the survey. It is extremely important that every student chosen for the sample be surveyed.

If a student chosen from your school is unable to read the survey instrument due to a visual handicap or a learning disability, please notify the Intermediate office as soon as possible. We will arrange for large print or braille instruments for the visually impaired, and a reader for nonreaders.

We will appreciate your cooperation in using your professional and ethical judgment to assure that the survey is conducted just as it is planned to be.

Thank you for your help and assistance. If you have any questions, call Bill Mulcrone at 286-8800, extension 227, or Mike Bugenski at extension 122.
HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SURVEY

Please fill out and return to Macomb Intermediate before you conduct the survey.

District: ________________________________

High School: ________________________________

Date of survey administration: ________________________________

Time: ______ Place: ________________________________

Name of person responsible for survey: ________________________________

Title: ________________________________

Note: Communications staff of M.I.S.D. will be making some on-site visits during the administration of the survey.
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